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Motivation of Community College Faculty and Administrators to Pursue the Doctorate: A Qualitative Interview Study

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MOTIVATION OF COMMUNITY COLLEGE

FACULTY AND ADMINISTRATORS TO PURSUE THE DOCTORATE:

A QUALITATIVE INTERVIEW STUDY

A Dissertation

Submitted to the School of Graduate Studies and Research

in Partial Fulfillment of the

Requirements for the Degree

Doctor of Education

Tomi Waters

Indiana University of Pennsylvania

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Indiana University of Pennsylvania
School of Graduate Studies and Research
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DEDICATION

This dissertation is dedicated to the memories of my parents, Thomas and Irene Waters. From them, my brother and I learned the importance of education, and they would be so pleased to know that we now both hold doctoral degrees.

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I would like to offer my sincere thanks to my committee chair, Dr. Mary Jalongo, for her guidance and patience in the completion of my dissertation. My appreciation also goes to the other members of my committee, Dr. George Bieger and Dr. Kelli Jo Kerry-Moran, for their support and encouragement. Dr. Jennifer Rotigel also served on my committee prior to her retirement and I appreciate her support, as well.

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Title: Motivation of Community College Faculty and Administrators to Pursue
          the Doctorate: A Qualitative Interview Study

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     The purpose of this study explores the motivations of community college faculty, adjuncts, and administrators who seek and obtain doctoral degrees. There were three categories of volunteers, all employed by a community college. These were volunteers who had recently completed a doctoral degree in the last five years, were currently enrolled in a doctoral program, or were seriously considering enrolling in a doctoral program in the near future. The research questions for this study sought to determine the demographic characteristics, including educational background, of participants; the self-reported motivations of the participants to complete a doctoral degree; and, the perceptions of participants regarding doctoral degree attainment and its relationship to students and community college success.

     A review of the literature indicated that a paucity of information exists in the literature about community colleges in general and, specifically about doctoral aspirations of faculty and administrators. Weiner's Attribution Theory was used as a theoretical framework for this study and provided an authentic structure for evaluation of the responses to the research questions. Seventeen community college faculty, adjuncts, and administrators were interviewed through a structured interview process. Emerging themes were identified within responses to guided questions and across questions. Overall results indicated multiple motivators toward degree completion, including personal satisfaction in completion of a doctorate, opportunities for career advancement, and helping students succeed in the community college environment.

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CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION OF THE PROBLEM

The American Association of Community Colleges (2013) proposes that trends are changing regarding expectations for community college faculty and administrators. "Whereas the master's degree, professional experience, and solid teaching were once sufficient to advance within the community college setting, many of these postsecondary institutions now prefer instructors and administrators with the doctorate" (American Association of Community Colleges, 2013). Some community colleges are also slowly moving toward support of faculty scholarship through reduced teaching loads and other incentives (Bers, 2009; Townsend & Rosser, 2009). Through a qualitative phenomenological study, this research explores the motivation of community college faculty, adjuncts, and administrators seeking doctoral degrees. Doctoral degrees are typically not required for faculty in community colleges, although many administrative positions in these colleges now require or suggest doctoral degrees for administrators, typically in areas of administrative leadership studies or in an academic discipline. In view of the fact that doctoral degrees are not required for the professorate in community colleges, it is interesting to note that approximately 13% of community college full-time faculty and 6% of part-time faculty across the nation now hold doctoral degrees (AACC, 2015).

Community colleges differ in many ways from four-year baccalaureate colleges or universities. These differences include entrance and acceptance requirements, demographic differences in student populations, types of course offerings, and minimum requirements for instructors. Terminal degrees are normally required for the professorate in baccalaureate colleges and universities, while community colleges typically require master's level preparation. Four-year colleges and universities have admissions criteria, along with competitive entrance requirements to measure ability for college-level work. Conversely, two-year public community

colleges are likely to be open enrollment colleges, accepting students regardless of their level of preparation. In fact, over 60% of students entering open access community colleges across the country place into the developmental course sequence (Jaggars, Edgecombe, & Stacey, 2014). Another significant difference is that faculty at four-year colleges and universities have scholarship as part of their work load, along with extensive committee service and time allocations for research. These full-time faculty typically teach four courses per semester, dependent upon their research load, while full-time community college faculty typically teach five courses or more courses per semester. Therefore, the obvious distinction has been made that community colleges are called "teaching colleges," while some four-year colleges and universities are considered "research institutions" (Cohen, 2008; Provasnik & Planty, 2008*).*

It is the norm in four-year colleges and universities for administrators to hold doctoral degrees. It is also becoming the norm for administrators in community colleges to hold doctoral degrees, as more community colleges prefer or require terminal degrees for middle-level and higher-level administrators (AACC, 2015). The American Association of Community Colleges (2015) reports that 86% of presidents or chief executive officers in community colleges now hold doctorates; however, data are not reliable or readily available regarding other administrators as responsibilities and job descriptions vary among community colleges.

It is understandable and expected when individuals seek doctoral degrees because of requirements for specific high-level positions, even though they may have equally strong intrinsic motivation to complete a terminal degree. However, when individuals are not required to hold doctoral degrees for upward mobility in employment, then motivation for higher learning and mastery of their own disciplines may play key roles in their doctoral pursuit and completion. This does not suggest that doctoral candidates employed in other higher education institutions

are not also intrinsically motivated, or, conversely, that those in community college settings are not extrinsically motivated. Certainly, some employees in community colleges may also be seeking positions in four-year colleges or universities and seek to improve their credentials by completing doctoral programs.

In studying reasons for persistence among doctoral candidates, Gardner (2008) discovered that personal motivation to complete the terminal degree is a significant component in candidate success; however, no single reason accounts for doctoral attrition among students. She notes that doctoral students who remain motivated have a much higher chance of succeeding. Research indicates that doctoral candidates are often self-determined or self-regulated to continue in the process, and those who are highly determined complete their programs (Deci & Ryan, 1987). Spaulding and Rockinson-Szapkiw (2012) chose to identify themes related to doctoral program persistence, citing personal motivational factors and social factors as strong contributors to doctoral completion.

Factors specific to adult learning may also inform the discussion of doctoral candidate motivation (Knowles, 1977; Wlodkowski; 2008). Knowles proposes that adults assume responsibility for their own lives and "develop a deep psychological need to be seen and treated by others as being capable of self-direction" (p. 83). He further contends that adults develop the ability to learn what they need to know, particularly related to job knowledge and skills (Knowles, 1989). Wlodkowski (2008) posits that because the culture in the United States is based on individualism and pragmatism, adult education is then a highly pragmatic undertaking. He notes that adults, by definition, seek to improve their competencies through learning often related to economic need or professional expectations. A study of college students younger than twenty-one years of age, and those older than twenty-eight years concludes that the older group

of students has a much higher level of intrinsic goal orientation than their younger peer group (Bye, Puskar, & Conway, 2007).

Community colleges now educate over 10 million students each year, accounting for half of all undergraduates enrolled in college in the United States (Bailey, Jaggars, & Jenkins, 2015). As community colleges have recently moved to the forefront of the nation's policy agenda, further study of issues related community colleges is necessary and overdue. This study explores variables affecting the pursuit of doctoral degrees among community college faculty, adjuncts, and administrators.

Background of the Study

Community colleges are called "democracy's colleges" because of their broad, open enrollment policies and their welcoming practices directed toward non-traditional students (Boggs, 2010). From relatively recent beginnings in the 20th century, the community college system has grown in size and scope. Some states have organized networks of state-wide community college systems, such as Virginia, California and Texas, while other states have collaborations of community colleges that differ from state-wide systems. With community colleges now serving approximately one-half of the nation's undergraduates, community college faculty, both full- and part-time, account for nearly half of the nation's professoriate. Recent attention to community college graduation and completion agendas has highlighted the role that two-year colleges play in educating America's students; community colleges also educate a significant number of international students who comprise 5% of community college student enrollment nationally (AACC, 2015).

A study for the Carnegie Foundation for the Advancement of Teaching notes differences between community college faculty and faculty at baccalaureate colleges, in that smaller percentages of community college faculty hold doctoral degrees compared with their

counterparts in four-year colleges and universities (Gerstein, 2009). This study also notes that

the number of community college faculty belonging to unions is much higher than at

baccalaureate colleges. Since their inception, community colleges have defined themselves as

"teaching" colleges in contrast with to their baccalaureate counterparts, defined as "research"

colleges and universities. Prager (2003) notes that, although efforts have been made to justify

the scholarly inquiry of community college teaching faculty in terms of teaching mission,

"scholarship is still marginalized at community colleges" (p. 584). Conversely, Palmer (2015)

argues that some community college faculty find professional identity through their membership

in professional organizations and participation in scholarly publications within their disciplines,

along with presentations of data and new educational strategies at conferences meetings of these

professional organizations.

Most community college faculty members have comparatively heavy teaching loads totaling

fifteen credits or more per semester. This rigorous teaching schedule is often cited as the reason

that community college faculty have little time to engage in scholarly or research pursuits, even

though a very limited number of studies indicate that some of these faculty do find time (Grubb,

1999; O'Banion, 1994; Palmer, 2002). Additionally, few community colleges offer incentives

for faculty to engage in scholarly activities, such as grant writing and grant administration,

research, or comprehensive professional development activities that would merit release time

from class at four-year colleges and universities. Levinson (2003) argues that focus on teaching

in community colleges gives faculty a "competitive advantage" because they are more

responsive to the learning needs of their students, as compared with counterparts in baccalaureate

colleges who may be distracted by research and other scholarly pursuits (p. 575). Others deplore

the separation of teaching and scholarship, suggesting that the academic function of the

community college has been compromised and that community colleges are failing in their commitment to academic excellence and intellectual rigor (Eaton, 1994; McGrath & Spear, 1991).

Boyer (1990), in his four dimensions of scholarship in higher education, proposes that a "focus on teaching does not and should not negate the importance of scholarly research" (p. 74). A recent report explored Boyer's dimensions of with regard to community college faculty and propose that these faculty "exhibit varying degrees of engagement in Boyer's four domains of scholarship" (Park, Braxton, & Lyken-Segosebe, 2015, p. 15). The tide toward scholarship among community college faculty may be turning in a positive direction. Braxton and Lyken-Segosebe (2015) found that over 40% of community college faculty in a national survey report being published one or two times in the last three years. Upon investigation, Park, Braxton, and Lyken-Segosebe (2015) argue that community college faculty are primarily identified in three of Boyer's domains: *immersed scholars*, those involved in development of new instructional practices, presentation of seminars, and presentations at scholarly meetings; *scholars of dissemination*, those who develop and share their practices with faculty colleagues and with the general higher education community; and, *scholars of pedagogical practice,* those who are deeply involved with developing new teaching techniques, and new methods of student assessment and classroom management (Park, Braxton, & Lyken-Segosebe, 2015).

Bailey and Morest (2006) contend that community colleges stand apart from other higher education institutions because of "their lower funding levels, their enrollment of students who tend to face greater academic, social, and economic problems, and their particular place within the higher education sector" (p. 4). Bailey, Jaggars, and Jenkins (2015) comment on the significant role that community colleges play in educating underrepresented students. They note

that community colleges educate "a majority of low income, immigrant, first-generation, and ethnic minority students. Indeed, a majority of low-income, Hispanic, and Native American students who are undergraduates are enrolled in community colleges" (p. 1). Cohen (2008) contends that community college populations are much more reflective of their geographic locales, much more so than universities drawing students from different locations. Primarily, community colleges are commuter colleges, with few offering residential housing. Therefore, Cohen's point is well-taken and illustrated by the high minority population at most urban community colleges, and by high Hispanic populations at community college locations in Los Angles, Phoenix, Miami, and cities in Texas. As open enrollment institutions, community colleges have little control over the demographic variables of their entering students, related to "gender, race, ethnicity, first-generation status, socio-economic status, second language, background, marital or parental status" (Adelman, 2005, p. 118). Community colleges function by identifying the academic and supportive service needs of their students as they enroll, providing students with academic pathways best suited to their individual needs.

While much has been written about the pursuit of doctoral degrees during the decade of the 1990s (Johnson, 1995; Nelson, 1995; Hayworth, 1999), little focus has recently been placed on current enrollments in doctoral programs of community college faculty, adjuncts, and administrators. A seminal study conducted in 1999, The Survey of Doctoral Education and Career Preparation, continues to be referenced today as support for the contention that teaching in a community college is seldom considered as a viable career by doctoral program graduates. This research, organized by the Pew Charitable Trust, surveyed 4,000 doctoral students around the country (Golde & Dore, 2001). Across fields, only 3.9% of all doctoral candidates, in

various fields, listed teaching in community colleges as their first choice, although 16.6% believed that they would eventually accept teaching positions in community colleges.

A paucity of current information exists regarding the motivation of community college faculty to obtain doctoral degrees, although previous studies in the last quarter of the 20th century did discuss doctorally prepared faculty. In 1975, reflecting on the number of Ph.D. graduates of that era, Taylor predicted that the Ph.D. glut would push more doctoral program graduates in to two-year colleges; however, her data indicated that they would be dissatisfied working in community colleges because of the lack of opportunities for research. Bowen and Rudenstine (1992) studied doctoral education in order to explain the structure, content and outcomes of doctoral programs, including factors affecting the trajectories of doctoral candidates. Lawrence (1998) concluded that previous generalizations about hiring doctorate prepared faculty were supported; faculty members with the terminal degree were more likely to engage in scholarly work including grant preparation and administration, journal editing, professional association membership, and some research.

By 1999, during a sluggish academic hiring market, Haworth reported that Ph.D. graduates were turning to community colleges even though some reported that they were unprepared for the intensive teaching demand. A qualitative study in 2004 explored the appropriateness of advanced graduate degrees as preparation for a community college teaching career, and determined that instructors with doctorates made significant contributions through instruction as well as through efforts at scholarship and mission-driven college activities. Adams (2004) reported the educational dichotomy of community college faculty, trained at institutions that value research and scholarship, but finding themselves working at community colleges that value teaching over scholarship. She also identified that doctorally prepared faculty view themselves

both as teacher and scholar compared to those with master's degrees who considered themselves to be teachers. A study of women community college faculty with doctorates indicated that women chose to work in community colleges because they preferred the institutional climate at a community college; they also felt a commitment to the philosophy of community colleges, and aspired to teach academically diverse and non-traditional students (Robinson-Wright, 2002).

More recently, trends in doctoral education have made advanced graduate study more accessible to community college faculty and administrators by abandoning residency requirements, offering more practice-oriented degree programs, and accommodating graduate students' schedules through weekend, blended, and online delivery formats. Golde and Dore (2001) propose that "Doctoral education is a highly individualized enterprise; no two students have the same goals and experiences" (p. 38). However, because instruction and administration in community colleges are much different in many ways than in baccalaureate colleges, it is important to attempt to capture the factors affecting pursuit of doctoral degrees among community college faculty, adjuncts, and administrators.

Purpose of the Study

This study seeks to explore the factors affecting motivation of community college faculty, adjuncts, and administrators in seeking doctoral degrees. The American Association of Community Colleges (2015) reports that among community college faculty nationally, approximately 13% hold doctoral degrees while only 6% of part-time faculty have attained doctoral degrees. Building on national data regarding numbers of faculty and adjuncts with doctoral degrees, and on previous studies of faculty motivation to obtain higher level degrees and other areas of faculty scholarship, this study will explore the factors that have led community college faculty, adjuncts, and administrators to consider, enroll, and complete doctoral degrees.

Community college personnel are of particular interest in this study. These individuals, including part-time faculty, have relatively stable employment within the community college but have chosen or are electing to enter a doctoral program.

Research Questions

Weiner's Attribution Theory for Motivation will used as a theoretical framework for this study (Weiner, 1985). In this theory, Weiner argued that an individual's perception of his or her success determines future achievement or striving toward future goals, and is, therefore, considered a motivational belief (Eccles & Wigfield, 2002). Weiner proposed that in "achievement related contexts…there are three common properties: locus, stability, and controllability, with intentionality and *globality* as other possible causes" (Weiner, 1985, p. 548). In this context, Weiner refers to locus causality, rather than the typical locus of control, where internal versus external control are at opposite ends of a continuum. Stability refers to whether causes change over time or vary. While an individual may have a certain ability level, which remains the same over time, his effort toward a goal may be unstable as more or less effort is exerted at different times. Controllability refers to the conditions that an individual can regulate or manage versus those that are unable to be managed. Skills may be controllable, as one has the ability to improve his skills, while the actions of others or luck are not controllable. Weiner proposed that each of these causalities provides a unique influence on an individual's perceptions and expectancy for success, with the stability dimension having perhaps the greatest influence on expectancies of success in that attribution to internal strengths and abilities enhances pride and self-esteem (Eccles & Wigfield, 2002).

Other attribution theorists include intentionality and globality as additional dimensions (Abrahamson, 1975; Sweeney, 1986). Intentionality, as described by Weiner, as a property that "best differentiates between effort and strategy" (Kent & Martinko, 1995, p. 58). However,

Weiner was critical of including it as another dimension because he indicated that an individual who does something intentionally has control over his actions. Therefore, intentionality is attributable to the dimension of controllability. Regarding globality, in that attributions for a particular situation will occur in all situations, Weiner argued for specificity rather than globality, in that attributions were situational rather than entirely global. While Weiner recognized that other attribution models used intentionality and globality as dimensions or causations in their models, he felt that these should be included in his existing dimensions.

Locus	• Location of control • Internally held vs. externally held
Stability	• Change over time • Ability vs. effort
Controllability	• Ability for regulation • Skills vs. luck

Other Proposed Dimensions:

Intentionality	• Individual control • Effort vs. strategy
Globality	• Occurs in all situations • Global vs. situational
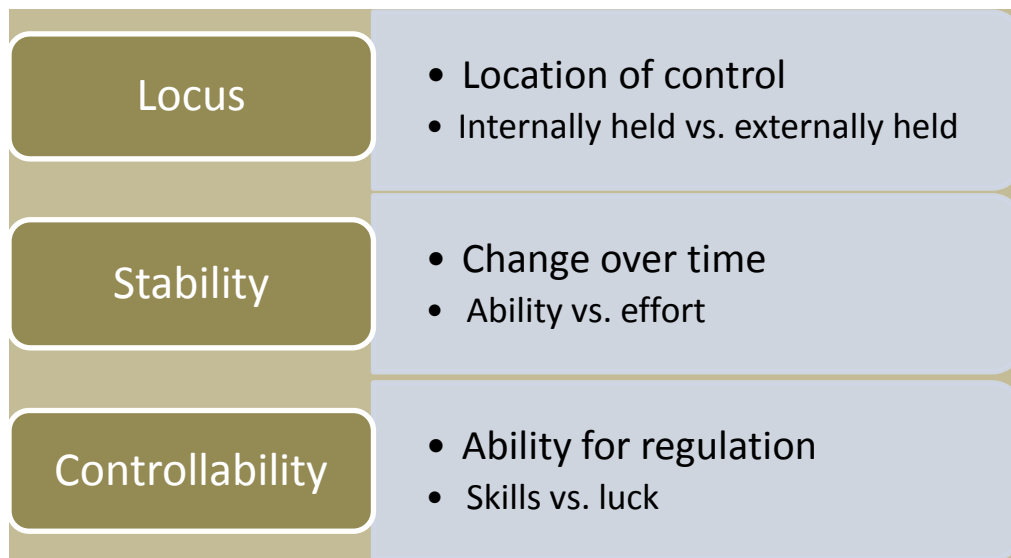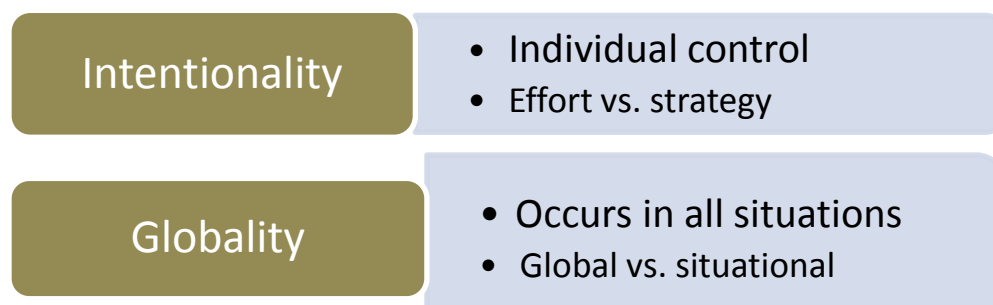
Figure 1. Dimensions of attributions, Weiner (1985) and other proposed dimensions.

Additional study of empirical research in this area led Weiner to include two motivational theories to support his original attribution theory. These include intrapersonal theory and interpersonal theory, related to the reasons individuals make decisions about the expectancy of success and pride in their achievements (Weiner, 2000). His theory will be used as a framework to study the motivation of faculty, adjuncts, and administrators in community colleges to seek doctoral degrees.

Answers to the following research questions are sought from community college faculty, adjuncts, and administrators in order to understand the motivation and shared experience of seeking and obtaining doctoral degrees among those employed in a community college environment.

1. What are the demographic characteristics of community college faculty, adjuncts, and administrators who choose to pursue doctoral degrees?

2. What self-reported motivational factors have influenced community college faculty, adjuncts, and administrators to pursue doctoral degrees?

3. How do these participants view their doctoral attainment relative to student and community college success?

Significance of the Study

This study is significant because it addresses the motivation of community college faculty and adjuncts to seek doctoral degrees when the current minimum requirements for teaching in community colleges are master's level degrees. It also addresses the motivation of community college administrators to seek doctoral degrees when doctorates are preferred, but often not required for certain administrative positions. Some large community colleges are now requiring doctoral degrees for high-level administrators, particularly those in academic areas, while some

community colleges list these positions are "doctorate preferred" rather than "doctorate required" (AACC, 2015). It should be noted that upwardly mobile administrators in community colleges are realizing that a doctoral degree may soon be required for a future position. This is not yet the case for community college faculty and adjuncts who will be able to continue to teach in community colleges with master's degrees in the foreseeable future. Therefore, this study is significant because it explores the motivation of faculty, adjuncts, and administrators who do not currently require doctoral degrees in their current positions, yet seek to obtain them. This information is useful to those who are currently employed in community colleges and are seeking doctoral degrees. It also adds to the body of knowledge related to community colleges in general, as community colleges have been studied far less in all aspects than four-year colleges and universities. It is also significant because few research studies, particularly those of a qualitative nature, have explored issues related to motivation of personnel in community colleges toward higher academic achievement. The results of this study will provide greater insight into the community college in general, and to the educational motivations of personnel specifically.

Definition of Terms

The following terms were used in this study and are defined in the context of the study.

Attrition- Loss of students who fail to progress toward college completion.

Community college- A two-year, open access college providing associate's degrees, certificates and transfer credits.

Developmental course: Courses designed for students who are academically unprepared when entering college, and need remedial coursework in order to prepare for the rigor of college level courses. Most developmental courses are in mathematics, reading, writing, and English. Some students are required to take a series of two to three developmental courses, called the *developmental sequence,* in order to qualify for

college level coursework.

Doctorally prepared- Holding an earned degree of doctorate in one of a variety of different academic disciplines.

Extrinsic motivation- The desire to engage in an activity to achieve an external consequence, such as a reward ((Zimbardo, Johnson, & McCann, 2014).

Interpersonal motivation- Self-directed thoughts or feelings which when positive, imply future success.

Intrapersonal motivation- The thoughts or feelings of others which may affect the future success of an individual.

Intrinsic motivation- The desire to engage in activity for its own sake or for personal satisfaction, rather than for some external consequence or reward (Zimbardo, Johnson, & McCann, 2014).

Persistence- Refers to the academic progress of a student toward completion of a degree.

Reflexivity- A reflection of an individual's own interpretation of information "based upon the cultural, social, gender, class, and personal politics" that the individual brings to the research process" (Creswell, 2013, p. 215).

Self-efficacy- "People's beliefs about their capabilities to produce designated levels of performance that exercise influence over events that affect their lives" (Bandura, 1994, p. 71).

Limitations

There are three major limitations of this study. First, the study identifies faculty, adjuncts, and administrators in a specific community college who self-identified into three categories: graduated from a doctoral program in the last five years, currently enrolled in and completing a doctoral program, and considering enrolling in doctoral programs. Once the study began, several individuals came forward and proposed that a category was missing from this group. That category is comprised of those who purposely chose not to complete a doctoral degree. While the purpose of this study is to determine motivation toward completion of a doctoral degree, it

may be interesting at some point in the future to consider a similar study of those who consciously elect not to seek terminal degrees.

Second, the study is based upon information provided in interviews with faculty, adjuncts, and administrators who self-identified as participants of the study. No attempt was made to reach others in the college who did not respond to the original email, since more than the target number of participants originally responded.

The third limitation deals with adjunct faculty members. The designation of adjunct faculty member is used in this study interchangeably with the term part-time faculty member. A more recent emerging term is contingent faculty, which describes both part-time faculty and non-tenure track faculty (Edmonds, 2015). Recent interest in adjunct faculty indicates that many are working at more than one educational institution (Baldwin & Wawryzynski, 2011; Edmonds, 2015; Kezar, 2012). Although some participants in this study self-disclosed during their interviews that they were currently employed at more than one educational institution, no effort was made to pursue additional information regarding employment at multiple institutions. Given the current interest in adjunct faculty, factors surrounding adjuncts working at multiple institutions deserves further study, both by quantitative and qualitative methods.

Delimitations

There are several delimitations of this study. These are outlined below.

1. This study focuses on self-identified participants at one large community college consisting of four campuses and four additional educational centers. No attempt was made to seek information from faculty or administrators outside this single community college.

2. The researcher currently holds the position of Associate Dean of Academic Affairs at this community college. Although the researcher clearly indicated that her position at the college

would in no way affect professional relationships with those who volunteered for the study, some possible participants may not have volunteered because of the researcher's role in the college. Conversely, some participants may have volunteered because of the researcher's position or because of professional knowledge of or previous interactions with her.

   3. An individual researcher conducted each of the interviews and performed the analysis of all data. Because of the study being conducted by a single researcher, unintentional bias may have occurred.

Summary

This chapter provides an introduction to a phenomenological study designed to gain information regarding the motivation of community college faculty, adjuncts, and administrators who seek and obtain doctoral degrees. Differences between community colleges and four-year colleges and their respective faculty are explored. The purpose and significance of the study are explained, along with definitions of specific terms used in this study. Limitations and delimitations to this study are also described in this chapter, regarding the limitation of the study to personnel in one large community college and the researcher's professional role in that community college.

In Chapter 2, a review of the literature is presented. Of interest to this study are the following areas: history of the doctorate; history of community colleges; doctoral program pursuit; descriptions of community college faculty, adjuncts, and administrators; theoretical framework for the study, Weiner's Attribution Theory; and a review of adult learning and lifelong learning.

CHAPTER 2

LITERATURE REVIEW

The following chapter provides a review of the literature related to various aspects of this study. These include information on the history of the doctoral degree and a review of doctoral pursuit. This chapter also includes discussion regarding the genesis of community colleges from the original junior college, changes to the community college structure and mission following the Truman Commission Report, and an overview of the differences between baccalaureate and community colleges. Weiner's Theory of Attribution is introduced as the theoretical framework for this study, along with a review of other motivational theories. Finally, this chapter provides a discussion of adult and lifelong learning in the context of doctoral degree pursuit.

History of the Doctorate

The history of the doctorate as an academic title can be traced to the University of Bologna in the 11th century, which required permission from the Roman emperor to prepare and award students for the *doctors legume* or doctor of laws degree (McDonald, 1948). The University of Paris followed soon after in 1145 by awarding doctorates. McDonald (1948) explains that the term doctor appears to have originated among the Romans, and was "the equivalent of teacher or instructor" (p. 90). He notes that by the twelfth century, it became a title to honor men of great learning, such as "Thomas Aquinas, Roger Bacon, and other distinguished school men" (p. 90). The Papacy began to grant European universities the ability to appoint degrees of *doctors legume* (doctor of laws), *canonunetdecretalium* (doctor of cannon laws), and *doctor utriuaquejuris* (teacher of law and cannon). By the beginning of the 13th century, Oxford University had begun to award doctoral degrees (Zajas, 1985).

American doctorates were modeled after doctoral programs in Germany, designed for "an elite cadre of serious students…as they prepared for careers as scholars and researchers" (Nettles

& Millett, 2006, p. 1). German scholars believed that "the various sciences constituted a 'whole' unified by philosophy, and that their knowledge furthered universal enlightenment," hence the title of Doctor of Philosophy (Ph.D.) awarded by most academic disciplines (Baez, 2002, p. 90). Yale University was the first American university to begin a Ph.D. program in 1860, awarding the first doctoral degrees in the United States in 1861. Delayed by the events of the American Civil War, the first graduate school in the United States was established at Johns Hopkins University in 1876. Brubacher and Rudy (1968) described the first American doctorate on the same plane with degrees given in the medieval universities in Paris and Bologna, which provided entrance into *elite* academic guilds composed only of those scholars who had met the highest academic challenges. Mendoza and Gardner (2012) report that 3,500 doctoral degrees had been awarded in the United States by 1900, including those from the University of Chicago, Harvard University, Stanford University, and Columbia University.

The number and scope of doctoral degree programs grew rapidly after the first program at Yale. By 1924, sixty-one U.S. universities were offering doctorates; and, one hundred years after Yale's first doctorate was awarded, 208 colleges and universities were offering doctoral degrees around the country (Nettles & Millett, 2006). Today, over 430,000 doctoral students are currently matriculating in doctoral programs in the United States (Council of Graduate Schools, 2013).

The doctoral degree in Education (Ed.D. or D.Ed.) was established in 1920 for practicing educators, and today requires much of the same coursework, both in rigor, time, and research as most Ph.D. degrees. While research is a required component of the Ed.D. or Ph.D., Baez (2002) notes that the Ph.D. is considered to be research oriented while the Ed.D. or D.Ed. is considered to be more practice oriented. He notes, "Despite the attributed differences between the two

degrees, studies of them do not reveal significant differences" (Baez, 2002, p. 51). Baez (2002) further notes that few differences exist in admissions criteria, course requirement, dissertation research, or dissertations themselves. Today, some Doctorates of Education are focused on administration or administrative leadership, while other programs focus on teaching practice.

Although Ph.D. degrees have been awarded in health professions related fields for decades, a new educational phenomenon of the last decade has been the Doctor of Practice degree in specific health professions fields, including Nursing, Occupational Therapy, Anesthesia Technology, Physical Therapy, and many others. This degree recognizes the importance of professionals in the health care field who serve as practitioners or educators, who seek higher education but are not necessarily interested in extensive research or scholarly activities associated with a Ph.D. degree. Regarding the nursing profession, Jolley (2007) notes, "It is inevitable that some nurses who are already qualified to degree and master's degree will take advantage of the doctoral degree opportunities which now newly present themselves." Doctor of practice degrees require about 50% of the coursework required for Ph.D. or D.Ed. degrees; however, most require research studies and dissertations in respective healthcare fields.

Doctoral Program Pursuit

In any profession, pursing a doctoral degree can impact both the personal and professional lives of doctoral candidates. Powers and Swick (2012) indicate that "pursuing a doctoral degree is a major life change for students, is incredibly demanding, and the process is complex" (p. 389). They note that the rigors of a doctoral program, and the transition into the program, account for an average 50% attrition rate among doctoral candidates. In fact, a reported 20% of all doctoral students fail during the dissertation portion of the degree after completing the required coursework (Bair & Hayworth, 1999; Cesari, 1990). Ivankova and Stick (2007) report

that "high failure rate and the ever increasing time to degree" are chronic problems in pursuit of doctoral degrees (p. 94). Doctoral student attrition has also been called a "scandal" because of the high attrition rates (Smallwood, 2004, p. A11). Current literature contains a robust presence of studies exploring the general attrition rates of students in doctoral programs (Bowen & Rudestine, 1992; Church, 2009; Gardner, 2008; Golde, 2005; Gururaj, Heilig, & Somers, 2010; Ivankova & Stick, 2007; Tinto, 1993). However, most studies try to identify reasons for attrition rather than motivation toward persistence and completion.

In the limited number of studies that explore motivation to seek doctoral degrees, intrinsic variables are often cited as the motivators to enroll in and complete doctoral degrees (Ivankova & Stick, 2004; Wellington & Sikes, 2006). Some individuals seek the intellectual stimulation and challenge of doctoral level work (Scott, Brown, Lunt, & Thorne, 2004), while others seek a lifelong learning experience (Ivankova & Stick, 2007). Others reportedly seek extrinsic rewards, such as a higher level position, increased salary, or professional respect (Jablonski, 2001). Hoskins and Goldberg (2005) propose that doctoral students remain motivated in their programs, only if these programs are good "academic matches," in that the curricula and foci of these programs are congruent with their own conception of their learning needs (p. 177). They contend that a lack of perceived congruence accounts for a portion of the attrition in doctoral programs. Others contend that stress and social isolation are the two primary factors in attrition of doctoral students (Ali & Kohun, 2006; Lewis, Ginsberg, Davies, & Smith, 2004; Lovitts, 2001).

Most existing studies related to doctoral motivation are discipline or population specific. In a study of doctoral candidates in Counselor Education and Supervision, Hinkle, Iarussi, Schermer, and Yensel (2014) reported that participants identified a variety of motivators: to gain

positions as professors, to prepare for increasingly satisfying work, or to open new career pathways. Some indicated an interest in higher levels of clinical supervision and the appeal of being able to conduct research. Flowers and Lazaros (2009) studied the motivation of those seeking doctoral degrees in Technology Education and found the most common reasons were eligibility for a new job, personal fulfillment, pay raises, and status associated with a terminal degree. Ph.D. candidates in Mathematics reported personal interest in the subject of mathematics and personal satisfaction as motives for pursuing doctoral degrees (Geraniou, 2009).

A recent in-depth study looked at the motives of women seeking doctoral degrees in a variety of disciplines, concurrently studying the factors of their daily lives that influenced their progress (Onwuwgbuzie, Rosli, Ingram, & Fries, 2014). The authors propose that women face additional challenges as wives, mothers, employees, and academics that affect them more negatively in doctoral pursuit than men because of the multiple and concurrent responsibilities related to managing a home, child care, professional work, time management, and capacity of support structures. Participants cited both intrinsic and extrinsic motivations for seeking doctoral degrees, including personal satisfaction and encouragement from family members.

The Council of Graduate Schools initiated a longitudinal study of doctoral students in order to determine reasons for high attrition rates among doctoral candidates in STEM (Science, Technology, Engineering, and Mathematics) disciplines over a twelve-year period, with an average doctoral degree completion rate of 54% (2004). A study of 5000 graduate students conducted by the National Research Council in 2010 found that the discipline of study accounted for a dramatic difference in both doctoral completion and time to completion. Those doctoral candidates in the sciences had higher doctoral completion rates, possibly attributed to the disciplines themselves because those departments had more structure, attracted students who

flourished in a structured environment, and provided experiential learning activities. These data confirmed similar earlier studies related to doctoral completion as compared in different departments (Bowen &Rudenstine, 1992; Golde, 2005).

The literature is also beginning to address the disparity related to race and ethnicity among doctoral program completers. The Woodrow Wilson National Fellowship Foundation looked at current statistics and provided recommendations to increase the number of minorities in doctoral programs. Currently, while these numbers continue to grow slowly, only about 7% of doctoral completers are African-American while only 11% are Hispanic (Woodrow Wilson National Fellowship Foundation, 2005).

In 2010, Gardner proposed that social experiences play a key role in the completion of doctoral experiences by correlating the amount of support provided by specific departments with doctoral completion rates of students in their disciplines. Recently, Colbert (2013) explored the reasons for persistence of doctoral completers in a qualitative study. Participants identified the importance of their own personal goals on persistence and completion, in addition to needs for "professional and personal growth, career advancement, and job opportunities" (p. 120). Local access to doctoral programs, program structure, and support of families and the external community were also identified as key factors for persistence to completion by those in the study (Colbert, 2013).

The Chronicle of Higher Education proposes that there are far too many doctoral programs, and many of them "mediocre at best," with high attrition rates (Bok, 2013). This article chastises graduate schools for failing to prepare doctoral students with the skills necessary for the "complicated art of teaching." While doctoral graduates may have a breadth of knowledge in their subject matter, knowing a subject well does not necessarily prepare an individual for

teaching or classroom pedagogy. Bok (2013) notes that only one-fourth of today's doctoral

program graduates are securing jobs in research universities. The others are obtaining teaching

positions in institutions where students may be less prepared and less motivated to learn,

indicating a greater need for teaching preparation in doctoral programs.

In spite of these studies, a paucity of information exists regarding the motivation of doctoral

candidates to seek terminal degrees, particularly in the area of qualitative study. This research

seeks to learn the motivation of an even smaller subset, the pursuit of doctoral degrees among

faculty, adjuncts, and administrators employed at community colleges using a qualitative study

format.

Community Colleges

Boggs (2010, p. 2) posits, "American community colleges are much like the nation that

invented them," and describes community colleges as open-door institutions providing education

to all those who choose to enter, as inherent in the mission of the community college. He also

notes the importance of community colleges in meeting the economic and workforce needs of the

regions they serve. Community colleges now provide education for more than half of all

undergraduate students in the United States, and have become the largest segment of higher

education with the most growth (AACC, 2015).

Beginnings of Community Colleges

"The development of community colleges should be placed in the context of the growth of

all higher education in the twentieth century" (Cohen, 2008, p. 6). Community colleges can

trace their history as junior colleges to the early portion of the twentieth century. These junior

colleges were primarily private, two-year colleges, some attached to universities and others

attached to religious colleges; most had entrance requirements.   Beach (2011) proposes that

state-sponsored normal schools were the precursors of junior colleges. Normal schools were

developed with the specific purpose of training young teachers for elementary schools, as the common school movement grew in the United States. Normal schools were called the first "people's college" because they provided unprecedented opportunities for education in the late 19th and early 20th century, particularly for those who would not otherwise been able to attend college (Beach, 2011, p. 4).

Historians credit Joliet Junior College as the first junior college. It was founded in 1901 by William Rainey Harper, then president of the University of Chicago, and J. Stanley Brown, superintendent of the Joliet Township High School. Joliet's initial college classes were combined with high school courses in the beginning, but by 1915, Joliet Junior College had been constructed as a separate college campus facility. Following Joliet, the University of Wisconsin created extension junior colleges in 1904 to assist the general public in becoming educated. Beach (2011) notes, "The junior college was meant to more rationally separate the wheat from the chaff in the middle and upper-middle class 'literate white native born' student population," accounting for over 90% of the college population in the United States during the beginning of the 20th century (p. 11). By 1909, there were 20 junior colleges, but by 1919, the number of junior colleges had greatly proliferated to 170 across the nation (Koos, 1924). Junior college accreditation standards were adopted in 1917 and the American Association of Junior Colleges was formed in 1921 with twenty-five participating junior colleges. The Great Depression led to increased enrollments in junior colleges, as the lack of jobs encouraged people to use their time gaining an education or learning new vocational skills (Tillery & Deegan, 1985). As the junior college concept grew, state junior colleges were opened as public institutions (Cohen, 2008). Cohen (2008) notes that until the 1940s, two-year colleges were identified as junior colleges and defined as "institutions offering two years of instruction of strictly collegiate grade" (p. 4).

Truman Commission Report

Perhaps the most significant contribution to the creation of community colleges was the 1947 establishment of the Truman Commission, which published the report titled "The President's Commission on Higher Education," known as the Truman Commission Report (Quigley & Bailey, 2003). Quigley and Bailey (2003) note that the Truman Commission on Higher Education Report is responsible for naming public two-year colleges as community colleges, along with the inception of the community college movement. They further note the importance of the Truman Commission Report in identifying enormous barriers to higher education which existed previously in a male dominated nation where race, gender, economic, social, and geographic barriers played significant roles in access to higher education. Quigley and Bailey (2003) tout the Truman Commission Report as "radical departure from all that had come before it," because it came at a time when the nation was "male dominated, segregated, anti-Semitic and anti-Catholic, with deep pockets of urban and rural poverty" (Quigley & Bailey, 2003, p. xi). Only 10% of high school graduates at the time attended college. In spite of the social climate during this time, the Truman Commission recommended an end to barriers to higher education based on "race, gender, income, and geographic location," indicating that a majority of Americans were capable of enrolling in college (Quigley & Bailey, 2003, p. xi). This report is credited with "changing the course of higher education in the United States from 'merely being an instrument for producing an intellectual elite' to becoming 'the means by which every citizen, youth, and adult is enabled and encouraged' to pursue higher learning" (President's Commission, 1947).

The Truman Commission Report solidified the purpose of community colleges, and portrayed them as "the keystone to higher education," with access for "all Americans" (Quigley

& Bailey, p. xii).   The primary reason for the creation of the Truman Commission resulted from large numbers of military personnel, both men and women, returning after World War II who sought education under the G.I. Bill. Truman recognized that existing colleges and universities lacked the capacity to handle all of those seeking higher education after the war. Prior to World War II, only 8% of high school graduates went on to college (Quigley & Bailey, 2003). However, academic skills testing of servicemen and women indicated that more than half of those tested upon entry into the Armed Services were clearly qualified for at least two or more years of college.

The remarkable discussion of the Truman Commission report led to the creation of community colleges across the United States; it insightfully outlined the role community colleges should play according to five recommendations. First, the community college was charged with conducting frequent community surveys to determine the educational needs of the area it served. Second, community colleges were envisioned to meet the higher education needs of students who were graduating from high school as well as those adults who might choose to return to higher education after notable absences in time. Third, community colleges were charged with preparing students to lead full and rewarding lives, through the ability to earn a living either through general education programs or through vocational programs. Fourth, community colleges were to meet the needs of students who chose to continue their education at four-year colleges or universities, a group often overlooked in transfer from junior colleges. Finally, community colleges were charged with providing adult education programs for community participation and lifelong learning (Quigley & Bailey, 2003).

Establishing Community Colleges

One of the earliest participants in the community college movement was Dr. Ralph R. Fields who was the product of a two-year junior college and had conducted extensive studies abroad surrounding two-year colleges (Fields, 1962). Dr. Fields had strong opinions regarding the development of community college curricula. He proposed a four-angled design approach to provide the highest level of benefit for students (Quigley & Bailey, 2003). First, he proposed that course designed be aligned with other phases of college life; second, he sought to study the factors affecting the curriculum design; third, he advocated studying the advantages and disadvantages of methods of organizing courses; and, fourth, he urged consideration of teaching practices and the inclusion of learning activities in curricular design. In espousing this plan, Quigley and Bailey (2003) quote Dr. Fields:

> In the planning of courses in community colleges…we must constantly
> remind ourselves that this is a multi-purpose institution. We must bear
> in mind, for instance, that important as preparing students for further
> college work is, it is not the only one which two-year colleges must
> implement. There is also the preparation of many individuals for
> appropriate vocational careers. There is also the general purpose of
> helping individuals to develop personally in relationship to their lives
> as homemakers, citizens, and people. Although certain courses will be
> planned to give major emphasis to one or another of these purposes,
> nonetheless in each course some contribution to all is possible if
> opportunities are seized. (p. 39)

Quigley and Bailey (2003) also note the important role that vocational health careers programs have played in community colleges. They describe a report of the Joint Nursing Committee in 1950 which recommended the establishment of a two-year curriculum for nurses which could be implemented in community colleges. This curriculum would include general courses in college study as well as in nursing. Prior to this time, nurses were educated in hospital nursing diploma programs which did not offer two-year degrees. By 1970, over six hundred community colleges were offering nursing programs. Allied health programs in a variety of disciplines, such as radiologic technology, respiratory therapy, and medical technology, were quick to follow nursing's lead for associate degrees.   The establishment of these programs in community colleges required that community colleges employ both faculty in traditional academic disciplines, as well as faculty in specific nursing and health career programs. Community colleges were also required to meet evolving state and national accreditation standards for these programs.

Cohen (2008) contends that the need for community colleges was prompted by three social forces: a) the need for trained workers in the nation's expanding industries; b) "the lengthened period of adolescence," which provided for longer custodial care and time in school for youth; and c) the "drive for social equality," which favored a move toward education for those other than the wealthy (p. 1).   With the rapid expansion of technology driven by science exploration, schools and colleges were viewed as the appropriate training grounds. Cohen (2008) proposes that community colleges "rose out of the belief that schools were challenged with solving all types of problems, including integration, and community colleges were the perfect place for educating students across all races and socio-economic levels" (p. 2).

Vaughan (2008) argues that the mission of most community colleges is shaped by the following commitments: "serving all segments of society through an open-access admissions policy that offers equal and fair treatment to all students; providing a comprehensive educational program; serving the community as a community-based institution of higher education; teaching and learning; and, fostering lifelong learning" (p. 3). Vaughan describes some of the early community college students of the 1960s as children of veterans of World War II, named *babyboomers*, who realized that they needed a college education to enhance their futures. At the same time, the women's movement and the civil rights movement were offering opportunities to groups who had been underrepresented previously in higher education (Vaughan, 2006). Stump (2013) credits the Vocational Education Act of 1963 and The Higher Education Act of 1965 with the dramatic change in the composition of the community college student body. The Higher Education Act and its later amendments provided financial assistance for students who would never have had the opportunity to attend college before. "Open access to higher education, as practiced by the community college, is a manifestation of the belief that a democracy can thrive, indeed survive, only if people are educated to their fullest potential" (Vaughan, 2006, p. 4).

Community College Faculty

Miller (1997) proposes, "Teachers are at the heart of the community college mission and serve the learning needs of their communities in essential and unique ways" (p. 83). The earliest junior college and community college faculty were high school teachers who sought master's degrees in order to teach at the college level in two-year colleges. An early study by Eells (1931) indicates that during the 1920s, up to 80% of junior college instructors had previously taught in high schools. But, in 1960, Medsker reported that 65% of community college faculty had previously taught at the elementary or high school level. A study by Bushnell (1970)

showed that about 70 % of community college faculty had previously been high school teachers during the decade of the 1960s when many community colleges were founded. Cohen notes that early community colleges were formed to resemble high schools, and early instructors were treated as though they were high school teachers, with curricula established by the state, mandated on-campus hours for faculty, and textbooks selected by committees (Cohen, 2008). In the 1980s, the role of community colleges grew to encompass a large number of vocational education programs, when instructors in trade and industrial programs were hired for their skills and reputation in specific areas of vocational study (Beach, 2011). As community colleges became larger, enrolling liberal arts as well as vocational program students, the roles of faculty and administrators changed and evolved. Some faculty formed collective bargaining units to protect their rights and to solidify their roles in the college environment.

Doctorally Prepared Community College Faculty

Early studies argued against doctoral degrees for community college faculty because doctoral graduates had been prepared as researchers and not as teachers (Eells, 1931: Cohen & Brawer, 1977). During the 1920s, fewer than 4% of junior college faculty held doctoral degrees. At the inception of open, public community colleges in the 1960s, doctoral-level faculty members were rarely employed in early community colleges. Jencks and Riesman (1968) propose reasons in an early paper studying community colleges. First, during initial years, community colleges were closely aligned with the public school systems in their areas. Teachers from public school systems often took jobs in community colleges or worked as adjuncts, particularly in locations where community college classes where initially held in high schools until permanent buildings and campuses were established. Second, community colleges were unable to compete financially with established four-year colleges for doctorally prepared faculty

and administrators. Jencks and Reisman (1968) contend that many employees of early community colleges were recruited from master's degree programs. Some were high school teachers who elected to complete master's degrees in order to teach at the community college level. Others had some doctoral level preparation but failed to complete their doctoral coursework or dissertations.

However, during the 1960s and 1970s, a true class system existed between doctorally prepared candidates and master's prepared candidates for positions in community colleges, which may in some ways continue to exist today. The relatively few doctorally prepared candidates who took positions in community colleges during that time period may have experienced sincere disappointment at not having been hired at a baccalaureate college or university (London, 1978). Several studies reported the need to socialize doctorally prepared candidates into the community college culture, proposing the difficulty of moving from a research-based institution to community colleges where no research or other scholarly activities may have been taking place at that time (Lawrence, Hart, Linder, Saulsberry, Dickmann, & Blackburn, 1989; Tierney & Rhoades, 1994; Van Maanen & Schein, 1979). Cohen and Brawer (1987) went on to propose that doctorally prepared candidates employed in community colleges often experienced isolation and feelings of separation from the research culture where they had been trained.

By the late 1980s, the number of doctoral degree holders among combined community college faculty peaked at 20%, with the highest numbers occurring in liberal arts disciplines (Cohen, 2008). An effort was made to create and provide a doctor of arts degree that would offer well-qualified staff from community colleges an opportunity for doctoral level education, in cooperation with the Council of Graduate Schools and with the Carnegie Commission on Higher

Education (Cohen, 2006). These programs proposed study in a specific academic area, along with pedagogical preparation and a teaching internship. However, Cohen (2008) contends that none of these programs in the late 1960s and 1970s ever developed into a "major source for community college instructors" (p. 88). Vaughan (2008) agrees that the role of the community college faculty member has not changed; faculty members are primarily responsible for teaching. However, he notes that an increasing number of faculty in recent years have sought doctoral degrees. In addition to teaching, faculty members perform many other roles in the college, including curriculum and committee work, advising students, meeting with them during regular office hours, and engagement in student-centered activities often related to service projects or service learning.

While noting that it is impossible to accurately describe the community college professoriate because the numbers and differences are so large, Cohen (2008) asserts that the proportion of male faculty is smaller in community colleges than in universities and higher than in high schools. He contends that most community college faculty hold master's degrees and are less likely to hold terminal degrees than university professors. He proposes, "Their primary responsibility is to teach; they rarely conduct research or scholarly inquiry" (Cohen, p. 84). Vaughan (2008) briefly mentions that some faculty members provide publications in journals, and stay current in their specific disciplines by reading, writing, and attending the meetings of their professional associations (p. 18). Cohen (2008), however, contends that few community college faculty members publish, primarily because there is no time or financial incentive offered by community colleges to faculty for scholarly activities.

Lack of Research Interest in Community College Faculty

Twonbly and Townsend (2008) decry the lack of attention in the literature to community college faculty. They quote the National Center for Postsecondary Improvement (1998, p. 4) by concluding that not much has changed since the original quote. "Community college faculty receive little attention from postsecondary researchers—or worse, are simply dismissed as separate, and by implication, a lesser class of college professors." The authors propose that the number of community college faculty members alone should demand some attention from researchers. Today, nearly half of all college professors teach in community colleges (AACC, 2015). Moreover, community college faculty teach the largest number of first-generation, minority, and disadvantaged college students in the country (Bailey, Jaggers, & Jenkins, 2015).

Lack of interest in community college faculty may result from the fact that little research is done at community colleges, and researchers at four-year colleges often overlook community college faculty in studies. Twombly and Townsend (2008) propose that university researchers often study themselves as a professorate; however, when community college faculty do conduct research, it is much more common for them to study teaching and pedagogy because of their work in teaching institutions. Although gradual change is occurring, the lack of research about community college faculty and administrators may also be related to the ongoing stigma of community colleges that purports them to be somehow lesser or deficient, and therefore perhaps not worthy of study.

Part-Time Community College Faculty

The role of the adjunct or part-time faculty member in colleges and universities has also received attention recently. While many adjuncts are professionals who teach part-time in order to maintain an academic connection to their disciplines, some are also experts in their fields who

have taken retirements from their original careers and are seeking to share their knowledge with students. However, current attention is being given to the growing group of adjuncts who work part-time at more than one community college or university in an attempt to cobble together a living wage. Adjuncts across the country are looking at unionization in order to improve their salary and benefit options offered by their employing institutions. Vaughan (2008) notes the major role that adjuncts play in the education of students in community colleges. Currently, part-time faculty comprise 58% the teaching staff at U. S. community colleges, providing education for more than half (53%) of all community college students (Center for Community College Student Engagement, 2014).   As increasing numbers of community college faculty are leaving for retirement, community colleges are hiring increasing numbers of adjuncts to carry their teaching loads, primarily related to the funding issues caused by lower enrollments, that they are currently experiencing.   The number of adjuncts is also increasing as the need for instructors in the growing distance learning area of instruction continues.

Community College Administrators

Administrators in today's community colleges have multiple responsibilities in managing business and financial aspects of their institutions, as well as providing for the academic needs of a constantly changing student body. The call for transparency in community colleges, related primarily to student academic progress and completion, has increased dramatically over the last decade as the focus on community colleges as leaders in economic and workforce development has dramatically increased. In this environment, administrators must keep the mission of the community college closely integrated with the success of its students and the educational commitment to region it serves. "Administrating a community college has become an increasingly difficult task" (Cohen & Brawer, 1989, p. 113).

Large community colleges now increasingly seek presidents and academic leaders with doctoral degrees (AACC, 2015). Most job advertisements for community presidents, provosts, chief academic officers, and academic deans seek candidates who hold doctoral degrees, while some list "doctorate preferred" for these positions. Upwardly mobile administrators in community colleges realize that obtaining a doctorate is now necessary for vertical movement, different from minimum hiring requirements for faculty and adjuncts. As the need for doctorally prepared administrators has increased, new doctoral leadership programs have arisen to prepare these administrators, with most programs being dedicated to community college leadership and administration. This response has been due in part to the concerns of community college national organizations, such as the American Association of Community Colleges, which began over a decade ago to express concern for the future of community college leadership as a large number of administrative retirements loomed (AACC, 2015). Others identified the graying of community college leadership as a crisis that would affect the nature and viability of community colleges (Romero, 2004; Shults, 2001; Weisman & Vaughan, 2002). The concern of a leadership crisis has placed greater emphasis on ways to prepare future administrative leaders for community colleges, with a greater focus on women and minority leaders (Bagnato, 2005).

At the same time, AACC (2004) focused efforts on providing professional development and opportunities for doctoral programs in higher education that met the leadership competencies the organization had developed for administrative advancement. This framework was developed by community college practitioners in response to the growing understanding that community colleges around the country would soon see a predicted mass exodus of community college presidents and high-level leaders, based upon their increasing age and the number of advanced degrees being awarded in community college administrative leadership programs (McNair,

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2009). The resulting AACC identified competencies which were developed in this manner are: Organizational Strategy, Resource Management, Communication, Collaboration, Community College Advocacy, and Professionalism (AACC, 2005).

Although new higher education doctoral programs were designed to meet a growing need for trained administrators, the efficacy of these programs has been little documented in the literature. A 2006 study explored the value of a higher education doctorate and found this type of doctorate to be adequate preparation for middle-level and high-level community college administrators who sought to advance to higher level positions (Townsend & Wiese, 2006). Nearly half of all study participants found the higher education doctorate useful based upon the theory and practical application provided in the curriculum. However, one quarter of participants found this doctorate to be overly based in theory at the expense of real world application; the final quarter of participants had just begun doctoral programs and did not have enough information to answer appropriately. These differences may be based upon the differences related to their programs at different universities. Participants selected the following courses to be the most valuable in their programs: Budget and Finance in Higher Education, Organization and Governance in Higher Education, Curriculum in Higher Education, Evaluation in Higher Education, and Law in Higher Education (Townsend & Wiese, 2006). The authors concluded that "pursuit of a doctorate in higher education would seem to be a wise career move for aspiring community college administrators" (Townsend & Wiese, 2006, p. 345).

Later, a survey of students in thirty-eight higher education doctoral programs, supported by AACC, provided information about the demographic characteristics of these programs, along with their perceptions of the programs related to value to their career goals (Romano, Townsend, & Mamiseishvili, 2009). The results of this study showed that of 153 student respondents, 63%

were female and 71% were White, Non-Hispanic. All but 2% were citizens of the United States.

Interestingly, almost 50% had taken courses at community colleges as undergraduates. Nearly

half self-identified as first generation college students. They ranged in age from 25-64 years,

with an average age of 42 years. Over 60% were employed in community colleges at the time of

their doctoral studies. Nearly a quarter of participants surprisingly responded that their doctoral

program enrollment was not job related, but rather an attempt to satisfy their own intellectual

interest in further education. Most saw themselves as working as a teacher or administrator in a

community college in ten years after graduation, while only a small portion (13%) thought they

would be working in four-year colleges or universities. While most respondents felt that

administrators in community college should have doctoral degrees, few thought that these

degrees were necessary for faculty members. When asked to select the two most important

competencies for community college presidents, from the six AACC Leadership Competencies,

participants viewed the most important as Communication and Collaboration. Finally, the

authors propose, "If community college leadership programs are to be valid ways to prepare

community college leaders, the programs should research their own effectiveness" (Romano,

Townsend, & Mamiseishvili, 2009).

Later, McNair (2009) compared the value and alignment of California options for doctoral

degrees in community college administration and their preparation for administrative practice,

using the AACC Leadership Competencies as a framework. Along with the doctoral offerings of

public and private universities, California passed legislation allowing the creation of seven

additional sites for California State University to offer doctoral programs in education focused

on community college administration (McNair, 2009). Respondents (n=113) to the study survey

indicated high agreement with the need for inclusion of all the core competencies in doctoral

program study, with the highest need being in Organizational Strategy, Resource Management, and Communication. In fact, 100% of respondents indicated that "the ability to convey ideas clearly in writing is an essential skill" (McNair, 2009, p. 211). With varying levels of agreement for each competency, participants felt that these competencies could all be developed through doctoral program study, although they also highlighted the importance of on-the-job training, mentoring, and professional development.

Lovell, Crittenden, and Stumpf (2003) explored issues related to leadership in rural community colleges, based upon the Doctor of Philosophy Program in Community College Leadership at Mississippi State University. This atypical program, called *The Road Less Traveled,* prepares leaders for the unique challenges of rural community college administrators, primarily serving doctoral candidates in Mississippi, Alabama, Arkansas, Louisiana, and Tennessee. The authors propose that "rural community colleges have the strategic position in rural society necessary to address the problem of rural poverty" and how rural community colleges can play significant roles in effect that poverty has on education, which may inform all segments of community college education (Lovell, Crittenden, & Stumpf, 2003, p. 3).

Stumpf (2013) takes a more philosophical look at the plight of today's community college administrators. He asserts that administrators today "find themselves on an intellectual landscape that is not a smooth, even surface" (p. 566). He contends that community college administrators are positioned on a slippery slope related to an explosion of knowledge in the face of changing demographics and political pressures. Stumpf's literature review of community college history and comments on administrators begs the question of how community college administrators can provide appropriate education during a knowledge and related technology explosion, as students are entering college less and less prepared academically. He proposes,

"Despite the risk, it is the responsibility of community college administrators to reflect upon theory and practice of the past and present and step forward with ideas that help their organizations to develop, grow, and improve" (Stumpf, 2013, p. 573). In this sense, a theory-based doctoral program in higher education, as previously described, would serve to provide a useful background for current administrative decisions.

Keim and Murray (2008) recognized the impending mass retirements of community college leaders and sought to study the characteristics and pathways of community college Chief Academic Officers (CAO) in an attempt to identify trends in preparation of academic leadership. They propose that while those in the position of CAO are most likely to move into positions as college presidents, CAOs are leaving their positions at an even greater rate than college presidents, thus shrinking the qualified pool of candidates significantly. "Because CAOs provide an indispensable bridge between the faculty and the administration, they may have a greater effect on the academic affairs of an institution than even the president (Keim & Murray, 2008). With regard to Chief Academic Officers, Vaughan (1990) contends, "These individuals are at the center of what is ultimately of greatest importance to a community college, teaching and learning (p.19). Keim and Murray (2008) found that the number of CAOs with doctoral degrees was decreasing, with only 70% holding earned doctorates in 2008; of those with doctoral degrees, 66% held Ed.D. degrees while the remainder held Ph.D. degrees in various academic disciplines. The authors note the decline of CAOs with doctoral degrees from 85% in 1985 to 76% in 2000 to only 70% in 2008, following a downward trend which may be related to the availability of qualified candidates able to fill these positions.

Differences Between Community Colleges and Baccalaureate Colleges

Vaughan (2006) proposes that community colleges differ from most other types of institutions of higher education, in the country and in the world, because "rather than turn away people who do not have the pre-requisites for college-level work, the community college offers avenues for students to obtain the necessary pre-requisites" (p. 6). One of the greatest challenges facing community colleges today is the high number of academically underprepared students who seek higher education. Enrollments in community colleges have increased dramatically (American Association of Community College, 2014), while it may also be argued that four-year institutions are accepting more academically underprepared students, as well. Largely, community college enrollments have risen because community colleges are accessible institutions of higher education, particularly for underprepared, non-traditional, low-income, and/or diverse students (Rutschow, Richburg-Hayes, Brock, Orr, Cerna, Cullinan, Gooden, & Martin, 2011).

Student Preparedness

While colleges and universities have the ability to select their students through comprehensive admissions practices, the primary task of remediating the most poorly prepared developmental students has fallen to public, open enrollment community colleges. "Those students with the greatest academic need were more likely to enroll in large, urban community colleges serving high proportions of minority students, particularly Hispanic and economically disadvantaged" (Bailey, Jeong, Cho, 2009, p. 20). Sherer and Grunow (2010) recognize this situation by noting that community colleges reflect the "democratic creed of accepting all students, while fulfilling a critical role in educating the nation's workforce" (p. 2).

Over 60% of all entering community college students are placed into developmental courses (Sherer & Grunow, 2010).   In order to determine college-readiness, community colleges rely on enrollment placement tests to assign students to appropriate developmental or college level courses. Nearly half of all students who begin at community colleges do not achieve the goal of graduation or transfer to a four-year college or university (Provasnik & Planty, 2008). Although economic and personal reasons play a role in lack of completion by developmental students, enrollment in the developmental course sequence is now being identified as the reason that students do not progress appropriately (Bailey, Jeong, & Cho, 2009). With more than half of all college students needing remediation before entering college-level courses in community colleges, it is clear that the curricula offered in community colleges must be different than that offered in four-year schools, which affects the course content and pedagogy of faculty and adjuncts in community colleges.

Other Differences

There are other significant differences between community colleges and four-year colleges. Community colleges tend to attract more first-generation college students, students from low-income backgrounds, minority students, and non-traditionally aged students. Faculty members are teaching fifteen credits of five courses each semester, and others teach even more based upon need, seniority, and the overage system that exists in many community colleges. "The primary activity of almost 90 percent of faculty at community colleges is teaching, with virtually no faculty devoted primarily to research" (Provasnik & Planty, 2008). Some community college faculty are teaching students who were born during four different decades in one class, making it difficult to engage the learning styles and demographic characteristics of this variety of students.

Little information exists in the literature regarding comparisons of doctorally prepared faculty and administrators in community colleges with those who are master's level prepared. However, a more recent dissertation study by Adams (2004) compared the perceptions of community college faculty with doctoral-level and master's-level degrees. Her findings propose that "clearly, all doctorally prepared and master's prepared faculty members considered their primary role as a community college faculty member to be that of a teacher" (p. 114). More interestingly, both doctorally prepared and masters prepared faculty considered their role as "one instrumental in helping students" (Adams, 2004, p.114). This study also noted that doctorally prepared faculty sought to combine teaching with research and scholarship, even though they perceived a lack of administrative support in these activities. Adams (2004) concluded that doctorally prepared participants considered their role to be both as teacher and scholar, while master's prepared participants identified their role as teacher alone.

Another compelling study explored the motivation of community college faculty for basic research, teaching research, and other areas of professional development (Hardre, 2012). This study sought to define the motivational characteristics of community college faculty and the factors that supported or thwarted their engagement in these activities. She and other researchers noted the important role that faculty motivation plays in productivity and retention of faculty, leadership and mentoring programs, and overall institutional success (Hardre, 2012; Latham, 2007; Van Ast, 1999; Wlodkowski, 1999). Hardre (2012) concluded that the majority of community college faculty members are more intrinsically motivated to professional development activities, noting the importance of value and self-efficacy in pursuit of the three types of professional development studied. Yet, little research has been devoted to faculty motivation in community colleges. Murray (1999) reported that institutional policy and climate

were key factors in faculty development and their investment in the college community.

Sanderson reported a crisis in hiring of community college faculty and administrators (2000),

while Murray (2004) argued that many faculty accepted positions in community colleges

unintentionally or by default, therefore lowering their motivation to teach the community college

population and to seek additional professional development. These studies may negatively affect

the overall perception of community college faculty. Nevertheless, Hardre (2012) proposed that

"teaching is at the heart of the community college enterprise and faculty efforts," but little

research has been devoted to the motivation of community college faculty and adjuncts to teach

(p. 541).

Demographics of Faculty and Adjuncts

This study seeks demographic information about participants as descriptors in order to better

understand the individual participants and their positions within the study college. In the

literature, results of demographic characteristics of doctoral candidates are inconclusive related

to gender. Tinto (1993) studied various doctoral candidate characteristics, which he identified as

student attributes, such as gender, race, age, educational experience, and social class. While age

was a significant factor in his study, he found that gender differences were not significant in the

pursuit of doctoral degrees. By contrast, significant gender differences were identified related to

cognition and motivation among middle school students, but not in academic performance

(Wolters & Pintrich, 1998). The authors reported that female students displayed higher levels of

cognitive strategies across subjects, but less self-efficacy modulation. Bridgeman and Lewis

(1998) reported that test anxiety was an issue for female students influencing their self-efficacy,

while Miller, Findley, & McKinley (1990) reported that women have higher levels of intrinsic

motivation and are better able to integrate new information. In a study of graduate students,

Balam (2015) employed the Motivated Strategies for Learning Questionnaire (MSLQ). His results indicate that female graduate students were more intrinsically motivated toward degree completion, and that male graduate students were more extrinsically motivated. In this study, female students also scored higher in metacognitive self-regulation that males, and females scored higher in time management and control of their study environments than males. This study also confirmed the early work (Bridgeman & Lewis, 1998), finding that test anxiety was greater in females than in males. In a comprehensive study of attrition among doctoral candidates, Stiles (2003) reported that male doctoral students were more likely to finish than females. However, Wao and Onwuegbuzie (2011) were unable to confirm significance of gender in their comprehensive study of time-to-doctorate for doctoral students in the field of Education.

With regard to age, results concerning the significance of age among doctoral students differ among studies. Tinto (1993) reported a significant difference regarding the age of doctoral candidates, in that older students were more successful at completing their doctorates. Stiles (2003) determined that older Caucasian students were more likely to complete doctoral degrees than older minority students. Wao and Onwuegbuzie (2011) found that age at admission to a doctoral program was not significant related to time-to-doctorate or attrition in doctoral programs.

Theoretical Framework

Variables that affect the pursuit of doctoral degrees among personnel at community colleges form the basis for this study. The variables studied are related to the motivation of individuals to consider, seek, and complete doctoral degrees as employees of community colleges. While doctoral degrees are increasingly becoming required for administrative positions in community

colleges, the master's prepared faculty member and adjunct meet the current minimum requirements for professors and instructors. This study seeks to learn the characteristics of those seeking or attaining doctoral degrees while employed in community colleges and their motivation toward a terminal degree.

Motivation Theory

There are several different interpretations of the definition of motivation. Motivation is defined as "the state of wanting to perform a specific activity in a given situation" (Schiefele, 2002, p. 197). Definitions of motivation differ based upon their relationship to various disciplines of study. As a psychologist and social scientist, Weiner (1992) views motivation as a concept explaining why individuals think and behave in a specific way. Wlodkowski (2011) notes, "Philosophers and religious thinkers have a similar understanding of motivation but use metaphysical assumptions to explain its dynamics" (p. 1). He further confirms that as biological and neurological explanations for motivation are emerging through advanced science, that "motivation binds thought to action" by a human process that directs energy to goal accomplishment (Wlodkowski, 2011, p. 2). Zull (2002) contends that motivation and learning cannot be separated when studying them from both a psychological and biological view point. While this dissertation in no way claims to chronicle all of the contributors to motivation or causal theory, a variety of psychologists are mentioned here, in relation to the history of these theories as related to this study. Motivation theory was advanced early in the last century by Lindeman (1925) who suggested that the motivation of adults is related to their needs and interest in learning, and Dewey (1938), who proposed that choice, meaning, purpose, and motivation were necessary for students throughout their educational process. Weiner notes that in 1958, Heider "reasoned that goal expectancies in achievement related contexts are determined

by perceived ability and planned effort expenditure, relative to the perceived difficulty of the task" (p. 555).

Maslow's Hierarchy

In the 1940s, Maslow began to explore human needs and their relationship to motivation, culminating in his now famous Hierarchy of Needs (1954), which proposes that individual needs serve as the motivation for human behavior. His original five levels in the hierarchy are: 1). physiologic needs; 2). security needs; 3). social needs; 4). esteem needs; and, 5). self-actualization needs. He contends that lower-level needs, termed deficiency needs such as food, safety, and physiologic needs, must be achieved before higher level needs, such as self-efficacy and self-actualization, could be addressed. Maslow's hierarchy is often portrayed as a pyramid, with the deficiency needs at the bottom of the pyramid and the social and personal esteem needs at the top. Maslow argued that human beings have a desire to reach their highest potential, termed a self-actualization.

Atkinson's Grand Theory

For nearly forty years, Atkinson pursued the "grand theory" of motivation by attempting to "identify the determinants of action and specify their mathematical and/or sequential (temporal) relations" (Weiner, 2010, p. 28). Early in his study of human motivation, Atkinson proposed three principles which were different from those of earlier motivation theorists. These were: motivation is determined by individual differences or motives; incentive (value) is conceptualized as an effect, such as pride in accomplishment; and, incentive or value is related to the expectance of success, such as greater pride is shown in accomplishing more difficult tasks (Weiner, 2010). Atkinson (1964) suggested an achievement motivation theory where

achievement is the product of an individual's motivation coupled with the characteristics of a particular task.

Herzberg's Motivation-Hygiene Theory

At the same time, Herzberg was developing his Motivation-Hygiene Theory which proposed that there were two categories of human needs (1954). He categorized these as hygiene needs (physiological needs and safety) and motivating needs (belonging, esteem, and self-actualization) and hygiene needs (physiological needs and safety). Herzberg's work is similar to Maslow's Hierarchy, but he employed two categories of human needs, rather than the five original categories proposed by Maslow. Herzberg's *hygiene* needs represent Maslow's lower level needs, while his *motivators* closely resemble Maslow's higher level needs. Process theorists propose that the primary motivating force for individuals to reach their goals is their desire to reach that goal.

Alderfer's ERG Theory

While Maslow created a hierarchy of needs, Alderfer (1972) sought to extend Maslow's theory by proposing that three categories of motivation exist: Existence, Relatedness, and Growth (ERG) based on those proposed by Maslow. He contended that Existence is related to Maslow's lower-level needs; Relatedness referred to areas that Maslow terms socialization and interpersonal interaction; and, Growth, represents Maslow's higher-level categories of esteem and self-actualization. Alderfer (1972) contended that, unlike Maslow's hierarchy, needs in each level could be sought and achieved simultaneously. He also argued that needs are different for different individuals and, therefore, the order of needs may be different and not specifically prescribed as Maslow had suggested.

Reward Motivation

In 1968, deCharms proposed that human beings experience motivation through what he identifies as personal causation. He argued that "the key to intrinsic motivation is the desire to be the 'origin' of one's own action rather than a 'pawn' manipulated by external forces" (Deci & Flaste, 1995). Murray (1938) proposed that humans have needs of the mind, intimating that people have the intrinsic need to feel self-determination or a sense of autonomy, much like what deCharms calls personal causation. Murray (1938) contended that individuals achieve success in their goals when they feel that their need to achieve is intrinsic and chosen by them rather than by some extrinsic controlling force. His work brought forward an ongoing discussion of rewards. If someone was paid to do a job, was his or her motivation controlled by an extrinsic motivator of payment? Ryan (1982) proposed that rewards were dependent upon how the individual perceived the reward. If the reward was simply a method of acknowledging the achievement of another, then the reward could be intrinsic without being tied to external control. In this way, the individual could still retain his personal autonomy and take pride in individual achievement without being influenced by external control.

Ryan and Deci's Self-Determination Theory

Later, Deci and Ryan (2000) proposed a comprehensive framework for the Self-Determination Theory (SDT) which explores both human motivations tied to human personality. The authors sought to study both intrinsic and extrinsic motivations by establishing human regulatory styles and processes and the degree to which they are influenced by self-determination. Deci and Flaste (2006) contended, "At the heart of human freedom is the experience of choice" (p. 209). They argued that, "Intrinsic motivation is associated with richer experience, better conceptual understanding, greater creativity, and improved problem-solving,

relative to external controls" (p. 51). They further contended that individuals behave autonomously related to responsibility, and that responsibility is tied to the greater good even if personal satisfaction is attached to good acts. Later, Deci and Ryan (2009) proposed that there are three basic needs of humans, the need for competence, autonomy, and relatedness. They argue that if any of these are thwarted, an individual's psychological health with be adversely affected.

Motivation for Education

Educators have also sought to identify motivation of students in K-12 settings as well as in college and graduate school settings (Assor, Kaplan, Kanat-Maymon & Roth, 2005; Deci, 1971; Deci & Ryan, 2000; Pelletier, Seguin-Levesque, & Legault, 2002; Sheldon & Kreiger, 2007; Tinto, 1993). Ryan and Deci (2000) proposed that humans have a propensity to acquire and assimilate knowledge, which they relate to their curious nature. An important experiment conducted with fifth grade students, indicated to some members in the group that they would be asked their opinions about a specific reading, while the others in the group were told that they would be tested on the material in the same reading (Gronick & Ryan, 1987). Students who were being asked their opinions were more intrinsically motivated; they found the material more interesting and scored better in areas of conceptual understanding that those who thought they would be tested. Baumert and Koller (1998) proposed that by middle school, students have learned to differentiate between their interest and ability in specific subjects, and develop stronger interests and related motivation toward the subjects in which they are skilled. In a study of college students, Andre and Windschitl (2003) found a significant relationship between interest and conceptual understanding related to motivation of students in higher level science courses.

Tinto's Theory

One of the most well-known proposals related to graduate education is Tinto's Theory of Doctoral Persistence, which explores the reasons why some doctoral students persist to graduation while others do not (Tinto, 1993). Three phases of doctoral persistence were identified by Tinto: *transitional,* where doctoral candidates become oriented to their programs, faculty, and courses of study; *leading to candidacy,* where doctoral students gain the skills and knowledge they need to show competency and prepare for research; and, *dissertation,* where doctoral student interaction was confined to their research topics and their individual doctoral committees. Tinto argued that both personal and intellectual reasons account for completion at the doctoral level, including interpersonal relationships with faculty and student peers in doctoral and graduate school departments and communities. Socialization of the graduate student to his or her new faculty, surrounding, and classmates also affects doctoral progress. He also proposed that personal family relationships and collegial work relationships were important external influences on doctoral students' persistence.

Weiner's Attribution Theory

Many of the theorists mentioned above could have been selected as a theoretical framework for this study, and several recent dissertations employ Tinto's framework regarding persistence related to motivation (Ampaw, 2010; Cardona, 2013; Colbert, 2013; Morris, 2007). However, Weiner's Attribution Theory (1985) was used as a theoretical framework for this study because it initially describes attribution as a three stage process: observation of behavior, determination of behavior to be deliberate, and attribution of behavior to internal or external causes. In addition to his recognition of intrinsic and extrinsic motivators, Weiner also identified four attributions of achievement: effort, ability, level of task difficulty, and luck. It is interesting that luck was

included in these attributions; however, the luck of another is often cited when individuals give credit to external forces, as in, "he was lucky to get the easy assignment," or "it is just her luck that she has the better instructor." This formed the basis for Weiner's theory that motivation toward achievement is tied or attributed to specific causations.

Educational Motivation

Weiner studied motivation in a variety of settings, including academic settings, at all levels of education, and proposed that learners can attribute their success or failure to both environmental factors and personal factors. For instance, if a student receives a failing grade on a test, he may attribute his failure to internal or external reasons. If the student attributes failure on the test to his own lack of ability, an internal attribution, Weiner proposes that this student would have a much lower level of motivation on future tests. However, if the student attributes his failure to poor instruction on the part of his teacher, an external reason, his level of motivation may be different on subsequent examinations because he feels that the fault has been attributed to a reason outside of his control. Depending upon his attributional choice, the student may or may not be motivated to achieve in the future.

Weiner's Review of Earlier Theorists

In 2010, Weiner recognized the work of earlier theorists who proposed the distinction between internal or external attributions as motivations for achievement (Collins, Martin, Ashmore, & Ross, 1973; Rotter, 1966). Weiner theorized that among causality, additional dimensionality was also required to appropriately categorize internal and external motivators. He reasoned that among the four causes most dominant in achievement were ability, effort, task difficulty, and luck. "Ability was classified as internal and stable, effort as internal and unstable, task difficulty was thought to be external and stable, and luck was considered external and

unstable" (Weiner, 1998, p. 551). Later, he proposed that there were many "shortcomings" to this original theory and that "ability may be perceived as unstable if learning is possible; effort often is perceived as a stable trait, captured with a continuum of labels from lazy to industrious; and, luck may be thought of as a property of a person, as luck or unlucky (p. 551). Rotter, Chance and Phares (1972) followed with a more one dimension taxonomy which proposed the property of locus of control, where the outcome of a situation is perceived as internal control of the individual. For instance, if a student does poorly on an exam, it is related to internal causes of skills and ability. However, Weiner (1985) countered with the argument that locus and control are two different dimensions. He proposed that locus should be labeled locus of causality rather than locus of control, contending that a student's poor attitude on an exam is related to controllability rather than innate ability.

Causal Dimensions

Weiner also explored achievement related to attributions in academics (1985). Weiner's Attribution Theory recognized that intrinsic and extrinsic factors are believed to affect the ability and persistence of students in doctoral degree programs, and that they have control in their doctoral completion (1985). His framework particularly relates to those individuals who seek a terminal degree even though it is not required for their current employment because those individuals may have greater intrinsic motivation to complete a doctoral program, and perhaps better causal attributions may enable them to be successful. Weiner further proposed that there are three dimensions that affect academic motivation, related to the emotional responses and outcomes. These causal dimensions are:

1. *locus*, related to the location of a cause, on a continuum between two poles (internal vs. external;

2. *stability,* related to the duration of the cause regarding whether they change over time;

3. *controllability*, related to the control or lack of control one has over a given situation.

Weiner posited that a student who did well in a doctoral program might attribute his success to a controllable dimension, such as the effort he put into study and preparation, while a student who did poorly on an examination might attribute his failure to an uncontrollable cause, such as his own lack of ability (Weiner, 1985).

Weiner's original theory proposes that attributions are made in four areas: effort, ability, level of task difficulty, and luck. Related to achievement, Weiner indicates that the effort that an individual puts into a task, the ability of the individual to complete the task, the difficulty of the task itself, and the amount of credence an individual places on his or her luck will effect motivation toward achievement. Weiner further contends that the characteristics of the attribution are more important that the attributions themselves in providing future motivation. Weiner named these characteristics as dimensions of causality, which include locus, stability, and controllability, as described in Table 1, below.

Table 1

Dimensions of Academic Motivation Regarding Weiner's Attribution Theory

Causal Dimensions	Variables Portrayed by Participants
Locus	A continuum of attributions from internal to external.
Internal	Intrinsic motivation related to the personal desire to achieve a doctoral degree, personal tenacity in aspiring to complete the degree, personal interest in education and lifelong learning, and self-satisfaction or perceived self-satisfaction in completing the degree along with valuing the act of completion itself.
External	Extrinsic motivation related to encouragement of family, friends, and colleagues; perceived benefits of career advancement; recognition as a doctoral completer; and, the opportunity to improve the credibility of the community college and the community college system through the benefits of a broader education and degree attainment.

Stability	Duration of a cause and its attributions.
Stable	Strong interest in completion and graduation, self-reliance, envisioning graduation, and a renewed or renewable sense of of self-achievement related to degree attainment.
Unstable	Concern for doctoral program length and difficulty, and concern for personal academic abilities.
Controllability	Personal control or lack of control over situations affecting completion.
Control	Level of control over degree completion through personal effort and tenacity, and ability to put forth the effort and time required for degree completion.
Lack of Control	Personal circumstances, such as concern over job stability or family circumstances, such as illness, perceived as barriers to completion.

Weiner (1985) proposes that "the structure of thinking is related to the dynamics of action" and that "expectancy and affect are presumed to guide motivated behavior (p. 548). His theory is tied to achievement, in that when a learner achieves success, he seeks to understand the cause for success in the achievement through the attribution process; attribution to achievement serves as a motivator in future learning situations (Weiner, 2000).

By 2000, Weiner had expanded his theory to highlight both intrapersonal and interpersonal theories of motivation. He proposes that attributions play a key role in the emotional response to motivation, further contending that attribution theory had by that time been reviewed for over three decades and had stood the test of empirical challenges and survived as a "dominant concept in motivation" (p. 1). Weiner defines intrapersonal theory of motivation as related to self-directed thoughts and feelings which, when positive, suggest future success. If a doctoral student is successful in competency exams, and is receiving excellent comments on assignments early in his doctoral program, then he may experience feelings of pride, accomplishment, and esteem which bode well for his academic success in the future. Conversely, Weiner's definition of an

intrapersonal theory of motivation relates to how others view the individual. So, if a doctoral

student does poorly on competency exams, the thoughts about how he is perceived by others may

influence his future performance negatively. If he feels others view him as incompetent,

unskilled, or unsuitable for a doctoral program, it may lead to poor academic success in the

future.

Weiner ties his original theories to those of intrapersonal, or intrinsic motivation, and

interpersonal theory, or extrinsic motivation, noting that a behavioral reaction results at the end

of the motivational process. He proposes that causal beliefs play a key role in motivation, which

he has identified as locus. "Locus influences feelings of pride in accomplishment and self-

esteem… expectancy of success, along with emotions such as pride, together determine

subsequent behavior" (p. 5). Table 2 below defines Weiner's causalities.

Table 2

Weiner's Causalities

Causality	Definition	Intrinsic Characteristics	Extrinsic Characteristics
Locus	Location of a cause which is either inside or outside of the actor	Ability OR Effort	Ease of task OR Help from others
Stability	Duration of a cause	Constant, such as academic ability	Unstable, such as chance
Controllability	Some causes are subject to volition alteration; some cannot be changed	Changeable, such as academic performance	Unchangeable, such as luck

Emotions Related to Motivation

A key component to attribution theory was Weiner's addition of the concept of emotion and its effect on motivation (1985).   Weiner (1985) asserted that "cognitions of increasing complexity enter into the emotional process to further refine and differentiate the experience," proposing a primitive emotional reaction to an event that is either positive or negative (p. 569). He contended that responses such as happy, related to success, and sad, related to failure, are *outcome dependent-attribution independent*, which are determined purely by success of failure of an attempt unrelated to the cause of an outcome. Once there is time for appraisal of outcomes, a different set of emotions emerges, attempting to seek causes for the outcome, which were termed *attribution dependent*. A doctoral student may be initially happy to learn he passed his candidacy examination, but may soon feel surprised or lucky that he passed or pleased that he spent so much time preparing for the exam. In summary, Weiner's Attribution Theory contends that the immediate reaction to an outcome is based upon an initial emotional reaction, followed by the search for a causal explanation or attribution. Causes are located in what Weiner termed "dimensional space," and that the locus of causes exerts an influence on an individual's self-esteem and pride, which he contended were purely internal and that "internal ascriptions elicit greater self-esteem for success" (p. 566). Causal dimensions are related to both expectancy and the value of goal attainment. "Expectancy and affect, in turn, are presumed to guide motivated behavior. This theory, therefore, relates the structure of thinking to the dynamics of feeling and action" (Weiner, 1985, p. 548).

Adult and Lifelong Learning

The concept of adult learning may also inform the study of motivation of faculty, adjuncts, and administrators toward doctoral degrees. The Andragogy Model was first described by

Malcolm Knowles (1973). In this model, Knowles proposes five assumptions related to the adult learner: a) adult learners have an independent self-concept that allows them to direct their own learning; b) adult learners have an accumulated pool of life experiences that provide a rich resource for learning; c) adult learning needs are closely related to changing social roles; d) adult learning is problem-centered and focused on immediate application of knowledge; and e) adult learning is motivated more by internal rather an external factors (Merriam, 2001). Knowles' model further asserts that adult learners understand the importance of learning, relate the topic to their own experiences, and have overcome their own inhibitions about learning. Merriam (2001) notes that Knowles' main focus in the development and implementation of andragogy, along with the importance of a learner-centered curriculum, is the concept of the self-directed learning of the adult student. In acknowledging Knowles' assumptions regarding adult learners, Wlodkowski (2008) asserts that "cultural conventions account for the most widely accepted generalizations in adult education: adults are highly pragmatic learners" (p. 97). He proposes that most adults return to adult education in order to improve their job skills and job related knowledge, which is confirmed by other authors (Aslanian, 2001; Mott, 2006; Schied, 2006). Wlodkowski (2008) contends, "Adults by social definition, economic need, and institutional expectation are responsible people who seek to enhance their lives through learning that develops their competence" (p. 97-98). He proposes that the usefulness of education related to increased employment opportunities may be even greater than the motivation of adults to gain greater intellectual knowledge through academic endeavors. Kaplam-Leirson (2001) argues that adults are living longer and are physically capable of learning well into their seventies and perhaps their eighties.

While lifelong learning certainly encompasses the concept of adult learning, it appears to have a definition that is rooted in the journey of the individual to improve his knowledge and skills in adulthood. "Lifelong learning…is the lifelong, lifewide, voluntary, and self-motivated pursuit of knowledge for either personal or professional reasons" (Coskun & Demirel, 2010, p. 2343). These authors explain that learning is not relegated to K-12 classroom learning, but that it occurs throughout life in a variety of scenarios and situations. Lifelong learning is "deliberate, and should occur throughout a person's lifetime" (Coskum & Demirel, 2010, p. 2343). Lifelong learners are active in their own learning, plan for learning, and are able to assess their own knowledge and learning to determine what they need or want to know (Knapper & Cropley, 2000). Sheppard (2002) proposes that a shift in the perception of adult learning has occurred since World War II, with the influx of adults to colleges after passage of the GI Bill, resulting in changing views as to who could learn and what was the appropriate time for learning. This change has come to be called lifelong learning, implying that most adults are self-directed learners who are motivated to learn to advance in their careers or to achieve personal goals for advanced learning.

Adult and lifelong learning are key concepts regarding doctoral education. All doctoral candidates, with the few exceptions of child prodigies, are adults. While some doctoral candidates have moved from high school to college to graduate school and a doctoral degree, most are now working adults who combined doctoral programs with jobs, families, and other career activities. Most would consider themselves lifelong learners as they have identified doctoral education as an option for continued learning, and they have sought out programs that meet their needs. Doctoral candidates, who begin their programs later in life, have certainly made conscious choices to continue their education as lifelong learners.

Summary

This chapter provides a review of the literature relative to this study. The history of the doctorate was reviewed, along with the history of community colleges. The pursuit of the doctorate was also reviewed, along with information on community college faculty, adjuncts, and administrators. Weiner's Attribution Theory was identified as the theoretical framework for this study, and was reviewed and placed in the literature among other motivation theorists. Finally, this chapter provided an introduction to adult learning and its relationship to the concept of lifelong learning.

In Chapter 3, the methodology for this study is discussed. This chapter includes the study design, participants, and the basis for the interview protocol. It also addresses how data are to be collected, and plans for data analysis based on emerging themes. Further discussion of Weiner's Attribution Theory is provided in the context of this study, as attributions play a significant role in individual motivation.

CHAPTER 3

METHODOLOGY

Creswell proposes, "Researchers search for essentials, invariant structure (or essence) or the central underlying meaning of the experience and emphasize the intentionality of consciousness where experiences contain both the outward appearance and inward consciousness based on memory, image, or meaning" (p. 52). Phenomenology allows the study of an experience or phenomenon by individuals who have lived a shared experience, and are able to describe the essence of this experience. Patton described phenomenology as a study of the experience of an individual or individuals who have shared an experience, and how and what they have experienced (1990). In order to learn the essence of this shared experience, Creswell (2013) proposes that a description of the experience must be obtained from those who have shared a similar human experience.

The Greek "phainomenon" is the word from which the current term phenomenology is considered to be derived, meaning "appearance." Early phenomenological studies were attributed to the writings of German mathematician Husserl, and closely tied to philosophers Heideger and Sarte (Mastin, 2008). Husserl first focused on mathematical concepts and later studied the essence of numbers in developing phenomenology, then publishing the seminal work, titled "Logical Investigations" in 1901. The "descriptive psychology" identified by Husserl has now come to be titled "realistic phenomenology," focused on the essence of the experience or shared experience. Nearly a century later Moustakas, in 1994, proposed that the key to phenomenology is the description of the shared experience, and not necessarily the explanations or analyzes (Creswell, 2013). Patton (1990, p. 71) confirms the definition of a phenomenological study as "one that focuses on descriptions of what people experience and how it is that they experience what they experience."

Qualitative research has its roots in social science inquiry. Over the last century, this type of research has extended into other disciples, including education (Denizen & Lincoln, 1994). Hatch (2002) proposes that all qualitative research has certain characteristics of commonality, in that it; occurs in *natural settings* and involves the lived experiences of actual persons; is based on *participant perspectives* of the world or elements of the study; employs the *researcher as the data gathering instrument* through field notes and/or interview transcriptions; relates to *first-hand engagement*, at the site or location of the study; seeks *centrality of meaning,* through the interpretive process; appreciates *wholeness and complexity*, in that subjects and settings are unique requiring complex reporting; provides for *subjectivity*, by observing outer expressions of inner states of subjects; recognizes that *emergent design* is possible, led by emerging information which may require changes to the study; offers *inductive data analysis*, resulting from identification of resulting patterns; and, understands the importance or *reflexivity* in research, through constant review and reflection of these data and emerging patterns. Qualitative research begins with an assumption that is the basis for study of social or human problems, using "theoretical frameworks that inform the research" (Creswell, 2013, p. 44).

Creswell (2013) credits the work of Denzin and Lincoln (2000) with elements of his definition of qualitative research, but contends that his own process places greater emphasis on the design of research and methods of inquiry (p. 44). Creswell (2013) states:

> Qualitative research begins with assumptions and the use of interpretive/
> theoretical frameworks that inform the study of research problems addressing
> the meaning that individuals or groups ascribe to a social or human problem.
> To study this problem, qualitative researchers use an emerging qualitative
> approach to inquiry, the collection of data in a natural setting sensitive to the

people and places under study, and data analysis that is both inductive and deductive and establishes patterns or themes. The final written report or presentation includes the voices of participants, the reflexivity of the researcher, a complete description or interpretation of the problem, and its contribution to the literature or a call for change. (p. 44)

Creswell proposes that the common characteristics of qualitative research include a *natural setting*, implying data are collected at the site or location of the problem or issue; *researcher as the key instrument,* referring the researcher having primary responsibility for the collection of data and creation of questions for participants; *multiple methods,* meaning that qualitative researchers often gather information from a variety of sources and review data to make sense of it; *complex reasoning through inductive and deductive logic,* inferring that qualitative researchers identify "patterns, categories, and themes from the bottom up" and constantly checking those themes again the raw data; *participant meanings,* referring to the meanings provided by the participants and not those held by the researcher or as described in the literature; *emergent design,* inferring that the original design of the research may change as data collection takes place, allowing for altering of data collection during the research; *reflexivity,* meaning that a researcher positions himself within the study, disclosing his background and how it may in some way inform the study; and, *holistic account,* referring to the reporting and identifying of multiple perspectives and factors involved in the research problem (Creswell, 2013, p. 45, 47).

Creswell further asserts that data analysis for phenomenology should consist of collecting information from participants in the form of individual interviews and "analyzing data for specific statements, meaning units, textural and structural descriptions, and description of 'the essence' of the experience" (p. 105). For this study, community college faculty, adjuncts, and

administrators shared their experiences related to completion, enrollment in, or intention to enroll in doctoral programs. This study employed a qualitative method of analysis for phenomenological study based upon interviews with participants. A limited amount of demographic data was collected at the beginning of each interview in order to characterize the participants in the study.

Location of Study

The site of this study is a community college in Pennsylvania. This community college is considered an extra-large community college based on enrollment guidelines established by the American Association of Community Colleges. With 150 programs of study, more than 30,000 credit students and 28,000 non-credit students attend the college annually This community college has four campuses and an additional four educational centers in its home county and in a neighboring county. The college offers certificate programs, associate's degrees, and credits transferrable to four year institutions. Located in a large urban area, the region is well-served by a concentration of higher education institutions, including private and public colleges and universities.

Currently, the study community college employs 247 full-time faculty members, and 1,100 adjuncts faculty members. While the number of adjuncts at the college is growing, about 25% of these adjuncts are employed as clinical instructors in the college's health career programs, including Nursing and twenty-five Allied Health programs. Of these full-time faculty members, 20.2 % hold doctoral degrees in a variety of disciplines, much greater than national statistics indicating that only 13% of community college faculty nationwide currently hold doctoral degrees (AACC, 2015). Faculty employed at the study community college have a variety of doctoral degrees, including Ph.D. degrees, Ed.D. degrees, D.Ed. degrees, and Doctor of Practice degrees in healthcare fields. Among the highest level college administrators, defined as the

president and those who report directly to his position, 73% hold doctoral or law degrees. Among second level administrators, deans of academic affairs and deans of student development, 54% hold doctoral degrees.

Method

Although this community college does not have a traditional Institutional Review Board, it does have a Research Approval Process, requiring prospective researchers to complete an overview of the study for approval by a committee comprised of members of the President's Cabinet. The researcher received approval from this committee to conduct research at the college (Appendix A), including the approval of the email that was sent through the college's email system to the list serve categories of "Faculty," which includes both full- and part-time faculty at the college, and "Administrators," which includes a large number of administrators and directors within the college's reporting structure. A copy of this email is shown in Appendix B. The email requested responses from those faculty, adjuncts, and administrators who were considering entering a doctoral degree program, those who were actively registered in a doctoral degree program, and those who had completed a doctoral degree program in the last five years. The researcher received 76 responses. Of those responses, about two-thirds actually met the criteria when contacted regarding the research. From those respondents, seventeen were randomly selected for interviews, at least five from each category. Respondents were contacted by email and interview times were scheduled for the semi-structured interviews which were conducted by phone at the convenience of the respondents over a six week period.

Interviews

The same interview questions were posed to each participant, and the tense of each question was tailored to the education progression of the participants, whether they were considering, enrolled in, or had completed a doctoral program. Questions to those who had completed doctoral degrees were posed in the past tense. Questions to those currently in doctoral programs were posed in the present tense, while those to participants who are currently considering entering a doctoral program were posed in the future tense.

"The idea of qualitative inquiry as a reflective process underscores the strengths of the qualitative approach" (Agee, 2008, p. 431). Hatch notes that while interviewing as a qualitative technique is often combined with observation or other strategies, "it can also be the primary source of data collection" (2002, p. 23). For this study, the researcher used the interview technique as part of a phenomenological exploration of motivation toward doctoral aspiration and completion. The steps in this study are based upon Creswell's Interview Steps (2013), which are modified in sequence from his original plan, as shown in Table 3.

Table 3

Creswell's Interview Steps

Step number	Key characteristics
1	Create or identify questions for interviews that are open-ended and focus on the research questions.
2	Pilot or adapt the interview questions.
3	Identify participants who are best able to answer the questions.
4	Determine type of interview and its practicality.
5	Use adequate recording procedures.
6	Define and use an interview protocol.

7	Determine the location of interviews.
8	Before the interview, obtain consent from the participant.
9	Use good interview procedures.

Identifying Research Questions

A series of interview questions was designed to elicit information from each participant about the shared experience of community college personnel considering doctoral programs, those currently matriculating in doctoral programs, and recent graduates of doctoral programs. The questions were based on the research questions with associated guiding questions in order to elicit information from participants. Demographic questions requested information about the participant's age, gender, educational background (degrees achieved), years since acquisition of last degree, discipline areas of degrees, years teaching or working at the community college level, and years teaching or working at the study community college. Interview questions related to pursuit of a doctoral degree were related to individual motivation, future goals, and selection of a doctoral program. These interview questions were created with regard to a theoretical framework, Weiner's Attribution Theory. These questions are found in the Interview Protocol, Appendix C.

Piloting or Adapting the Interview Questions

A review of the literature and existing dissertations resulted in several sets of questions that had been previously posed to doctoral candidates regarding purposes or motivations toward doctoral degrees. The researcher sought and gained written permission to use and adapt previously published questions for use in this study. These questions were piloted by the original authors as described below. Questions were selected or adapted for the community college

location to elicit information from each participant about the shared experience of community college personnel considering doctoral programs, those currently matriculating in doctoral programs, and recent graduates of doctoral programs. Demographic questions were selected to learn if differences in age and experience informed responses of participants. Interview questions were adapted from Wong (2014) and Colbert (2013) with written permission. The interview questions were modified slightly, with permission, to focus on the community college experience. Interview questions and guiding questions are displayed in Appendix C.

Identifying Participants for Interview

Based upon the guidelines articulated above, an email was sent to specific email list serves of administrators and faculty at the college through the general email system, with prior approval. The email was sent to "Administrators" and "Faculty," noting that current adjuncts are included in the "Faculty" list-serve. Participants self-identified by responding to the email. From those responses, the researcher contacted participants by email and by phone to ensure that they met the criteria for the study regarding doctoral progression. Of those who met the criteria of currently enrolled in a doctoral program, recent graduates of doctoral programs, and those considering doctoral programs, at least five from each category were randomly selected. Interviews were scheduled with those qualified participants who were able to provide the time to be interviewed by phone.

Determining the Type of Interview

The researcher selected the one-on-one, semi-structured type of interview for this research. Interviews were conducted by phone at times convenient to the participants over a six week period. Interviews were scheduled for a period of 60 minutes per interview and no interview exceeded that time frame. Confirmations of interview appointments were made by email and

confirmed by phone on the day of each interview. Demographic questions were first asked of

the participants, then followed the qualitative questions and guiding questions, as shown in

Appendix C. Interviews were recorded using audio-taping with the consent of participants. This

type of interview was selected for practicality in obtaining data from participants at the study

community college who are located at eight sites throughout a large county with an urban center.

Using Adequate Recording Procedures

At the beginning of each interview, participants were welcomed to the interview and

provided with additional information about the study, the value of their participation, and a

guarantee of anonymity and confidentiality of the information provided. A request was then

made by the researcher to tape-record each interview for ease of transcription; the researcher

reiterated that no information would connect the name of the participant to the information which

the participant provided. All of the participants agreed to have their interview conversations tape

recorded, prior to the beginning of taping. The researcher employed a cassette recorder with

microphone to optimize sound quality for interview transcription at the conclusion of the

interviews. To ensure capture of data, hand-written notes were also taken during the interviews

by the researcher.

Defining the Interview Protocol

The interview protocol was determined based upon the research questions and the ability of

the participants to respond, from information related to their personal experience in a doctoral

program or anticipation of entering a doctoral program. Demographic questions provided initial

information about each participant, along with open-ended questions. The entire interview

protocol is found in Appendix C.

Time and Location of Interviews

As previously explained, the times of the phone interviews were predetermined according to the schedules and convenience of the participants. Interview times were confirmed prior to the interview start times. Most interviews were done over lunch time or at the end of the work day so that the interviews would not interfere with the work time of participants.

Obtaining Consent from the Participant

The researcher informed the participant of the purpose of the interviews, the length of time required (up to one hour), and the intension for using the results of the researcher as part of her dissertation process. Each participant was asked and complied by signing the "Informed Consent Form" prior to any information from the interview being used in the research (Appendix D). This consent form describes the interview process, demographic questions, and research questions. It also provided for the participant to participate as a volunteer for the study, and guaranteed complete confidentiality through the use of a pseudonym attached to any information provided in the interview, including in the dissertation or future publications. The expected benefits of the study were also explained to participant. Although few questions resulted, the researcher was prepared to respond to any questions that participants asked concerning collection of data and confidentiality of all information obtained.

Using Good Interview Procedures

The researcher used traditionally established interview procedures, outlined by Creswell (2013). She confined the interview to previously designated questions. The researcher also explained the level of confidentiality guaranteed to each participant, and indicated that pseudonyms were to be employed in the dissertation or any other publications.

Data Analysis

Hatch notes, "Data analysis is a systematic search of meaning…a way to process qualitative data (Hatch, 2002, p. 148). Merriam (2009) contends that data analysis is a process that explains data by consolidating, reducing, and providing for interpretation of the information that was collected. Hatch (2002) also explains that "important information is in the data, and by systematically asking the right questions of the data, that information can be revealed" (p. 148). Creswell (2013) proposes specific guidance for data analysis of a phenomenological study, based on techniques advanced by Moustakas (1994). This type of analysis was employed in this study, and calls for the following:

1. The researcher should consider his or her personal experiences with the phenomenon to be studied and to recognize and set aside these personal beliefs in order to focus on the information provided by participants.

2. The researcher then identifies significant statements from the interviews and transcriptions, listing the specific statements in a process that Moustakas (1994) termed *horizontalization*, where each statement has equal worth.

3. The researcher then looks at significant statements and groups them into "meaning units" or themes.

4. The researcher studies the themes and writes a description of what was experienced by the participants, called a "textual description" of the shared experience, and includes verbatim examples from the transcriptions.

5. Next, the researcher writes a description of how the experiences occurred, called a "structural description," reflecting on the setting and context of the phenomenon.

6. Finally, the researcher completes a written description of the phenomenon, using both the

textural and structural descriptions, to describe the essence of the phenomenological

experience (Creswell, 2013, p. 193-194).

Initial Procedures and Coding

A profile was created of each participant based upon information gathered in the interview

process. This information is presented in the form of a table (Table 3). Interview data were

collected using audio tape recordings and from the researcher's hand-written notes. Audio tapes

were transcribed verbatim by the researcher for use in analysis and coding.

The information was coded using strategies outlined by Saldano (2012) in order to identify

categories and thematic elements. Hatch (2002) notes, "Data analysis is a systematic search of

meaning … a way to process qualitative data" (p. 148). Coding was a critical part of the initial

analysis. Saldano (2012) defines a *code*, as used in qualitative inquiry, as "a word or short

phrase that symbolically assigns a summative, salient, essence-capturing, and/or evocative

attribute for a portion of language-based or visual data" (p. 3). Codes developed from the data

were then developed into categories, and categories were developed into themes. These data

were continuously reviewed using reflexivity practices into to gain as much information as

possible. An audit trail of contact and other information on participants was compiled and

continually updated throughout the study in order to maintain a chain of evidence and

information.

Thematic Analysis

As noted, this study employed a process that provided for the emergence of patterns and

themes from the data without established categories. Those themes that resulted came from the

data and not from an established framework. Thematic analysis was based upon the

recommendations of Creswell, who defined themes in qualitative research as categories or

"broad units of information that consist of several codes aggregated to form a common idea" or theme (2013, p. 186). He suggests that themes should be condensed into a small manageable group that can be addressed in the final narrative. The researcher created a list of statements identified from the participant transcripts and began to look at patterns of responses by identifying themes as units of meaning.

Weiner's Theory as a Framework

As previously noted, Weiner's Attribution Theory of Motivation (1985, 1989, 2000) is employed as a theoretical framework for this study. However, outcomes were based upon emerging themes, rather than *a priori* constructs. Although no *a priori* categories were created before the analysis, final emerging themes were compared to the basic premises of Weiner's theory. This theory proposes that opposing motivators, over which the individual has a continuum of control, provide for motivational activity or lack of it. In this theory, internal factors are compared to external factors to measure influence. Stable and unstable conditions are compared, along with controllable and uncontrollable situations. These factors will be used to align with responses emerging from participant interviews as part of the qualitative process. The researcher acknowledged the importance of reflexivity in continuous review of the data.

Summary

This chapter provides the methodology used in this qualitative study. As a phenomenology, this study seeks to identify themes associated with the shared experiences of doctoral students and future doctoral students who are employed in a community college. Motivation toward a doctoral degree is specifically studied, along with issues surrounding employment in a community college. An explanation of interview techniques, based on Creswell (2013), are employed, along with a description of how methods for thematic analysis to research questions, and their corresponding guiding questions. Data are presented in Chapter 4.

CHAPTER 4

PRESENTATION OF DATA

This study was conducted in order to understand the motivation of community college personnel (administrators, faculty, and adjuncts) who sought doctoral degrees, obtained doctoral degrees within the past five years, or seriously considered obtaining doctoral degrees while employed at the community college. Following are the primary research questions of this study:

1. What are the demographic characteristics of community college faculty, adjuncts, and administrators who choose to pursue doctoral degrees?

2. What motivational factors have influenced community college faculty, adjuncts, and administrators to pursue doctoral degrees?

3. How do these participants view their doctoral attainment relative to student and community college success?

Guiding questions under each research question were employed in order to elicit additional information on each topic from participants. Hatch (2002) proposes, "Data analysis is a systematic search for meaning. It is a way to process qualitative data so that what has been learned can be communicated to others" (p. 148). He further notes that researchers are able to organize and "interrogate" data, identify themes and relationships, compare and evaluate results through finding patterns. The concept of "interrogating" the data provides an interesting construct in that the researcher is able to question the data, through organization, categorization, and evaluation, with the anticipation and expectation of finding responses in the data to answer or clarify the proposed research questions. Hatch (2002) contends that different approaches to the research may lead to a variety of analysis strategies, but that the data holds important information if only the correct questions are asked of it. Creswell contends (2013) that

phenomenological research should be assessed in specific areas in order to ensure research quality. These are:

1. The researcher understands and can convey the philosophical tenets of phenomenology.

2. The researcher has identified a clear "phenomenon" to study.

3. The researcher uses accepted methods of data analysis, such as those of Moustakas (1994) or van Manen (1990).

4. The researcher captures the overall essence of the shared experience, including a description of the experience and the context in which it occurred.

5. The researcher employs reflexivity throughout the study (Creswell, 2013, p. 260).

In reviewing the work of Moustakas (1994), his focus is not only on the phenomenon but also on the link between the phenomenon and the person who has this experience. Moustakas proposes that data analysis begins with the individual who shared in the experience and that individual's description of the experience. He focuses on obtaining first source data and, by methods of reduction, identified emerging themes from first source data which was then compared to the data provided by other participants in the phenomenon. Moustakas further proposes the use of audit trails and member checking for accurate representation of the data collected. He also suggests the use of pseudonyms to support the confidentiality of all participants. Moustakas (1994) argues the importance of *epoche*, defined as an attempt to set aside the prejudgments or biases of the researcher through a process titled bracketing, and the use of systematic analysis procedures in order to provide the most effective qualitative research.

Van Manen (2007) described phenomenology as "a practice of sober reflection on the lived experience of human existence" (p.11). His earlier work (1990) describes qualitative data analysis as "phenomenological reflection" (p. 77). Van Manen sought to identify the essential

meaning of a phenomenon from a wide variety of sources. The theory of his proposed

qualitative data analysis consisted of defining focus, simplifying ideas, and explaining the

structure of the phenomenon of the shared, lived experience. His process of data analysis relied

on reading and rereading all of the text and examining statements or groups of words used by

different participants. Van Manen based his data analysis on four guidelines of reflection: how

space was felt or interpreted by the participant, physical presence of the participant in the

phenomenon, time, and relationships with others (Van Manen, 1990; Creswell, 2013). For this

study, Creswell's methods of data analysis were employed, based on his attributions to

Moustakas (1994) and Van Manen (1990), and with modifications to the Stevick-Colaizzi-Keen

method of inquiry and analysis (Creswell, 2013). His approach lists the following steps:

1. The researcher provides a review of her own experience with the study phenomenon, in
   an attempt to set aside personal experiences as much as possible.

2. Use *horizontalization* techniques to develop a list of significant statements, including
   treating each statement as of equal value with other statements provided in interviews.

3. Take significant statements and group them as *meaning units.*

4. Write textural descriptions of what each participant experienced, including verbatim
    examples.

5. Describe how the experience happened through emerging themes.

6. Finally, describe the essence of the experience in writing (Creswell, 2013, pp. 193-194).

For this study, the emerging themes will be compared to Weiner's Theory of Attribution to

determine if intersections occurred with this theory.

Personal Experience of the Researcher

In an attempt to set aside the personal experience of the researcher in this phenomenon, a profile of the researcher is provided. The researcher has worked in the community college where the study takes place for the last ten years, previously working as a medical researcher with an educational background in the biological sciences. The researcher came to be employed at the community college at the Center for Health Careers; approximately 25% of all full-time students in the college are enrolled in Nursing or the twenty-five Allied Health programs offered by the college. After working in the academic environment, the researcher chose to seek a doctorate in education to increase her knowledge of curriculum and instruction, as well as in administration of educational programs. The researcher's administrator provided encouragement for the researcher to enroll in a doctoral program. For the last two years, she has been employed as the Associate Dean of Academic Affairs at the college and is completing her doctorate. In addition, she has been employed by a local baccalaureate college for fourteen years as an adjunct professor. The community college provides tuition reimbursement for a portion of the researcher's doctoral program expenses, offering significant support for program completion.

Although the multiple activities of working, teaching, and attending a doctoral program have been difficult in terms of time commitment, it has been a very worthwhile experience. The researcher is enrolled in a cohort program, through which she has developed strong relationships with members of her cohort. Although the coursework for the cohort has been completed, several members continue to meet and remain in contact as they work on through the dissertation process.

Demographic Characteristics of Participants

This chapter provides data obtained from individual interviews with participants.

Demographic data of participants are included in Table 4, illustrating a representation of responses to the first research question, regarding the characteristics of study participants. The guiding questions requested information from each participant on their age, educational background, current enrollment status regarding a doctoral degree program, years since completion of the last previous degree, area of discipline, years teaching or serving as an administrator in higher education, and years teaching or serving as an administrator in a community college. These questions were asked at the beginning of each interview. Some participants shared detailed information regarding their previous degrees and degree disciplines which was tangential to the data reported in this study. The results of data obtained from these questions are shown below. Randomly selected pseudonyms have been assigned to each participant to ensure their anonymity.

Table 4

Demographic Characteristics of Study Participants

Name	Age	Doctoral Degree Status	Highest Degree Obtained	Years since Last Degree Completion	Role at this CC	Years in Higher Education	Years Employed at this CC
Bryce	35	Considering Doctorate	M.S.	10	Adjunct	7	7
Jason	51	Enrolled D.ED. Program	M.S.	2	Administrator	15	15
Andrea	42	Considering Doctorate	M. Ed.	12	Adjunct	8	6
Charles	31	Enrolled in Ed.D. Program	M.S.	8	Faculty	5	5
Fred	53	Enrolled in Ph.D. Program	M.S.	2	Administrator	4	4

Lindsay	47	Completed Doctorate	Ph.D.	4	Adjunct	25	16
Gary	31	Considering Doctorate	M.S.	1	Adjunct	1	1
Vanessa	57	Completed Doctorate	Ph.D.	2	Administrator/ Adjunct	6	6
Bonnie	58	Completed Doctorate	D.Ed.	3	Administrator	24	24
Lorraine	63	Completed Doctorate	D.P.	4	Faculty	30	30
Patricia	55	Enrolled in Ed.D. Program	M.S.	10	Administrator/ Adjunct	10	10
Louise	63	Completed Doctorate	Ph.D.	5	Faculty	26	26
Vincent	33	Completed Program	Ph.D.	1	Administrator	7	7
James	38	Enrolled in Ed.D. Program	M.S.	12	Administrator	14	6
Ned	53	Considering Doctoral Program	M.S.	13	Faculty	27	2
Mary	34	Enrolled in Ph.D. Program	M.S.	6	Administrator/ Adjunct	6	6
. Jessica	41	Considering Doctoral Program	M.S.	4	Faculty	16	14

Note: In specific cases above, some information was provided in general rather than specifically to maintain anonymity of the participants.

Participant Descriptions

The following information is provided to better describe the participants who volunteered

for this study. Every effort has been made to maintain the anonymity of participants who

willingly shared personal information about themselves for the purpose of this study. Participants were asked their age during their interviews. Some participants self-disclosed their ethnicity in responding to interview questions and in explaining their personal motivation.

Bryce. Bryce is a 37-year old adjunct faculty member in the Information Technology discipline at the college. He holds a full-time position in his field and teaches one class per semester as an adjunct. Bryce lives with his young family near the college campus where he teaches. He has seven years of experience in teaching at the college, although he provides professional development programs and trainings in his primary job. He hopes to consider enrolling in an online doctoral program in the near future, and is currently reviewing programs for enrollment.

Jason. Jason, 51 years old, is a financial administrator in the college and has been employed in the college for the last fifteen years. He is currently enrolled in doctoral program in Education at a local university and hopes to complete his program in the next two years. His master's degree is in Leadership, a degree program that he finished very recently. He feels a strong commitment to students, the community college, and the community, as well as to the concept of servant leadership.

Andrea. Andrea is a 42-year old adjunct faculty member who teaches at this community college and at two other higher education institutions in the local area. She shared that several members of her family were teachers and that it was natural for her to seek and gain degrees in Education. She is extremely interested in language and learning, and plans to seek a doctoral degree in the near future. She has been teaching in higher education for eight years, six of those at this college.

Charles. Charles is a 31-year old, self-disclosed African American faculty member who is enrolled in an Educational Leadership doctoral program at a local university. He attended a Historically Black College in the southern United States and has a strong commitment to improving educational opportunities for minority students. He has been a faculty member for five years at the college and recently became a department head in his field at his home campus. He hopes to help others through the education he is currently gaining in his doctoral program.

Fred. Fred is 53 years old and holds an administrative position in the college. He has a history in public service positions with increasing responsibility. Fred shared that he is divorced, indicating that he felt he had time for his doctoral program because of his marital status. He has served as adjunct faculty at a four-year institution for four years, and has been active in professional development and training programs in his discipline. As a current administrator and adjunct faculty member at another college, Fred disclosed that he hopes to be able to teach as a full-time faculty member in the future.

Lindsay. Lindsay is a 47 year old adjunct who has worked at the community college for 16 years, and has worked in higher education all of her career. She also teaches at a local four-year college and is interested in becoming full-time at one of these institutions. Lindsay shared she was the first one in her family to attain a doctoral degree. Her parents were very supportive of her education and, unfortunately, one of her parents passed away just two weeks after her doctoral program graduation. She was very glad that she was able to finish before her parent died.

Gary. Gary, aged 31, has just moved to the area after completing his master's degree. He self-disclosed that his background was Hispanic and when he had been in high school, he never considered a college degree or a graduate degree. No one in his family held degrees. Gary's

first educational experience was in a community college with a large Hispanic population. The faculty at the community college recognized his talent and encouraged him to continue his education. He hopes to gain employment as a full-time instructor in the community college or at a four-year college or university after he completes a doctoral program.

Vanessa. Vanessa is a 57 year old who has recently become an administrator at the college a year ago. She has also been teaching at the college for the last six years. Vanessa spoke about how much she valued education and enjoyed being a student, identifying herself as a lifelong learner. Vanessa discussed how much support she had from her family, and particularly the excitement of her college-aged children when she received her doctorate. She indicated that her doctorate made her eligible for the administrative position she currently holds, and she hopes to use the knowledge she has gained in her doctoral program to enhance her work at the college.

Bonnie. Bonnie, aged 57, is an administrator at the college. She shared that it took her eight years to complete her doctorate on a part-time basis. She indicated that the college was very supportive of her completing her doctorate during that time, and allowed her to leave for classes when necessary. Bonnie indicated that getting a doctorate was a long-time goal, and that she realized to move forward in the college administration that she would need a doctoral degree. She indicated that her family was very supportive, and that her husband became accustomed to her attending class and working on her dissertation.

Lorraine. Lorraine is a 63 year old faculty member at the college, who has 24 years of experience at the college. She is an instructor in a very successful healthcare program at the college. Lorraine shared that she was the oldest member of her doctoral cohort, but that she was intrinsically motivated to obtain a doctoral degree. She also indicated that she observed other faculty members obtaining doctorates and felt that it would be significant for her, her profession,

and the college to gain a terminal degree. She hopes to continue her education in a related field of study.

Patricia. Patricia, aged 55, is an administrator at the college who also serves as an adjunct faculty member. She has been employed by the college for ten years and is currently completing her doctorate in Educational Leadership at a large, local university. Patricia self-disclosed that she is divorced and chose a position at the community college so that her children could obtain an education. Both of her children have now have achieved master's degrees. Patricia has a love for learning and hopes to study as a post-doctoral student in the future. She described how her parents encouraged education for her and her siblings while they were growing up.

Louise. Louise, aged 63, completed her Ph.D. five years ago at a large, local university. She has been teaching for the college for 26 years and plans to stay at the college until her planned retirement in two years. She hopes to teach part-time after retirement and has a strong interest in research. She felt that it was important as an educator to complete a terminal degree even though she accomplished this later in life. Her family was very supportive of her seeking and obtaining a doctoral degree.

Vincent. Vincent is a 33 year old who recently accepted a mid-level administrative position at the college. He recently completed a Ph.D. program at a local university. Vincent disclosed that he is African-American and that because of his background and the socio-economic status of his family, he never anticipated attending college, much less obtaining a doctoral degree. He has a young family and discussed the stress created by being at school and working on his dissertation. Vincent eloquently discussed how important he feels it is for men of his race to serve as role models for young Black men so that they can see role models who have become educated and achieved doctoral degrees.

James. James, 38 years old, is an administrator at the community college. He also has a young family and wants to serve as an example for his children. He is enrolled in an Educational Leadership program at a local university and plans to eventually become a dean at this or another community college. All of his experience in higher education as an employee has been in a community college setting. He plans to take his family to his doctoral defense so that his young children understand that attainment of a doctoral degree is possible.

Ned. Ned, aged 53, has been at the community college as a faculty member in a new healthcare program for the last two years. He has a strong connection to his healthcare profession and has worked in educating others in the profession for 27 years in higher education and continuing education. He is seriously considering obtaining a doctoral degree but hopes to find an ideal degree that will meet his needs as a healthcare professional and educator. Ned finds his role as a faculty member as an ideal position for him, as he enjoys the academic setting.

Mary. Mary is 34 year old part-time mid-level administrator at the community college, and is also an adjunct faculty member. She is completing her Ph.D. in a combined online and residential program at a large university out of state. Mary began her education as a student at the community college, and has continued to work in work-study and part-time positions as she obtained her master's degree and now her doctorate. She indicates that the community college feels like "home" to her and she feels a strong connection to the college community. She hopes to obtain a dean's position at the community college once she completes her doctorate.

Jessica. Jessica is a 41 year old faculty member who is seriously considering a doctoral program. She has been a faculty member at the college for over fourteen years, and works part-time in a secondary job in her profession. Jessica enjoys teaching and the academic environment. She hopes to obtain a doctoral degree to increase her knowledge and transfer that

knowledge to her students. Jessica, who is a single-parent, shared that her children are getting older and that she feels now is the time to review options for entering a doctoral program.

Demographic Analysis

The average age of participants was 46.2 years, with a range of 31 years to 63 years of age. Six participants had successfully completed doctoral degrees within the last five years; six participants were actively enrolled in doctoral programs, at various levels of completion; and, five participants indicated a serious interest in pursuing a doctoral degree in the future. The average number of years since completion of their last previous degree was 5.8 years, with a range of 1 year to 12 years. This included those who have recently completed doctoral degrees; all participants had obtained at least master's degrees in a variety of disciplines. Participants reported an average of 13.6 years employed in higher education, ranging from 1 year to 30 years. They also reported an average of 10.9 years employed at the study site community college, with a range of 1 year to 30 years employment.

The original categories of full-time faculty, part-time faculty (adjunct), and administrator were first considered by the researcher. As the interviews were conducted, a sub-set of administrators was observed. Of the total eight administrators who participated in the study, three also taught at the college as adjuncts. These three individuals provide a unique perspective because their responses to the interview questions provide both administrative experience and classroom experience with direct interaction with community college students. They are identified in Table 4 using the designation of Administrator/Adjunct.

Analysis of Motivational Factors

The second research question was developed to determine the motivational factors that have influenced community college faculty, adjuncts, and administrators in pursuit of their doctoral degrees. Guiding questions, as found in Appendix C) are listed as topics below.

1. Motivations to return to academia to complete a doctoral degree;

2. Influence of previous learning experiences;

3. Effect on significant relationships regarding the pursuit of a doctoral degree, particularly family members, close friends, and colleagues;

4. Identification of the greatest satisfaction or perceived greatest satisfaction from receiving a doctoral degree;

5. Description of how the participant will use the doctoral degree in the future.

Motivational Factors

Several motivational themes emerged from the data. Participants most frequently cited *career advancement, self-fulfillment and self-efficacy, service to others, serving as a role model for students,* and *enhancement of their current profession* as motivators toward a doctoral degree.

Career advancement. *Career advancement* was mentioned frequently by participants. Many noted the need for a doctoral degree in order to seek increasingly important administrative or academic positions in higher education. Those currently in administrative positions felt that a terminal degree was key to their advancement to positions of greater authority in higher education.

> (**Victor: Administrator**) My motivation was more professional than personal. When I completed my master's degree, I told myself I was never going back to school. But after I started working in higher education, I realized as a

professional in order to move up in professional ranking, or to just gain better

knowledge about what I do on a daily basis, I needed to have a terminal degree.

(**Charles: Faculty**) I want to have more professional opportunities here and at

other institutions…to be able to work at a macro level at other schools of higher

education…It's something I've always aspired to do.

   Self-fulfillment or self efficacy. Participants also provided thoughtful responses regarding

self-fulfillment or self-efficacy in achieving a doctoral degree. Some mentioned their own need

to achieve the highest or terminal degrees in their profession, while many others wanted to

achieve personal fulfillment so that they and their families could be proud of their academic

accomplishments. Some participants used the metaphor of climbing a mountain to achieve a

goal of a doctoral degree to indicate their aim toward self-efficacy. Other participants indicated

that they were the first members of their families to seek or obtain doctoral degrees.

   (**James: Administrator**) On a personal level, it is self-fulfillment.

   Self-pride, to see if you can climb the mountain. No one in my family

   has done this, but it seems achievable.

   (**Gary: Adjunct**)   I have always wanted to be a doctoral student, to go as

   far as I can go. It's like climbing a mountain. I haven't done it yet but it

   is something I want to do.

   (**Andrea: Adjunct**) I have always been a terribly curious person and

   getting a doctorate seems like a logical extension of my curiosity. I've

   always wanted to go all the way to a Ph.D.

   (**Charles: Faculty**) It has always been my personal goal and something I aspired

   to do. In a sense, I restricted myself personally before, but now it is

something I want to do. I wanted to be the first one in my family to be

able to reach that accomplishment. It is something greater than myself—

for my family to be proud of, and to provide a sense of empowerment

for my community and the groups with whom I work.

Serving others. Participants mentioned planning to use their doctoral degrees to help or *serve others*. Service to others, for the most part, referred to serving students and helping community college students overcome obstacles to educational success.

(**Jason: Administrator**) I feel I can be a servant leader and use the doctoral

education I have had an opportunity to obtain. I know that I am doing

this work in my doctoral program so that I can serve others.

(**Gary: Adjunct**) Professionally, I have had a lot of professors tell me that

If I wasn't in education, I would be in another profession to serve others.

I find great joy in serving others. If I were not a teacher, I would be a

doctor or a firefighter or some other profession to help others.

Serving as a role model. Many faculty and administrators indicated that they were motivated to serve as a *role model* for the students they teach or with whom they interact.

(**Ned: Faculty**) One of my personal reasons was to challenge myself.

For someone in higher education, I have high expectations for my students

and if I want to see them reach their potential, then their instructor

should strive to reach the highest level of education…If I want to have

my students strive for academic excellence, then I need to do that also.

(**Jessica: Faculty**) I think it provides students with a role model and an

ideal. They can see what I have accomplished by getting a doctoral degree.

They have an educator with a strong knowledge base. Plus, I love working

with entry level students. The college is also stronger and has higher levels

of respect with more doctorally prepared faculty.

Enhancement of profession. Some faculty and adjuncts identified their motivation toward a doctoral degree as an enhancement to their profession or professional discipline. Faculty and adjuncts in specific professions, such as healthcare or criminal justice professions, identified themselves as both academics and professionals with dual professions. Their responses below reflect their acknowledgment of academics with primary professions.

(**Fred: Administrator**) At the time I enrolled in a doctoral program, I

thought it might be a nice way to finish my career, somewhere in academia,

knowing that many four year institutions with programs in (my discipline)

require doctoral degrees for faculty. What is motivating me now as I am

so close to finishing is because it will be something to fall back on if

someday I don't feel as passionate as (my current role).

(**Ned: Faculty**) I am looking for a doctorate that will enhance my profession.

I am looking for something that will enhance me further in my own career.

Not, that I am looking to leave academics, but for me it makes no sense

for me to get a doctorate in Philosophy, when I have no desire to get that

degree. I am looking to enhance my profession.

(**Lorraine: Faculty**) I also felt that in my profession, there needed to

be more people with doctorates.

Full-time Faculty vs. Part-Time Faculty Responses

The responses of full-time faculty were particularly interesting because full-time faculty at community colleges typically do not need doctoral degrees. From a research point of view, these responses are especially significant because faculty are attempting and completing doctoral degrees for their own reasons and through their own personal motivation, as they are not required for future employment.

> (**Louise: Faculty**) I thought my program here might close at one time,
>
> so I thought I would be more marketable with a doctorate. Personally,
>
> I have always wanted to have a doctorate.

> (**Vanessa: Administrator/Adj**unct) I believe this is where I was called to be.
>
> And, even though it didn't make any sense for me monetarily…I just felt that
>
> getting a doctorate was completing what I was supposed to do in life.

Part-time faculty identified career advancement and preparation for full-time faculty positions in higher education as their motivation to seek and complete doctoral programs.

> (**Andrea: Adjunct**) Recently, it has become clearer to me that I need to
>
> pursue a doctorate to make myself more marketable to this and other
>
> institutions. Both financial, personal, and professional impetus there.

> (**Gary: Adjunct**) With a doctorate, I could teach at a college or university.
>
> Teaching at a university has been a goal of mine for quite a while.
>
> And, supporting my family is a second reason.

> (**Lindsay: Adjunct**) It is an opportunity for advancement at a four-year
>
> institution where I also teach. It is to position myself for further advancement.

Influence of Previous Learning Experiences

Previous learning experiences, with regard to formal education in baccalaureate or master's degree programs, provided participants with the knowledge that they had the *skills and abilities* to pursue doctoral degrees. Some indicated that they did not realize they had the academic ability or perseverance to pursue a doctoral degree until they completed their master's programs and saw *other students moving forward*. A few noted that they were *encouraged by faculty* in their undergraduate and master's degree programs.

Realization of personal skills and abilities. Some participants indicated that they had not considered their own skill level to be adequate enough to seek a doctoral degree until they realized their own skills and abilities through work in and completion of their master's degree programs.

> (**Bryce: Adjunct**) Other people's perceptions of my skills, my demeanor, my personality were much higher than what I had perceived. I would say that my master's program convinced me that I was more than capable of obtaining a doctorate.

> (**Charles: Faculty**) The work I did in my master's program made me realize I should consider a higher degree.

Advancement of colleagues. Some participants indicated that they recognized the advancement of colleagues and former master's program classmates who had moved into doctoral programs and progressed successful. It provided a realization for these participants that they might have the academic abilities to pursue a doctoral degree because they had become familiar with the skill levels of former classmates who were now in doctoral programs, and considered themselves equal to the task.

(**Ned: Faculty**) Two individuals from my master's program immediately moved into doctoral programs and both said that there was not much difference between the work in a master's program and the work in a doctoral program.

Encouragement by previous degree program faculty. Participants also noted the influence of encouragement by faculty members in undergraduate and doctoral programs as influencing their decisions to consider entering a doctoral program.

(**James: Administrator**) My master's program was very hands on and the faculty were interested in me personally and in my learning.

(**Charles: Faculty**) At my undergraduate education at (school description), there was always a strong push for education. I was engrained with, "We must move forward." This has helped influence my decision.

Values and Beliefs

Participants were asked to describe the values and beliefs that have influenced their decision to consider or pursue a doctoral degree. Some participants provided information about their own beliefs and described what they value, while others described belief systems and reasons for their beliefs. Many participants indicated that they were influenced by *family values* regarding education and the *value of education* itself.

Values of families. Nearly all participants in some way identified their *family values* related to education, as being childhood and adult motivations toward higher education. Examples are shown below.

(**Bryce: Adjunct**) I have always placed a high value on education. I don't

know if it is because I was the first one in my family to complete a

four-year degree. My family really pushed me to go to college.

(**Jessica: Faculty**) My personal values came from my family. My parents

always stressed education at a young age. My family, my religious beliefs,

and the values I gained as an undergraduate have shaped my world view of

education. It is important to me to move forward in pursuing a doctorate.

(**Andrea: Adjunct**) With my family background, education has always been

a priority. The idea that someone should always be learning and should also

help others as a teacher, is fundamental to my values and beliefs.

(**Lindsay: Adjunct**) I have always had a love for academics and education.

I came from a family of teachers. So, I was continually motivated by my family

to continue my education, so I always had that support. I also enjoy the

enriching aspect of teaching to help others in life.

(**Patricia: Administrator/Adjunct**) I grew up in a household where my father

had a master's degree. Going to college was a natural progression for me and

my siblings. My family put great value on education. The belief in my house

was that if you don't go to college, you will be poor. College also makes

you aware, it makes you a thinker. Without a college education, my

knowledge of what is going on in the world would have been very shallow.

Value of education. Some participants focused on the *value of education* and the doctorate as

a goal to which they aspired. In this sense, the value of education was portrayed as part of their

belief system, coupled with regard for hard work and achievement.

(**Bonnie: Administrator**) A doctorate is valued. That was important to me. And the belief in education is that if you have achieved a doctorate, you have reached the max or the pinnacle.

(**Lorraine: Faculty**) My belief is that for those of us in higher education, we should advance to a terminal degree.

(**Victor: Administrator**) As an African American male, I feel proud but I also feel a responsibility to get this degree. Only one percent of all residents in the U.S. hold doctoral degrees, and only a much smaller percentage of those are African Americans. I needed to get this degree. It was bigger than just me.

Effect on Significant Relationships

This area of inquiry was also very interesting. Participants were asked to articulate the effect of their enrollment or proposed enrollment in a doctoral program with regard to significant relationships in their lives, particularly those with *family members*, *close friends*, and *colleagues*. All participants indicated that they had the support of their immediate families and many participants mentioned parental support and encouragement in their adult lives, as well.

Family members. The amount of spousal and immediate family support for participants seeking and gaining doctoral degrees was overwhelming. Participants identified spouses, children, parents, siblings and extended family in their descriptions of familial support.

(**Louise: Faculty**) My family is really supportive of me. My children were in college when I got my doctorate, so they were out of the house. My husband is always very supportive of me. So are my mother and my sisters.

(**Ned: Administrator**) I have had nothing but support from family and

friends. My family is waiting on the sidelines for me to finish. They know

how much time this journey has taken.

(**James: Administrator**) I don't know that pursuing a doctoral degree has

affected my relationship with my family. They are very proud of me. I

want them to be there when I defend.

(**Jason: Administrator**) My family is very supportive. There were no negative

responses from my family when I chose to enroll in a doctoral program. But,

some of my colleagues said, "You must be crazy!"

(Mary: Administrator/Adjunct) My father was initially not supportive but he

became supportive of my education when I started my master's.

(**Vanessa: Administrator/Adjunct**) My mom was super pumped. She got

her masters in her 50s and she always wanted to get her doctorate. My

husband—I know he thinks I was crazy for going back to school. But,

he and my kids were super excited when I graduated. They were calling

and inviting people to my graduation. It was very unifying for our family.

(**Lindsay: Adjunct**) When I was getting my doctorate, my family was very

supportive. My dad was suffering with cancer, so I had that motivation to finish.

He died two weeks after I got my doctorate.

   Close friends. Some participants identified the reactions of close friends in their decisions to

seek and complete doctoral degrees. Overall, their friends seemed supportive, even though the

time required for doctoral study influenced the stability or longevity of friendships.

(**Victor: Administrator**) I have seen a different level of respect from

my friends and colleagues since I have been working toward a

terminal degree, a respect that is much different than when you

are going for a bachelor's or master's degree.

(**Bonnie: Administrator**) My friends supported me. But, you can't always

be a best friend because you aren't around. I lost contact with some

of my friends because I just didn't have the time for everything.

(**Mary: Administrator/Adjunct**) My friends are supportive, but they are my

friends and I will always be just (participant's name) to them.

   Colleagues. Colleagues of participants were identified as having strong support for pursuit of

doctoral degrees by participants, in ways that helped and supported participants.

(**Charles: Administrator**) I have been receiving a lot of positive feedback

from my colleagues and co-workers about getting this degree. I has been

inspiring for some of my younger co-workers to see that I can teach full-time

and work on a doctorate. It has inspired them to consider getting doctoral

degrees. When you do this at a younger age, you have a chance to use the

doctorate in many ways.

(**Victor: Administrator**) Surprisingly, my colleagues have been very supportive

of me, especially because I am a young man. I want to be inspiring to younger

co-workers and they will have witnessed my growth.

(**James: Administrator**) I have had a lot of support from my colleagues here

at the college. The college does recognize you for your accomplishments.

(**Bonnie: Administrator**) My colleagues have been very supportive. I did

quantitative research in my dissertation and people here helped me.

Leadership allowed me to leave for class.

(**Patricia: Administrator/Adjunct**) My colleagues and mentors have been very

supportive of my decision to pursue higher education.

Greatest Satisfaction from Degree Attainment

Participants were asked to describe the greatest satisfaction they received from receiving

a degree or perceive upon completion of a doctoral degree. They noted the reward of *completion*

of the degree itself, a *sense of achievement* from doctoral completion, and opportunities for

career advancement. While completion of the degree and sense of personal achievement are

very similar in nature, participants appeared to make a distinction between these areas in their

responses.

Completion of the degree. The knowledge that they possessed the cognitive abilities to

complete a doctoral degree provided the greatest satisfaction for some participants.

(**Ned: Faculty**) I am not one who is looking at a title. I have never been that

way—that you would have to call me doctor. I think it would just be the

benefit of knowing things I did not know before and the option to continue

to explore those avenues after I have completed the degree.

(**James: Administrator**) It is going to be a good moment to know that it's

completed and that the credential will come with me. Another is to be able to

encourage others to do it. I'm not the smartest guy in the world, but I did it.

Sense of personal achievement. Participants indicated their strong *sense of personal*

achievement related to completing a doctoral degree. Not only did they value completion of the

degree, but they articulated a sense of achievement in their abilities and tenacity in completing a terminal degree. For many, the achievement was described specifically or generally as an intrinsic reward, knowing that they were responsible for doctoral degree completion.

(**Charles: Faculty**) Being one individual, it was something I never thought I would do. Very few young African American males have doctorates, and I personally felt before that I would never be able to do that.

(**Fred: Administrator**) The greatest satisfaction---I thought it would be more professional to allow me to obtain higher positions or work at other institutions---but, now that I have almost completed the degree, it is more personal…Personally, I didn't think I had the mental or intellectual fortitude to complete a doctorate, but I am shocked at much I now know.

(**Mary: Administrator/Adjunct**) I would say just achieving that goal and putting "Doctor" in front of my name. Also, to be able to know that I have the degree and hopefully to do some great things with it.

(**Lindsay: Adjunct**) My satisfaction will be that I achieved a goal I had set for Myself at the beginning, I decided that I was going to make this a very enjoyable process even though it was going to be a tremendous sacrifice. I didn't want it to be something that I dreaded doing every day.

(**Patricia: Administrator/Adjunct**) It is not even about being a "doctor." It's not a tag that I will wear on my chest. It is a personal goal and I will have done it.

(**Bryce: Adjunct**) Besides being an overwhelming amount of work, I will know that I did it while working full-time and teaching part-time and doing the other things that need to be done like helping my family.

Opportunities for career advancement. A few participants mentioned that completing a doctorate will provide them with *greater opportunities for career advancement* that would not be open to them without a terminal degree.

> (**Andrea: Adjunct**) The idea that I know…that I know how to find out more. And, of course, the doctorate will open up doors for me in the job market, doors that I don't have access to now.

> (**Bonnie: Administrator**) It legitimizes my role at the college, and allows me to pursue higher positions. I have that credential now.

Planned Use of the Doctoral Degree in the Future

When asked how participants planned to use their doctoral degrees in the future, the answers were varied. Some talked about the advantage of *sharing newly gained information* with students, while others discussed opportunities for *advanced teaching* and *research or scholarship pursuits*.

Sharing newly gained information. Several participants indicated that they gained or hoped to gain significantly new information from matriculation in their doctoral programs and that this new information would improve their subject knowledge and teaching pedagogy. The focus of these participants was increasing their knowledge so that they could improve teaching and learning in their classrooms.

> (**Ned: Faculty**) I hope to take the knowledge I gain to the students and colleagues I am in contact with… and make it beneficial for them.

> (**Patricia: Administrator/Adjunct**) I am better at delivering education and I hope to go back to more time in the classroom. In the community, I am talking to people about the value of education, to teach them that they can do it.

(**James: Administrator**) The more I learn from this education, the more I can help students, the better decisions I will be able to make. I want to improve myself both personally and professionally. I look forward to serving the community.

Advanced teaching. Several participants indicated that they would like to continue teaching, some noting teaching at an advanced level either in a baccalaureate program or full-time at the community college.

(**Louise: Faculty**) After retirement, I would like to teach in a baccalaureate program, one course a semester, and I would also like to do more research.

(**Jessica: Faculty**) I definitely plan to continue teaching, and other educational activities such as research. I hope to provide diverse opportunities in the community college, and I would like to contribute back because the college helped with tuition assistance.

(**Mary: Administrator/Adjunct**) I would like to be full-time faculty in higher ed. My long-term goal is to work in administration at [this community college]. Ultimately, I would like to be director of a department and eventually a dean.

Research and scholarship. Several participants indicated their interest in scholarly activities, including research and writing. Many appreciated their newly acquired research skills and look forward to opportunities to conduct and publish research.

(**Vanessa: Administrator/Adjunct**) I am always looking for opportunities to write. I love doing research, benchmarking where we are and where we are going. I hope to be able to publish the work that I am doing here and help others.

(**Victor: Administrator**) I am officially taking MS off my name when I graduate

next month. With the position I have now, I want to wait a full year before

applying for other positions. I really want to do further research. I would

like to publish in peer reviewed journals, and perhaps co-write with others.

Analysis of Doctoral Attainment Related to Community College Employment

The third research question addresses how participants viewed their doctoral attainment

related to their current or future employment. As employees of a community college, the

researcher sought information regarding the level of commitment of participants to the

community college setting, their plans for upward mobility, or their plans for scholarly activities

in the future. Guiding questions are found in Appendix C. They are listed as topics below.

1. Reasons why the participant accepted a community college position.

2. Identification of the differences between community colleges and baccalaureate colleges.

3. Engagement in current or future scholarly activities.

4. Relationship of doctoral degree attainment regarding student success.

5. Relationship of doctoral degree attainment to the success of the community college.

6. Future plans of participants regarding their employment after attainment of a doctoral

    degree.

Reasons for Accepting a Community College Position

Participants indicated several reasons for having accepted a position in a community college.

For the most part, they identified their perceptions of being able to *help students*, particularly

underserved students, as a reason for accepting employment at a community college.

Others discussed the *practice of teaching* as a motivator to work at a community college, while others appreciated the *benefits and reputation* of this particular community college as incentives for employment.

   Helping students. Most participants identified their association with being able to help students succeed as their reason for accepting employment at a community college. Of these, some explained their understanding of the unique educational needs of community college students, indicating their desire to be part of this process.

>   (**Charles: Faculty**) When I was in high school, I was in dual enrollment at a community college and there were a lot of barriers and I eventually dropped out because I didn't have enough support. There is a learning curve between high school and college and I want to be able to provide support to students to prevent their failure. I want to be a person of empowerment for them and help ensure their academic success.

>   (**Patricia: Administrator/Adjunct**) I knew that if I did not work in a college, I would not be able to send my kids to college and pay their tuition. I grew up in an educational environment. I enjoy working here because we really do change lives, we really do!

>   (**Vanessa: Administrator/Adjunct**) Why? I loved the students. I have developed a big appreciation for students who see the community college as a way of improving themselves. I like the attitudes of the students and their grassroots nature.

>   (**Victor: Administrator**) In all honesty, it was the first level of higher education that I could get involved in. But there is a lot of satisfaction in

helping students. Many of these students are coming from backgrounds

where they are not prepared to go to college, so we are helping them even

more. I want to stay within the community college setting.

(**Bryce: Adjunct**) The concept of the community college is awesome. I

wanted to feel like I was needed and it was a niche for me. Teaching for me

is a creative outlet. This was the first school to offer me a position as an adjunct.

Practice of teaching. Some participants indicated that they accepted positions at the

community college in order to enhance their personal teaching practices, related to the role of

faculty and adjuncts as "teachers" in the community college setting.

(**Ned: Faculty**) I love to teach. It had nothing to do with me moving

forward for a doctorate.

(**Andrea: Adjunct**) I wanted to teach and I seriously believe that community

colleges have potential in the market and in society today. I believe

that the students need the hands on help with the commitment to teaching

that I have. Quite frankly, I like the environment better than the four-year

colleges that aren't quite as focused on teaching.

Benefits and reputation of this community college. Other participants indicated their

reasons for accepting a position at this community college as related to the benefits offered by

the college, as well as its reputation as an extra-large community college.

(**Louise: Faculty**) I came here because the college had a program that I liked.

The program was a really good fit for me.

(**Mary: Administrator/Adjunct**) It's part of my dream to work at (specific

campus). It feels like home to me.

(**James: Administrator**) I came from a smaller community college. Looking

over the county line at the mightier, bigger school, I was on the outside

looking it. So I jumped at the chance of a position here.

(**Jason: Administrator**) The community college offered the best benefits,

Including educational benefits, and the best position.

(**Gary: Adjunct**) Being new to the area, it was my first job opportunity. It

was a great way to get my foot in the door and gain experience.

Differences between Community Colleges and Baccalaureate Colleges or Universities

Participants were asked to identify their perceptions of the differences between community

colleges, in general, and baccalaureate colleges and universities. They identified *helping*

students related to student success as the primary difference between these types of institutions.

Participants in this study clearly recognize the difference in student populations who are enrolled

in these types of institutions and identify a need to help underserved students in community

colleges. One participant also identified the *hierarchy* in universities as being different from that

typically found in community colleges.

Helping students related to student success. Although no participants specifically

mentioned the term "mission" related to community colleges, their responses clearly represented

an understanding of the mission of community colleges and the unique needs of community

college students. This includes large numbers of educationally underprepared students, non-

traditional students, and financially disadvantaged students.

(**Ned: Faculty**) The people here at this institution really try to help the students.

We have some people here who are really struggling. That's why I would

want to get my doctorate. If I could learn something new, something more—

I could pass it on to the students.

(**Charles: Faculty**) The differences are teaching versus research. Here faculty

aren't required to do research. Also, the community college provides

opportunities for students who do not have access to a four-year school, by

offering a more affordable cost per credit, and high quality service in a diverse

environment.

(**Andrea: Adjunct**) In my experience at [this community college], there is

more focus on getting students through their program and getting them to

succeed. I know it is not just our community college where students are helped,

but it's the only one where I have worked. I don't think a baccalaureate program

is like that…Many four year colleges let students sink or swim.

(**Fred: Administrator**) First, and foremost, even though we don't like to talk

About it, funding dictates what support can be provided for the students. A four-

year school can find money for their developmental students, but we have such

an influx of them at the community college, funding is an issue. Next, our

population is non-traditional and that is different at a four-year school. The

level of education of students in four year colleges is different, and their

drive is different. In most cases, their parents have been influential in

preparing them for a four year school. The students we get here are different—

some took time off from school, they have children, they are working. I

don't think the education we offer is different from a university because we

have a lot of adjuncts who teach here and at those big schools. The biggest

difference is the backgrounds of the students and how they were prepared for
college.

(**James: Administrator**) The community college's open door policy—we try to
help everyone. We provide remediation and the ability to transfer credits to four-
year colleges.

Hierarchy. One participant also mentioned the hierarchy associated with universities as a
difference, indicating that less hierarchy existed in the community college system.

(**Bonnie: Administrator**) Baccalaureate colleges are more siloed than we are.
I think about (name of local college) and I think they have more bureaucracy than
we do. They have more of a communication problem and more hierarchy—
It takes them longer.

Scholarly Activities

Participants were asked if they have engaged in scholarly activities or plan to engage in
those activities once they have completed their doctorates. Most participants indicated that they
have or would like to continue with scholarly activities, including *research and writing*, and
professional development. Two participants indicated an interest in engagement with
professional organizations. Two participants cited interest in *seeking an additional degree*.

Research and writing. Many participants cited future research and writing for publication as
a scholarly interest after completing their doctoral degrees.

(**Bryce: Adjunct**) Certainly, it is one of the things I look forward to after
getting my doctorate. I look forward to being able to contribute to the scholarship
in my field.

(**Mary: Administrator/Adjunct**) I would love to publish. I have already provided workshops and presentations on lots of topics.

(**Vanessa: Administrator/Adjunct**) I have always wanted to write. I enjoy writing. I would like to continue the work of my dissertation.

(**Louise: Faculty**) I would enjoy having the opportunity to do more research.

Professional development. Responses of some participants indicated a scholarly interest in providing or gaining professional development as an extension of scholarly activities following completion of a doctorate.

(**Jason: Administrator**) I participated in the Leadership Development Program and the professional development activities offered by the college. Right now, I am having a tough time balancing my doctoral work, my job and my family. But I look forward to more professional development after my doctorate is complete.

(**Victor: Administrator**) I'm attending two conferences, but other than that, I can't get away.

(**James: Administrator**) I have presented at (local college conference), and at National conference in Chicago. It was a great opportunity. I would like to write on my dissertation is completed…would certainly like to publish more about my topic.

(**Andrea: Adjunct**) I feel like I need to have a doctorate or be full-time before I write. My department chair knows my abilities, but I am not sure that the (full-time) faculty recognize my knowledge.

Professional organizations. Extension of scholarly activities through work with professional

organizations was identified by two participants.

> (**Gary: Adjunct**) I am working with some organizations right now, and it is
>
> something that I always wanted to do before I got my master's. And, I see
>
> that intensifying after I get my doctorate.
>
> (**Vanessa: Administrator/Adjunct**) I am actually reaching out to get
>
> involved with several different (professional) groups…I definitely have
>
> aspirations for scholarly engagement.

Additional degrees. Two participants indicated an interest in returning to academia to

complete additional degrees, as an extension of their scholarship after completing their doctoral

degrees.

> (**Lorraine: Faculty**) I have no desire to publish. But, I would like to go back to
>
> School and get a degree in gerontology. There is going to be a great need as the
>
> population ages. The community college is a great spot to provide information
>
> on retirement counseling, counseling for those coming back to study for credits,
>
> and information on life-style changes. I think we can provide that for the
>
> community and I would like to be part of that.
>
> (**Patricia: Administrator/Adjunct**) And, even after I finish my doctorate, I
>
> would like to pursue more higher education. I would like to study sociology…
>
> I love learning.

Doctoral Degree Attainment and Student Success

Participants were asked to describe how their attainment of a doctoral degree was related to

student success in the community college. Their responses were related to three categories:

increased ability to help students, *becoming a role model*, and *adding credibility to the community college.*

   Increased ability to help students succeed. Regardless of their current position in the college, participants indicated that attainment of a doctoral degree would provide an opportunity to improve their ability in helping students succeed.

> (**Victor: Administrator**) I would like to be able to use my doctorate in different ways, but especially to help students overcome whatever (obstacles) in their life. It's a short-term sacrifice being in a doctoral program, but it allows me to counsel students to stick with it.
>
> (**Jessica: Faculty**) I will be able to give (students) more information I learned Through my doctorate…or new research methods I learned. I would learn that by interactions with colleagues in the doctoral program.
>
> (**Louise: Faculty**) I had a lot more to offer to my students after I received my doctorate. I am not sure if they perceived it, but I did.
>
> (**Vanessa: Administrator/Adjunct**) I think I bring forth the things that I have learned in research and in practice to everyone.
>
> (**Gary: Adjunct**) Getting a doctorate will help me know more about the scholarship of teaching. It will help me improve as a teacher, and that will help my students.
>
> (**James: Administrator**) My (doctoral) program is focused on helping students at all levels…helping students in general.

(**Andrea: Adjunct**) Getting a doctorate will help me know more about the scholarship of teaching. It will help me improve as a teacher, and that will help my students.

Role model. Providing role models for students was an overwhelming response from participants. They clearly indicated that if students could see what they had accomplished, then those students would be able to set educational goals for themselves.

(**Lorraine: Faculty**) With my doctorate, students see me as a role model. I say to them that I know what it is like to being going to school and doing multiple things at the same time. I think I am more sensitive to the students' needs.

(**Charles: Faculty**) I think it provides students with a role model and an ideal. They can see what I have accomplished by getting a doctoral degree. They have an educator with a strong knowledge base. Plus, I love working with entry level students. The college is also stronger and has higher levels of respect with more doctorally prepared faculty.

(**Patricia: Administrator/Adjunct**) I can be a role model. Students can look at me and see that I have a doctorate. I teach sociology and I spend a lot of time on the role of the community college (in the social construct).

(**James: Administrator**) A doctorate will give me better credibility at higher levels, and it is also an example for students who have future educational goals.

Adding credibility to the college. Some participants equated having a doctoral degree with increased credibility for the college, indicating that this credibility will help students succeed.

(**Bonnie: Administrator**) It helps when you represent the college in the community. So when you work with different groups, they recognize you as having an important position within the college.

(**Fred: Administrator**) One thing about having a doctorate, it gives you authority. People recognize that I have authority and I can get more things done to help students…the credential really helps.

Doctoral Degree Attainment and the Study Community College's Success

   Participants were asked to consider how their doctoral degree attainment would help the community college succeed. Their responses were grouped into two categories: *adding credibility to the college* and *improving teaching and student success.*

   Adding credibility to the college. Participants indicated that more faculty, adjuncts and administrators with doctoral degrees adds additional credibility to them as professionals and to the college, in general.

(**Ned: Faculty**) Well, I think (others) see the aspect that you have a doctorate, and it adds credit to your program. I would like to use the knowledge from a doctorate to solidify our program here, to increase our enrollment, increase our retention, and increase our success rate of student completing the program.

(**Louise: Faculty**) I think it speaks to the college's academics, that we have doctorally prepared faculty at a community college.

(**Lorraine: Faculty**) I think it looks good for the college to have more doctorally prepared faculty. I would hope that those with doctorates bring something to the college, a new way of doing things. I think it makes a real

difference when people are involved. Personally, I am learning how to think better because of my doctorate.

(**Jason: Administrator**) It lends overall credibility that an administrator in my position holds a doctoral degree. The college can capitalize on having a number of people with doctorates.

(**Vanessa: Administrator/Adjunct**) It helps our reputation, our trust, and our work. It helps to build our integrity as a community college. It makes us as a college more competitive. When people look at a roster and see that so many of us have doctorates, it has to make prospective students feel comfortable.

Improving teaching and student success. Participants felt that their doctoral degrees will improve their teaching and inform their work at the community college, thereby increasing the success of the college and its students.

(**Louise: Faculty**) I can apply what I have learned in my doctoral program to the classroom at [this community college].

(**Victor: Administrator**) I would like to be able to use my doctorate in different ways…to be able to help students overcome whatever (obstacles) in their life. It is really a short-term sacrifice being in a doctoral program, but long term results in being able to help students and the college.

(**Mary: Administrator/Adjunct**) It helps the college because students will have a broader knowledge base…and, I am able to conduct research studies. I feel like I have a greater knowledge base for the college and the students.

(**Patricia: Administrator/Adjunct**) It helps us help students succeed.

(**Bryce: Adju**nct) Having that type of expertise, having someone who has

my background, helps with students.

(**Lindsay: Adjunct**) I think it would be good if everyone had higher degrees.

(**Andrea: Adjunct**) A doctorate will help me be better informed as a person

and instructor, and it will help support instruction to improve the college.

(**James: Administrator**) Having a terminal degree, it brings the academic

experience, and that's what we're here for. Others can look at us

and say we have some smart people here and degrees to back it up.

Plans for Future Employment Following Doctoral Attainment

Most participants indicated that they wanted to stay at this particular community college

or to work within the community college system. Some participants did acknowledge that they

might seek employment in a four-year college or university.

(**Ned: Faculty**) I wouldn't be looking to leave here, unless I'm told to…

I thoroughly enjoy what I do here. Yeah, we have some frustrating

moments working with students, with faculty, but you work through it.

I haven't been this happy in a position since (when I first started working)…

Here, I am loving what I am doing, loving who I'm working for. I couldn't

be happier than I am right now.

(**Louise: Faculty**) I'll be here until retirement.

(**Jessica: Faculty**) I enjoy teaching and students. I plan to stay here or at

another community college in the future.

(**Lorraine: Faculty**) Yes, I plan to stay at the college. Before I had my

doctorate, I would see people getting doctorates and not bringing much back.

I want to bring something back.

(**Mary: Administrator/Adjunct**) It's my goal to get a full-time position at the

college. I hope to work at [this community college] (forever).

(**Patricia: Administrator/Adjunct**) I most certainly do (plan to stay). I know

that culture and I am comfortable with it. Once I get my degree, I am going

to look for other roles within the college. I want to be able to do something

here with my doctorate.

(**Vanessa: Administrator/Adjunct**) Yes, staying here would be my plan,

my hope, my dream. But, you never know what kind of opportunities will

present themselves.

(**Gary: Adjunct**) As a new adjunct, I know I need to acquire as much experience

as I can. I am looking for a full-time position. Having experience is something I

value at this point.

(**Victor: Administrator**) If I can be like the individuals we have had here for

forty years, then I don't need to go anywhere else. But in education, leadership

is always changing, so you never know what happens. My plan is to stay

as long as I can, and use my degree. My doctoral degree helps me align more

with the educational standards.

Emerging themes from each individual guiding question and those themes that emerged

across all questions are shown in Figure 2.

EMERGING THEMES FROM GUIDING QUESTIONS

- SELF-FULFILLMENT
- CAREER ADVANCEMENT
- SERVING OTHERS
- SERVING AS A ROLE MODEL
- ENHANCEMENT OF PROFESSION
- PREVIOUS LEARNING EXPERIENCES
- REALIZATION OF ABILITIES
- ADVANCEMENT OF COLLEAGUES
- FACULTY ENCOURAGEMENT
- FAMILY VALUES
- STUDENT SUCCESS
- VALUE OF EDUCATION
- PERSONAL ACHIEVEMENT
- IMPROVED TEACHING
- ENCOURAGEMENT OF FAMILY AND FRIENDS
- MISSION ALIGNMENT
- CREDIBILITY

EMERGING THEMES ACROSS QUESTIONS

- INTRINSIC SELF-SATISFACTION
- CAREER ADVANCEMENT
- SERVICE AS A ROLE MODEL
- IMPROVED TEACHING
- HELPING STUDENTS SUCCEED
- MISSION ALIGNMENT
- LIFELONG LEARNING

OVERARCHING THEMES

- PERSONAL SATISFACTION
- JOURNEY OF LIFELONG LEARNING
- ALIGNMENT WITH THE MISSION OF THE COMMUNITY COLLEGE

Figure 2. Emerging themes, from guiding questions, across questions, and overarching themes.

Summary

In this chapter, information gleaned from interviews with seventeen participants was used to describe answers to the research questions, regarding motivational factors for community college faculty, adjuncts, and administrators to seek and obtain doctoral degrees. Demographic information about each participant was described in table and paragraph format, including the location of participants along a continuum of having achieved a doctoral degree within the last five years, current matriculation in a doctoral degree program, or interest in seeking a doctoral degree. Findings were reported as responses to each guiding question, with responses categorized within each guiding question. Themes across questions include alignment with the mission of the community college, ability to serve as an educational role model for students, improving teaching for student success, helping students succeed, and self-efficacy and intrinsic motivation to advanced education, and extrinsic motivation toward career advancement. Overarching themes or threads emerging throughout the analysis were personal satisfaction, journey of lifelong learning, and intrinsic altruism in helping students to succeed and serving as role models. These are discussed in Chapter 5.

CHAPTER 5

CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

For decades, information and research about aspects of community colleges have for the most part been excluded from the literature. This may in part be due to the lingering stigma that continues to haunt community colleges, portrayed as somehow inferior to baccalaureate colleges and universities. However, current attention in the national political arena has broadened interest in community colleges from many aspects, including workforce development, open access, accountability, and student progression and completion. This study explores the reasons why community college faculty, adjuncts, and administrators seek doctoral degrees, as these terminal degrees are not required for most positions in community colleges. Interviews were conducted with seventeen community college faculty, adjuncts, and administrators in an attempt to answer the following research primary questions. These are:

1. What are the demographic characteristics of community college faculty, adjuncts, and administrators who choose to pursue doctoral degrees?

2. What self-reported motivational factors have influenced community college faculty, adjuncts, and administrators to pursue doctoral degrees?

3. How do these participants view their doctoral attainment relative to student and community college success?

Guiding questions under each research question were employed in order to elicit additional information on each topic from participants. Established interview and qualitative analysis techniques were used in order to determine answers to these questions.

Chapter Summaries

In this study, Chapter 1 provides the background of community colleges and the traditional roles of faculty, adjuncts and administrators in these colleges. This chapter also highlights the purpose of the study, information about study significance, study limitations and

delimitations, and a review of terms used report. Chapter 2 provides a literature review detailing the history of community colleges, the history of the doctoral degree, faculty at community colleges, and the differences between community colleges and baccalaureate colleges. Chapter 3 offers a comprehensive description of the methodology used in this qualitative research. In Chapter 4, the data are presented. Chapter 5 provides an analysis of the results of this research, including a discussion of alignment with Weiner's Theory of Attributions used as a theoretical framework in this study.

<div align="center">**Attribution Theory and Doctoral Degree Motivation**</div>

Weiner's Theory of Attribution was used in this study as a theoretical framework in order to study responses to research questions and guiding questions as emerging themes from the individual interviews with participants. Weiner originally described attribution as a threefold process: observation of behavior, determination of behavior to be deliberate, and the attribution of behavior to internal or external causes (Weiner, 1985). In refining his theory, Weiner proposed that student learning may be the result of attributions that students make about their own learning and learning abilities, related to environmental and personal factors affecting the types of attributions made by learners (Weiner, 2000). Often used in describing the behaviors of K-12 students, Weiner's theory may also be applied to doctoral candidates who are employed in community colleges following his guidelines as their behavior is observed in this study related to the intention to complete a doctoral degree, the deliberate behavior they exhibit in pursuing a doctoral degree, and the attribution of their motivation in seeking doctoral degrees to internal and external causes. In this regard, Weiner's theory may be used to explain the importance of intrinsic and extrinsic variables as motivators toward doctoral degree attainment.

Dimension of Locus

Weiner (1985) proposes that "causal ascriptions play a key role" in motivation and in emotion, as well. The results of this study indicate that dimension of locus played a strong role

in the attributions of participants related to their internal (intrinsic) and external (extrinsic) motivation toward doctoral degree completion.

Intrinsic motivation. In their interview responses, participants indicated that they were self-motivated toward achievement as an inherent interest, and that they valued doctoral completion as both personally satisfying and as a demonstration of their academic abilities. Many indicated that obtaining a doctorate was a long-held personal goal, something they wanted to achieve for themselves as an indication of their knowledge and persistence toward degree completion.

> (**Lorraine: Faculty**) I really have a sense of achievement because I was an older individual—I think I was the oldest one in my class—and I was able to accomplish this at this point in my life. For me it was just the intrinsic reward…the satisfaction of knowing that I had completed it.
>
> (**Andrea: Adjunct**) Mostly, I have wanted this because I have wanted it. No one is pushing me to get it, no one is forcing me to. I want it for me. I am hoping to benefit from the knowledge I gain…It is something I want. It's the dictionary definition of *intrinsic* motivation.

Intrinsic altruism. Across categories and across questions, many participants identified intrinsic motivation in the form of altruistic purposes to help community college students succeed and to serve as role models for students and for their own children. These results are significant because as members of the community college community, participants related a heightened awareness about the community college environment where the pathways to educational success and progression for students often include many more barriers than those for the typical college student, such as lack of preparedness and other academic issues, social and family issues, job related issues, and financial issues. Study participants noted that they wanted

to obtain doctoral degrees so that they are better able to help community college students

succeed and to serve as role models for their students and for their own children.

> (**Patricia: Administrator/Adjunct**) We have a lot of marginalized students
> and they are struggling. I can tell them that I was in their shoes fifteen years
> ago. And, now I can tell them that if I could do it, they can do it too.

> (**Mary: Administrator/Adjunct**) I grew up in a lower income, working class
> family. No one on either side of my family had a degree. I saw my family
> struggle and I knew that education was a way to a better life. I have been
> through a lot in my life and I feel very passionate about helping students
> overcome obstacles so that they can get an education.

> (**James: Administrator**) I can look a student in the eye and say, "I sat
> in your seat at one time." The doctorate lends credibility to me, to my
> concepts, and what I believe in. I am proud of my accomplishments.
> Less than one percent of the population ever gets a doctorate. It's quite
> an honor and a credible accomplishment.

Role models for minority students. Minority participants expressed an interest in serving as

a role model for students, and in particular for minority students. The National Science

Foundation (2013) reports a racial gap in the number of doctoral degrees awarded to minority

students. Of the 52,749 earned doctorates awarded in 2013, only 4.1% were earned by African

Americans and 4.0% of Hispanics who were United States citizens. Those minority participants

clearly articulated their understanding of the need for role models among minority doctoral

graduates because such a small percentage of all doctoral graduates are minorities. This area of

minority doctoral degree achievement deserves substantially more research in order to

understand the motivation of those minority doctoral candidates who are successful, and the particular demands placed on them as role models for other minority students. Every minority participant in this study clearly articulated his or her understanding of the need to serve as a role model for minority students because of the significant underrepresentation of minorities among all doctoral degree completers.

> (**Gary: Adjunct**) Well, the first thing that I think about, definitely in a community college setting…being in class with a doctorate, I can share my story, what I had to do, and be a role model. Being Hispanic, I've wanted an education for a long time. I can help my students with anything that I know, and what I had to do. They will know that if I could do it, they can do it too.

> (**Victor: Administrator**) I think it falls to someone who looks like me to, who has been through the same trials and tribulations that students have. And, I am not only talking just about race. I'm talking about having kids, working, going back to school at the same time. I think the students will see me and see that they can push more to get their education. It's a sign that they can do it also.

Extrinsic motivation. Extrinsic motivators were present in the responses of participants in several ways. First, the support of family members, friends, and colleagues provided for participants to consider enrolling in doctoral programs and also provided for encouragement in the completion of their doctoral programs. With the exception of one participant, all indicated that they had an enormous amount of support from their immediate family members, including spouses/partners, children, and parents. While a particular burden appears to fall on the spouse

or partner of the doctoral candidate, all spouses or partners appeared to be extremely supportive of the candidates, in spite of the fact that additional care for children and the home fell to the them while the doctoral candidates completed their doctoral coursework and their dissertations. Nettles and Millett (2006) report that little research has focused on the effect of having children under the age of eighteen regarding decisions to enter doctoral programs, although research on progression of doctoral students indicates that having children under the age of eighteen years inhibits their progress, reflected in attrition rates and time to degree (Nerad & Cerny, 1993; Tuckman, Coyle, & Bae, 1990). In this study of community college educators, participants recognized the length of time they were away from home, while working and attending doctoral classes, or busy at home with doctoral and dissertation work.

> (**Victor: Administrator**) These last three years have been very difficult. Work already takes you away from home, and school takes as much time as work. So, the amount of time you are away from your significant other is strained. My wife has been my biggest support but she also comments on how she is alone with the kids so much when I am not there. I tell her that it is almost over and I am not going to be in school forever.

> (**Bonnie: Administrator**) It took me eight years going part-time to finish my doctorate. My husband was supportive and he just got used to it after a while.

> (**Andrea: Adjunct**) My family has been very supportive about the whole thing. My husband has been very supportive too. He knows what academic life is like and he is up for me getting a doctorate. I am confident that I have the social supports to pursue a degree.

(**Lorraine: Faculty**) Well, I didn't clean the house for eighteen months! But

my husband was very supportive. He was my proof-reader.

Encouragement and feedback from colleagues also played a role in the continued motivation toward degree completion. Participant comments indicated that their colleagues encouraged them to enroll in doctoral programs and supported them emotionally with regard to doctoral completion, particularly with encouragement to persist and complete their degrees. Friends were also supportive of doctoral candidates, in spite of the fact that participants reported having much less time to spend with friends because of the commitments of their doctoral studies.

(**Charles: Faculty**) Here at the college with my professional colleagues,

we have all been very supportive of each other regarding seeking

advanced degrees.

(**Lorraine: Faculty**) I felt very supported by my colleagues, particularly

the ones in (my department). They encouraged me with comments like,

"You don't want to quit now" and "It's going to be over soon and

you'll be a doctor."

Extrinsic motivation was also recognized in the comments of participants who identified career advancement and enhancement of their current profession as enticements toward doctoral degree completion. Career advancement was most noted by mid-level administrators who were seeking higher positions of authority within the college and the accompanying higher salaries, and by adjunct faculty members seeking full-time teaching positions within the college and the accompanying higher salaries and job stability offered by full-time faculty positions. While these extrinsic factors played a clear role in the decisions of some to seek doctoral degrees, it should be noted that many of the individuals who sited extrinsic motivators also described being

intrinsically motivated by the goal of self-fulfillment in completing a doctoral degree. Therefore, it is difficult to separate intrinsic and extrinsic motivators, as they appear to work synergistically in some, and perhaps most, individuals.

Conclusions regarding locus. The following conclusions are therefore made about the importance of intrinsic and extrinsic motivation in doctoral degree completion. Participants provided pertinent information regarding their own intrinsic and extrinsic motivations. After review of all the interviews, it is clear that the intrinsic motivation to complete a doctorate, whether as self-determination or self-efficacy as a life-time goal, was key in the attribution process for all participants in this study. The identification of intrinsic motivation directed at the altruistic goals of helping community college students succeed and providing role models for them was prominent in the responses of participants across questions and categories. Extrinsic motivators across questions recognized career advancement and the opportunity for increased salaries in higher paying positions. The responses of participants were clearly in alignment with Weiner's Theory, in that all participants mentioned motivations along the intrinsic-extrinsic continuum.

Dimension of Stability

Weiner's dimension of *stability* relates to the duration of a cause, in this case doctoral degree attainment, and the attributions related to progress toward a goal. Weiner defined stability along a continuum from *stable* to *unstable*. Stability in this study is found in the goals of participants seeking doctoral degrees and their ability to attribute the probability of degree completion to their own skills and strong interests in completion. Responses from individuals related to envisioning their success by picturing seeing themselves "walking across that stage" to get their

doctoral diplomas while others spoke about the sense of achievement they have attributed to their academic success.

> (**Fred: Administrator**) I plan on walking during graduation—hearing my name walking across the stage, and just knowing that it is done. My greatest satisfaction is seeing this done.

The unstable component of this dimension may be found in the concerns that participants originally had about their own academic abilities with regard to completion of the program. These concerns were overcome as participants moved through their doctoral programs and were able to self-assess that they were capable of completing the required work.

Conclusions regarding stability. The dimension of stability is an important component in the progress of doctoral students and their inherent need to complete the degree. When looking at Weiner's continuum for this dimension, it is clear that the participants in this study were most found on the stable end of the continuum. This may be because a third of the participants had already achieved their doctorates, while those enrolled in a doctoral program had all completed at least a year of course work and were able to make attributions toward success after being able to determine that they had the academic ability and tenacity to complete the program.

Dimension of Controllability

Weiner describes controllability as the attributions that individuals make regarding their ability to control situations, on a continuum from control to lack of control. In this study, control is related to the personal control that a doctoral student might have related to personal effort toward achievement, and the effort needed for completion.

> (**Gary: Adjunct**) My beliefs are around character and serving others.
> I have been told I have a persistent drive, when there is something
> else to achieve. If I believe in myself, I will have the personal
> drive to see how far I can go.

Lack of control may be described as the inability of an individual to control barriers to doctoral completion, both personal and professional, that may have arisen or that those considering a doctorate might anticipate.

> (**Bryce: Adjunct**) My wife is supportive, but she has (an illness) and I
> do a lot of things in the evening at home. I know when I go back to
> school, she will be concerned about how everything will get done.

Interpersonal and Intrapersonal Theory of Attributions

With regard to Weiner's later addition of interpersonal and intrapersonal theories of motivation to attribution theory, his interpersonal theory stresses the importance of emotional responses in relation to future success (Weiner, 2005). He suggests that positive self-directed thoughts or feelings lead to future personal success, while negative thoughts or feelings may deter future success. Positive interpersonal theory is evident in the responses of participants in this study. Many indicated that obtaining a doctoral degree was something they had "always wanted to accomplish," while others indicated that they were always mindful of their "perceptions of self-satisfaction" when completing a doctoral degree. As in Weiner's Theory, the need for positive attributions is also outlined in self-determination theory where the positive thoughts of individuals and their emotional reactions to rich experiences provide for intrinsic motivation toward goal attainment (Deci and Ryan, 2000).

(**Bonnie: Administrator**) My belief is that you have to be self-motivated and

want to do it. It is so easy in all our lives to make excuses, and sometimes

the excuses are good. But, you have to think past that mentally, and work

to get it done.

Some participants described that their original thoughts or feelings toward pursuing a

doctoral degree were negative, primarily related to the time to degree completion and questions

about their own personal academic abilities related to doctoral degree completion. However, the

thoughts and feelings of those were eventually altered by observing others with what they

recognized as academic skills similar to their own pursuing doctoral degrees, and also by the

realization they had after working in higher education that a doctoral degree was necessary for

higher level positions.

(**Fred: Administrator**) I can honestly say that when I finished my master's

degree at (name of institution), I figured I was done. I had been so wrung out

that I didn't think I would consider a doctorate. But, later I thought that if I

wanted to end up as a professor, I needed a doctorate and I wanted to be a

professor with a doctorate.

(**James: Administrator**) Personally when I saw other students moving on up

in the ranks from a master's to a doctorate, I thought, "I could do that myself."

In describing intrapersonal attributions, Weiner proposes that the thoughts of others may

positively or negatively affect motivation toward specific goals. He contends that how others are

perceived to view an individual, by that individual, may positively or negatively affect

motivation toward a specific goal. In this study, all participants described the positive views of

others as attributions toward their own success which aligns with Weiner's attributions of emotional response to motivation toward success.

> (**Mary: Administrator/Adjunct**) Even though my parents weren't educated and we were not necessarily taught the value of education, we were taught the value of hard work. My dad was a brilliant man but he never had the opportunity to go to school. He was in combat in Viet Nam. He made a sacrifice to go and fight so that his younger brother could stay home. When I am having negative thoughts or a bad day, I think about my dad and think that I can do this.

Alignment with Theoretical Framework

Weiner (1985) contends that attributions for success are the result of causal judgments made by individuals and the role of self-motivation in explaining successes, or failures, such as in those seeking doctoral degrees. Fiske and Taylor (1991) agree that satisfaction is gained by those who make causal attributions and are able to control their future success. "Understanding what factors give rise to a certain outcome enables one to control the likelihood of that outcome, or at least predict when it will happen" (Fiske and Taylor, 1991, p. 23).

While Weiner's Attribution Theory may be complex, it is evident that it is supported by the emerging themes of this study as an appropriate theoretical framework. The most obvious alignment is in Weiner's causality dimensions, particularly the dimension of locus. Intrinsic and extrinsic variables account for the primary motivations of doctoral students, whose responses indicated that their intrinsic motivations were stronger and perhaps more compelling than their extrinsic motivations. Also present in a majority of the interviews is the concept of service to others, which the researcher has identified as "intrinsic altruism," or the internal motivation to

help and provide service to others. Many participants identified that obtaining their doctoral degree would allow them to better serve others as servant leaders, and as educational leaders in helping students to succeed. They also wanted to serve as role models for community college students who face multiple barriers to education. This is an extremely thought-provoking idea as to whether these participants as employees of a community college have a greater understanding of the needs of community college students and recognize their own role in helping these students, or perhaps that they were drawn to positions at community colleges because this is where they feel they might have the greatest opportunity to serve students. Weiner's later refinement of his theory to describe interpersonal and intrapersonal attributions, as positive attributions, in this study provide for pathways to doctoral candidate success.

<div align="center">**Other Cross-Study Emerging Themes**</div>

In reviewing the responses of participants, several additional important themes emerged from the data. These are personal satisfaction, the concept of lifelong learning, and intrinsic altruism in the form of helping students succeed and serving as role models.

Personal Satisfaction

Breckner (2012) suggests that an internal drive among doctoral candidates is a critical factor in doctoral degree completion. He contends that the personal satisfaction of completing an esteemed degree has been identified as motivation for resiliency and completion. Bandura (1994) indicates that a strong sense of self-efficacy "enhances human accomplishments and personal well-being," noting that those individuals who have a high assurance in their personal abilities are able to develop intrinsic interest in attaining their goals as well as gaining personal satisfaction from their achievements (p. 71). Personal satisfaction gained by positive attributions

for success, in this case among doctoral candidates, is a significant overarching theme across both research and guiding questions.

This overarching theme of personal satisfaction is aligned with recent research indicating that intrinsically motivated personal goals led to persistence in degree completion among doctoral candidates (Cardona, 2013; Colbert, 2013). In this study, participants clearly indicated their personal satisfaction or anticipated satisfaction at doctoral completion, indicating that it was a long held goal.

> (**Bonnie: Administrator**) It is something I have always wanted to do.
>
> (**Jessica: Faculty**) Getting a doctorate is a personal challenge for me, something I have always aspired to and I will be the first in my family…it gives me a sense of empowerment. It's something that is greater than myself. I want my family to be proud.

Lifelong Learning

Knowles (1989) contends that two concepts govern adult learning. The first concept is, "Adults have a self-concept of being responsible for their own lives… and a need to be seen by others as capable of self-direction" (p. 83). The second is, "Adults become ready to know those things they need to know…to cope effectively with real-life situations" (p. 84). Additionally, Colbert (2013) proposed that the desire to learn was critical to doctoral candidates. She notes that "learning was not the initial motivator but as doctoral candidates progressed, it became the primary motivator to persist to degree completion" (Colbert, 2013, p. 128).

While adult learning is often tied to the specific education of adults as opposed to children, lifelong learning connotes the journey in search of education throughout one's life. Both of these concepts are not incongruent with the intrinsic search for lifelong learning, one of the

overarching emerging themes of this study.   The value of lifelong learning was evidenced by the fact that several participants in the study were over the age of 50 years and expressed their personal need to continue in the learning process. Some younger participants identified also themselves as lifelong learners and anticipated additional formal and informal learning experiences in the future throughout their lives. Whether it is exposure to higher education through their jobs in a community college or their intrinsic motivation toward continued learning experiences, many participants in this study identified themselves as lifelong learners. Lifelong learning was also tied to the metaphor of a journey by some participants, viewing their continued studies as a journey of education throughout their lives.

(**Jason: Administrator**) Education for me is a lifelong journey. I know that I am doing this work on my doctorate so that I can serve others. My journey will not end with the doctorate. I am a lifelong learner.

(**Bryce: Adjunct**) I believe in lifelong learning, especially if you are in a field that changes quickly. It has pushed me to learn whatever is possible.

(**Lorraine: Faculty**) I believe in lifelong learning and I like learning. I also thought that having a doctorate was a good example for my students.

(**Lindsay: Adjunct**) My greatest satisfaction will be in seeing where I am in my character and beliefs, and what I had attained personally. I don't view it as much as an achievement but a milestone on a journey that is just going to continue.

Alignment with the Mission of the Community College

Community colleges hold a specific place in the hierarchy of higher education in the United States. For many students, community college is their only chance at higher education and often

a second chance for those who have struggled in higher education previously. As a gateway to

job opportunities and future baccalaureate degrees, community colleges offer the first step on an

educational and employment pathway. The mission of community colleges is embodied by their

open access and enrollment policies that promise a quality education for all at an affordable cost.

In this study, all of the participants are employed in a community college. Their responses to

questions across the interviews provided insight into their complete alignment with and loyalty

to the community college mission. Participants clearly articulated their understanding of

community college students, as non-traditionally-aged, often first-generation, underprepared for

college-level academics, and balancing the responsibilities of children, family, and jobs while

attending community college. While alignment with the mission of the community college may

be expected among community college employees, the responses of the participants in this study

were overt in their support of the community college function and mission as to be considered an

emerging theme. This theme is also tied to the concept of intrinsic altruism, as mentioned

earlier, relating to a goal of helping students succeed.

> (**Mary: Administrator/Adjunct**) One of the primary differences is
>
> demographics of the students we serve. A lot of our students have obstacles,
>
> low income, first-generation, working class, some have disabilities. While
>
> there are students with these demographics at four-year colleges, we serve so
>
> many more of them. Another difference at the community college, the people
>
> who work here are willing to take the extra time and they really care about
>
> the students. I think those are the two main differences.

(**Fred: Administrator**) I think the difference is that there are many students

who are not yet ready for the rigors of a four-year college and we are prepping

them here. Plus, the cost is a bargain. Education today is very expensive.

It is a commitment of time and resources. Our costs make college affordable

for students. People here really take time to help these young men and

women. At some four year schools, you are just a number…[this community

college] is more user friendly. In my experience, the community college

system prepares the student who might not be ready academically to jump

right into a four-year school.

(**Jason: Administrator**) Yes, I plan to continue to work at the community

College and look forward to helping those who have helped me and others, as

well. I feel that I can be a servant leader and use the education I have had an

opportunity to obtain.

Situating Study Findings in the Relevant Literature

In researching the motivations that affect community college faculty, adjuncts, and

administrators pursuing doctoral degrees, this study observed emerging themes across questions,

which are noted in the data review in Chapter 4, and across responses of participants to all

questions. Nettles and Millet (2006) note, "The research in the field of doctoral education

suggests a hierarchy of accomplishments of which obviously the most important is degree

completion" (p. 38). This study documents the emergence of the overarching theme of seeking

doctoral degree completion across participants, regardless of their job title within the community

college, and across their levels of doctoral completion, specifically those considering entering a

doctoral program, enrolled in a doctoral program, and completed a doctoral program in the last

five years.

Motivational factors influencing doctoral degree completion or aspiration to doctoral degree completion were also noted across questions and across participants. The emerging themes in these areas were the anticipated *intrinsic factors*, related to the personal goals of individuals seeking doctoral degrees, along with the *extrinsic factors*, related to family encouragement, the promise of career advancement to positions of higher authority, and greater opportunities for engagement in scholarly and other research activities in the future. The other emerging themes, which were somewhat unanticipated, were related to *service* to community college students, including alignment with the mission of community colleges to serve all students; the personal mission of *helping all students succeed*, the opportunity to provide *improved teaching;* and, the opportunity to serve as *role models* for the community college student.

The results of this study show the motivations of community college faculty, adjuncts, and administrators in seeking doctoral degrees. Many studies in the literature are related to doctoral persistence and attrition (Bair, 1999; Gardner, 2009; Tinto, 1993), with doctoral program attrition at 50% or greater (Ivankova & Stick, 2007). Other research has observed conditions surrounding the time taken in obtaining a doctoral degree (Bowen & Rudenstein, 1992; Wao & Onwuegbuzie, 2011). Several identified factors are recognized in the literature related to attrition and time to doctoral completion, including personal sacrifice, employment status, social integration into doctoral programs, financial considerations, dissertation difficulties, and support systems (Gittings, 2010; Lovitts, 2001; Spaulding & Rockinson-Szapkiw, 2012; Tinto, 1993). Golde (2000) observed the paradox that "the most academically capable, most academically successful, most stringently evaluated, and most carefully selected students in the entire education system—doctoral students—are the least likely to complete their academic goals" (p. 199).

However, the literature also indicates that motivators or levels of motivation, often considered as a component of personal attributes, influence doctoral completion and length of time to completion (Grover, 2007; Litalien, Guay, & Morin, 2015). Hoskins and Goldberg (2005) propose that doctoral candidates with personal and professional motivations had higher rates of persistence and completion. Spaulding and Rockinson-Szapkiw argue that some doctoral students are motivated by wanting to make parents or family members proud, while others were motivated by the desire to "serve and improve the lives of others" (p. 209). The authors also noted professional motivators for career advancement, compensation, or increased marketability.

The results of this study agree with and add to the existing literature related to personal and professional motivations toward doctoral completion and success. This study determined that encouragement of family, friends, and colleagues provided motivation toward doctoral completion, much as is noted in Spaulding and Rockinson-Szapkiw (2012).   It also identified the concept of *intrinsic altruism* which was evident in a majority of the participant responses. It is difficult to determine from this study if this concept is more prevalent among community college educators or among educators in general. However, participants clearly viewed themselves as role models and supporters of student success.

Recommendations for Future Research

In spite of the current emphasis on community colleges and their role in workforce development, it is apparent that many aspects of these colleges continue to be vastly understudied. The Community College Research Center, associated with Columbia Teachers College, is leading the research of community college issues, particularly related to developmental education and retention of community college students. National foundations, including the Lumina Foundation and the Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation, are supporting various aspects of learning in community colleges. However, there are many opportunities for

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research related to community colleges that have not yet been explored. Over the last decade, community colleges have been competing with colleges and universities for federal grants, and several have won large federal grants by scoring higher in grant competitions, even ahead of well-known four-year institutions. While established avenues exist in colleges and universities for publishing the results of these grant studies, community colleges do not view the importance of grant projects in the same way that universities do, and therefore do not often support the time required of faculty or grant administrators to conduct and publish these studies.

Additionally, while large community colleges often participate in national surveys designed to measure their faculty participation, such as the Community College Survey of Faculty Engagement (CCSFE), these studies are purely quantitative in nature. Therefore, opportunities exist for qualitative studies of faculty, adjuncts, and administrators in order to learn more about their engagement in the colleges where they are employed. As more faculty, adjuncts, and administrators from community colleges receive doctoral degrees, opportunities also exist to chronicle their scholarship and professional development activities after receiving their degrees, using both quantitative and qualitative means.

In terms of this study, the researcher would like to have asked more about the doctoral programs in which the community college personnel were enrolled, why they chose these particular programs, and how the information from those programs has influenced their leadership skills and teaching pedagogy. Additionally, the researcher could have inquired more about the aspirations of participants to seek employment in four-year colleges and universities after completing the doctorate, instead of only asking if these individuals wanted to remain at the study community college or another community college. These areas of study may provide better understanding of the motivations of faculty and administrators, and specifically regarding

adjunct faculty who may have had aspirations toward becoming faculty in four-year institutions or those seeking administrative positions in community colleges or four-year institutions.

It would also be interesting to further explore the motivations of healthcare professions who are academics in two-year and four-year colleges and seek doctoral degrees. What is the motivation of these individuals to gain doctoral degrees in their own healthcare disciplines? How are they adding to their own professions by obtaining doctoral degrees? Does the doctoral degree add credibility to them in their own professions? This may be an interesting area of research that deserves more attention and study.

Finally, this study explored the responses of only five full-time faculty members who had completed doctoral degrees in the last five years, even though doctorates are not required for their positions. The opportunity exists to study, by both quantitative and qualitative means, an extensive number of full-time faculty in many community colleges who have completed doctorates in order to better understand their motivation toward terminal degrees.

Conclusion

This study is unique in that it focuses on the motivation of community college faculty, adjuncts, and administrators in seeking doctoral degrees. "Community college currently are experiencing perhaps the highest expectations and the greatest challenges in their history" (CCSSE, 2012, p. 1). With the national focus on community colleges, it is important to understand the motivations of individuals who work in community colleges, particularly those seeking doctoral degrees. The results of this study propose that faculty, adjuncts, and administrators in community colleges seek doctoral degrees for both intrinsic and extrinsic reasons, as shown by Weiner's theoretical framework for this study. These community college personnel also seek doctoral degrees in order better help their students complete their education

and succeed through improved teaching and educational advancement. They seek to serve as role models for students, as they are particularly aligned with the community college mission of education for all. Whether this alignment has developed from working in a community college environment or whether their motivations are related to intrinsic altruism requires further study. However, it is clear that the motivations of doctoral candidates employed in community college settings are remarkably integrated with their desire to support the unique needs of students in community college and to encourage their success as a primary motivation in doctoral candidacy.

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Appendix A

Administrative Approval

CCAC   The first choice for faster results.

COMMUNITY COLLEGE
OF ALLEGHENY COUNTY

Office of College Services
800 Allegheny Avenue
Pittsburgh, PA 15233-1895
Ph: 412.323.2323
Fax: 412.237.3097
www.ccac.edu

October 23, 2014

To: Whom it May Concern:

On Friday, January 24, 2014, a determination was made by the staff that reviews and authorizes research projects to authorize Ms. Tomi Waters to conduct her research project at the Community College of Allegheny County. The view of the staff was that her research is in keeping with the goals of the Community College.

Based on the proposal, Ms. Waters has permission to contact faculty, adjuncts, and administrators to conduct individual interviews for the purpose of determining the variables affecting pursuit of doctoral degrees among community college personnel.

If you have any questions or wish to discuss this authorization, please feel free to contact me at 412.237.3126 or at marchey@ccac.edu.

Sincerely,

Mary Frances Archey, Ed. D.
Vice-President of Student Success and Completion

Appendix B

Sample of Email to Possible Participants

The following is an email which was sent to faculty, adjuncts, and administrators at [this community college] through the general Outlook system.

Dear Colleagues:

Doctoral degrees are not required for teaching in community colleges, yet [this community college] has a higher percentage than the national average of faculty and administrators who seek and obtain doctoral degrees. I am currently completing my doctorate at Indiana University of Pennsylvania and my dissertation will focus on why faculty and administrators at [this community college] pursue doctoral degrees. Permission to conduct this study has been provided by cabinet members, through the college's Research Approval Process, coordinated by Dr. Mary Frances Archey.

I am requesting volunteers in each of three categories of faculty, adjuncts, and administrators:

- those considering entering a doctoral programs;
- those currently matriculating in doctoral programs; and,
- those who have been awarded a doctoral degree in the last five years.

Volunteers will be asked to participate in a one hour interview, which will be conducted over the telephone and audio-recorded so that transcripts can be typed. All information will be held as strictly confidential; no names as identifiers will ever be used in my dissertation or in future publications. If you provide information in an interview, and then decide to withdraw from the study, any information you provided will be immediately destroyed.

I am asking as a colleague for your help in collecting this data. In no way should my position at the college influence your decision to volunteer. Please contact me immediately if you choose to participate.

Thanks very much for your time and consideration.

Sincerely,

Tomi Waters
Associate Dean of Academic Affairs

Appendix C

Interview Protocol

Interview Protocol: Pursuit of Doctoral Degrees
Doctoral Dissertation Project: Interview

Doctoral Dissertation Project: Interview

Time of the Interview:

Date:

Location of the Interview:

Interviewer:

Position of the Interviewer:

Interviewee:

Position of the Interviewee:

Interviewer will provide a brief description of the project and its purpose.

Research Question 1. What are the characteristics of community college faculty, adjuncts, and administrators who seek doctoral degrees?

The following descriptive questions will be asked at the beginning of each interview.

1.1 Please provide your age.

1.2 What is your educational background including the degrees you currently hold?

1.3 Are you currently engaged in a degree program?

1.4 How long has it been since you completed you last degree?

1.5 What is your area of discipline?

1.6 How many years have you been teaching (or serving as an administrator) at the college level?

1.7 How many years have you taught (or served as an administrator) at a community college?

1.8 How many years have you taught (or served as an administrator) at [this community college]?

The following guided open-ended questions will seek expanded responses about the perceptions of participants.

Research Question 2. What motivational factors have influenced community college faculty, adjuncts, and administrators to pursue doctoral degrees?

2.1 What motivated you to return to academia to pursue a doctoral degree? Please describe both professional and personal reasons.

2.2 Have previous learning experiences affected your decision to pursue a doctoral degree?

2.3 How would you describe the values and beliefs that have affected your decision to pursue a doctorate?

2.4 How has or will this decision affect those with whom you have significant relationships?

This may include family members, close friends, or colleagues.

2.5 What gives you (or perceive will give you) the greatest satisfaction from obtaining a doctoral degree?

2.6 How to you plan to use this degree in the future?

Research Question 3. How do these participants view their doctoral attainment relative to current and future employment?

3.1 Why did you decide to accept a position in a community college?

3.2 What differences can you identify between a community college and a baccalaureate college?

3.3 Have you engaged in (or do you anticipate you will engage in) more scholarly activities since obtaining your doctorate?

3.4 In what ways do you view your attainment of a doctoral degree in helping students succeed in a community college?

3.5 In what ways do you view your attainment of a doctoral degree in helping [this community college] succeed?

3.6 Do you plan to continue to work at [this community college] or another community college after obtaining your doctoral degree?

Appendix D

Informed Consent Letter

Project: Variables Affecting the Pursuit of Doctoral Degrees among Community College Faculty and Administrators

Thank you for your interest in participating in this research study. You have been invited to participate because you are a faculty member, adjunct, or administrator who is considering, enrolled in or has recently graduated from a doctoral program. Your informed consent is necessary for your participation. This study will involve an individual interview lasting not more than 60 minutes. This interview will be taped using an audio-taping instrument in order to capture all of the information in the interview. At the beginning of the interview, you will be asked to answer some specific questions related to your age, gender, educational background, number of years since your last degree, your discipline, years teaching at the college level, years teaching at a community college, and years teaching at [this community college]. This information is completely confidential and is being sought to better identify your experience in seeking or obtaining a doctoral degree.

You are participating in this study as a volunteer. A numerical code will be assigned to your information and you will be identified by this number code, throughout this study and in research reports of this study. You have the right to withdraw from this study at any point by emailing me at zfks@iup.edu or twaters@xxxx.edu without adversely affecting your relationship with me or [this community college] or with any others in the college associated with this study. Once you have elected to withdraw, all information that you provided will be immediately destroyed. If you elect to participate without withdrawing, all of your information will be held in strictest confidence.

Your participation in this study is sincerely appreciated. The information you share will help others to understand the reasons why community college personnel choose a doctoral pathway. If you are willing to participate under the conditions outlined above, please sign the following form.

Principal Investigator: Tomi Waters, Doctoral Candidate, Indiana University of Pennsylvania

                                Curriculum & Instruction Program

Co-Investigator: Dr. Mary R. Jalongo, Coordinator, Indiana University of Pennsylvania,

                                Curriculum & Instruction Program

Phone: 412-999-0450

Email: zfks@iup.edu or twaters@xxxx.edu

This project has been approved by the Indiana University of Pennsylvania Institutional Review Board for the Protection of Human Subjects (Phone: 724-357-7730).

VOLUNTARY CONSENT to participate in "Pursuit of Doctoral Degrees among Community College Faculty and Administrators"

I have read and understand the information provided in this form and I agree to participate as a volunteer for this study and acknowledge that my responses will be recorded. I understand that any information I provide will be kept completely confidential and that I have the right to withdraw from this study at any time. I have received a copy of this consent form for my records.

Name: _____(please print)

Signature: _____

Date: _____

Your Phone Number (where you can best be reached):_____

                         _____

I certify that I have explained to the above individual the purpose of this study, the potential benefits, and any possible risks associated with his/her participation in the study. All questions that have been raised by the participant have been answered. My signature indicates that I have witnessed the above signature.

Researcher's Signature: _____

Date: _____