

WRITING A DOCTORAL EXEGESIS FOR A EUROPEAN STYLE DOCTORATE, HIGHER DOCTORATE, DOCTORATE BY PUBLICATION, AND DOCTORATES BY PREVIOUSLY PUBLISHED OR CREATIVE WORKS IN BUSINESS, TECHNOLOGY, AND HEALTHCARE

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ABSTRACT

Despite the increasing availability of doctoral programs in Business, Healthcare, Technology, and Creative Works offering completion through the publication process and requiring an exegesis, a significant gap persists in the comprehensive guidance provided to candidates. Guidance documents, handbooks, and recruiters frequently need to offer detailed instructions on constructing a comprehensive and acceptable exegesis and the required works necessary to form a compelling portfolio. This gap presents a notable challenge for candidates pursuing a doctoral or PhD by published works, an alternative route to obtaining a doctoral degree. In this model, candidates compile a collection of their previously published works, typically articles in refereed journals, and submit them as the core component of their doctoral thesis/dissertation. This approach enables experienced researchers or creative artists with a successful track record of publications to consolidate their work into a cohesive body of research for examination. Alongside these publications, candidates are required to write a commentary or synthesis, known as the exegesis, which contextualizes the publications, elucidates the overarching theme or contribution of the work, and reflects on the significance of the research. However, the lack of clear and comprehensive guidance on constructing this critical component leaves many candidates needing guidance on effectively presenting their work, potentially undermining the quality and coherence of their submissions, and hindering their success in completing their doctoral programs. This inquiry explores an under-discussed area and a significant gap in academic literature using document analysis and subject matter expert interviews. This study aims to provide a robust framework to assist candidates in successfully navigating this alternative doctoral pathway.

KEYWORDS: PhD, Doctoral Exegesis, PhD by Publication, PhD by Published Works, Doctoral Thesis, European Style Doctorate, Higher Doctorate, Doctoral Education

1. Introduction

Pathways to achieving a doctoral degree in Business, Technology, Creative Works, Healthcare, and the artifacts

required for completion have diversified significantly due to changes in program delivery, format, degree completion requirements, job market demands, and a

more diverse graduate student population (Burrell et al., 2020). Despite these changes enhancing the accessibility and applicability of doctoral programs, there remains ongoing concern about maintaining the high academic rigor and credible scholarship that traditional doctoral programs are known for (Burrell, 2024). This anxiety stems from perceived deviations from established norms and the immutable standards of scholarly engagement at this level.

A fundamental principle of doctoral research is that the work should contribute significantly to the existing body of knowledge in the field, with the candidate demonstrating a clear understanding of this impact and the ability to present and defend their findings against peer critique (Paltridge & Starfield, 2023). This concept of 'going public' is integral to doctoral study and assessment; most universities in the United States, Canada, the United Kingdom, and Australia expect PhD submissions to include material of publishable quality (Burrell et al., 2020). Traditionally, doctoral dissertations or theses become public after the examination process, highlighting the candidate's ability to produce work that withstands scholarly scrutiny (Powell, 2004; Bradley, 2009).

In many institutions, publications can be included in a doctoral submission or appended as additional evidence. However, a clear distinction remains between a doctorate by research and a doctorate by published or creative works. These approaches are considered separate yet related, with specific criteria for each pathway (Powell, 2004; Bradley, 2009; Peacock, 2017; Robins & Kanowski, 2008).

The concept of a doctoral submission based on published works dates to the nineteenth century in Germany, where doctoral dissertations were required to be printed and distributed to national

university libraries (Powell, 2004). This requirement underscores the importance of 'going public' and ensuring that doctoral work contributes to the broader academic community. While both traditional doctorates and doctorates by publication emphasize rigorous research methodology and advancing the field, they differ in execution. Traditional doctorates typically involve a supervised research program culminating in a dissertation, while doctorates by publication are based on a series of peer-reviewed publications (Powell, 2004; Bradley, 2009; Cowden, 2013; Gustavii, 2012).

The rigor required for a doctorate by published or creative works necessitates clarity regarding what is being examined and the criteria for success. Examiners must understand the assessment process and know the candidate's research area (Powell, 2004; Bradley, 2009; Peacock, 2017; Robins & Kanowski, 2008). Differences in submission composition between the two routes raise questions about the relevance of traditional theses to a candidate's future career as a researcher, where high-quality, refereed publications are often the recognized symbol of success. Given the rapid advancement of knowledge and the importance of national research assessments, training in preparing research publications should be recognized as a crucial component of PhD programs. This recognition should be reflected in the assessment process for traditional PhD submissions, emphasizing the importance of publication success or potential (Powell, 2004; Anderson & Okuda, 2019). Beyond fields like business, technology, and healthcare, the doctorate by published or creative works also represents a viable pathway for those in field like art, photography, and creative writing to complete doctorates too.

Table no. 1
The most common types of doctorates

Doctoral Award Type	Description
Traditional Doctorate/PhD	The traditional model where students complete coursework and produce a thesis or dissertation after research
Doctorate or PhD by Publication	Students publish their work in peer-reviewed journals as part of their doctoral studies.
Doctorate or PhD by Previous or Prior Published Works	Students take previously published or creative works and put them into a portfolio with a summary of their impact.
Professional Doctorates - These include: Doctor of Science (D.S.C.), Doctor of Business Administration (D.B.A.), Doctor of Management (D.M.), DrPh (Doctor of Public Health), Doctor of Education (EdD), Doctor of Public Administration (D.P.A.), Doctor of Health Sciences (DHSc), Doctor of Health Administration (D.H.A.), Doctor of Professional Studies (D.P.S), Doctor of Letters (D.Litt), Doctor of Engineering (DEng), Doctor of Computer Science (D.C.S.), Doctor of Design (DDes)	They are designed for professionals seeking to advance their careers through applied research.
A growing route to a PhD	A growing model challenges the traditional PhD, offering alternative pathways to a doctorate. Unlike a traditional dissertation, these options include capstone projects, internships, portfolio development, conference presentations, and journal article submissions.

Robins & Kanowski (2008) and Kamler (2008) elucidate the multifaceted nature of discussions surrounding doctoral publication practices within academia. The main idea is that the doctorate or PhD by publication model has gained considerable traction in several countries, including Australia and the United Kingdom. This model encourages postgraduate research students to disseminate their work through peer-reviewed journals as universities adapt regulations to support this pathway.

Evidence supporting this shift includes the growing recognition of the myriad benefits of doctoral students publishing their research. Publishing during doctoral studies strongly correlates with subsequent scholarly productivity, prompting institutions to emphasize academic publication and provide substantial support to enhance publication rates. For instance, Burrell (2024) highlights that this shift in pedagogical focus is essential for nurturing the next generation of scholars who are well-versed

in the demands and rigor of academic publishing.

Analyzing this trend, scholars argue that increased pedagogical focus on writing for publication is crucial within doctoral education (Paltridge & Starfield, 2023; Guerin, 2016). This shift improves publication rates among doctoral candidates and challenges the traditional PhD model. Diverse doctoral degree types, including the PhD by publication, professional doctorates, and Growing Route Doctoral programs, introduce new completion and scholarly requirements. These shifts reflect a broader trend toward accommodating diverse academic and professional aspirations (Paltridge & Starfield, 2023; Guerin, 2016).

Institutional pressures from university funding models and performance assessments also influence the adoption of these doctoral models. Universities increasingly seek to enhance their research profiles and publication outputs, driven by the need to meet performance metrics and

secure funding. This strategic emphasis on publication bolsters the institution's research standing and attracts high-caliber students and faculty. Consequently, the evolving landscape of doctoral publication practices underscores the importance of supporting doctoral students in their publishing endeavors. By doing so, institutions enhance their students' academic and professional development, contributing to the broader advancement of knowledge and scholarship within their respective fields. These discussions, as outlined by Robins & Kanowski (2008) and Kamler (2008), highlight the dynamic interplay between educational practices, institutional goals, and the evolving needs of the academic community.

A doctorate by published works, also known as a PhD by publication, is typically completed through a series of structured steps (Peacock, 2017; Robins & Kanowski, 2008; Chong, 2020). First, the student must ensure their university permits a PhD by publication and understand the specific guidelines set forth by the institution, including requirements for the number of publications, accompanying chapters, formatting, and presentation. Next, the student compiles a body of published work, usually journal articles or other scholarly publications, which demonstrates original research and contributes significantly to the field of study. These publications may be completed and published after program admission and during enrollment.

A higher doctorate is an advanced academic degree awarded for a substantial and sustained contribution to a specific field of study in a common theme, typically through a body of published research demonstrating original and significant scholarly impact. It recognizes a prolonged period of academic excellence and influential scholarship. It is usually awarded to a researcher who has already completed a doctorate degree and completes a portfolio of previously

published works for examination as a path to degree completion.

Along with the publications, the student writes a commentary or synthesis, known as the exegesis, which ties the publications together, explains the overarching theme, and reflects on the significance of the work. This document includes introductory and concluding chapters that contextualize the research, provide a coherent narrative, and demonstrate the overall contribution to the field. The student then prepares a thesis document incorporating the published works, the exegesis, and any additional requirements specified by the university, presenting a cohesive argument that displays the student's expertise.

The completed thesis/exegesis is examined by a panel of experts in the field, who evaluate the quality and significance of the research presented. Upon completing the examination process and any required revisions, the student defends his/her work in a viva voce examination or oral doctoral defense. Finally, the student submits the compiled publications and the exegesis to the university for formal evaluation and approval. This submission is typically reviewed and approved by a committee or board.

Overall, completing a doctorate through published works involves a rigorous process of compiling, contextualizing, and defending a body of published research to demonstrate the student's expertise and contribution to the field of study (Paltridge & Starfield, 2023; Anderson et al., 2021; Jackson, 2013).

2. Some of the Most Universal Examples

Capitol Technology University in the U.S. offers what they call European-style doctorates. Students can study in areas that include Engineering Management, Health Technology, Cyberpsychology, Cybersecurity Leadership, and Product

Management. Students enroll for one to two years. During enrollment, they must write and publish three peer-reviewed papers and complete an exegesis in a combined portfolio with 3 to 10 peer-reviewed published articles, depending on the program.

University of Sunderland, University of Westminster, London Metropolitan University, and Coventry University, among others in the U.K., offer a PhD by previously published works. During the enrollment period, students compile their published works and must complete an exegesis in a combined portfolio. Some of these programs require as many as 6 to 10 peer-reviewed publications.

Flinders University, Charles Sturt University, and Charles Darwin University, among others in Australia, offer a PhD by previously published works. During the enrollment period, students compile their published works and must complete an exegesis in a combined portfolio. Some of these programs require as many as 6 to 10 peer-reviewed publications.

Middlesex University in the UK offers a Doctor of Professional Studies by published and creative works. During the enrollment period, students compile their published works and must complete an exegesis in a combined portfolio. This program offers one of the most flexible options.

Lovely Professional University (LPU) is a private university located in India. It offers a higher doctorate that requires two years of postdoctoral experience and ten peer-reviewed publications in high-impact journals for researchers who have already completed their doctorate.

3. Problem Statement

Despite the availability of numerous doctoral programs offering completion through the publication process and requiring an exegesis, there remains a significant gap in the comprehensive guidance provided to candidates. Guidance

documents, handbooks, and recruiters often fail to offer detailed instructions on constructing a comprehensive and acceptable exegesis and the required works necessary to form a compelling portfolio. This gap presents a notable challenge for candidates pursuing a doctoral or PhD by published works, an alternative route to obtaining a doctoral degree in Business, Healthcare, Technology, and Creative Works. In this model, candidates compile a collection of their previously published works, typically articles in refereed journals, and submit them as the core component of their doctoral thesis. This approach enables experienced researchers with a successful track record of publications to consolidate their work into a cohesive body of research for examination. Alongside these publications, candidates are required to write a commentary or synthesis, known as the exegesis, which contextualizes the publications, elucidates the overarching theme or contribution of the work, and reflects on the significance of the research. However, the lack of clear and comprehensive guidance on constructing this critical component leaves many candidates unsure of how to effectively present their work, potentially undermining the quality and coherence of their submissions and hindering their success in completing their doctoral programs. This inquiry explores an under-discussed area and a significant gap in academic literature using document analysis and subject matter expert interviews. As of June 2024, there were only fourteen published articles in Google Scholar on the PhD or Doctorate by published works, with only six published in the last ten years.

3.1. The Aim of this Inquiry

The purpose of this study is to address the significant gap in comprehensive guidance available to candidates pursuing a doctoral degree through the publication process, particularly focusing on the construction of an exegesis.

Despite the proliferation of doctoral programs across various fields, including Business, Healthcare, Technology, and Creative Works, candidates frequently encounter insufficient instructional resources pertaining to the development of a cohesive and compelling portfolio. Existing guidance documents, handbooks, and recruitment materials often fall short in detailing the essential elements of an effective exegesis, which serves as a critical commentary that contextualizes published works, articulates overarching themes, and reflects on the contributions of the research.

This inquiry aims to illuminate this under-explored area of academic literature by employing document analysis and conducting interviews with subject matter experts. By synthesizing insights from these methodologies, the study seeks to establish a robust framework that will empower candidates to adeptly navigate the complexities of this alternative doctoral pathway. Ultimately, the research aspires to enhance the quality and coherence of submissions, thereby facilitating greater success in the completion of doctoral programs for those who opt for this innovative route to academia.

3.2. Originality, Significance, and Novelty of the Inquiry

This inquiry addresses a critical and underexplored issue in doctoral education: the need for comprehensive guidance for candidates pursuing a Doctoral or PhD by Published Works. While numerous doctoral programs now offer this alternative route, requiring candidates to compile their previously published works and an accompanying exegesis, the support provided to students in constructing these submissions still needs to be increased. This gap in guidance is significant as it presents substantial challenges for candidates, potentially hindering their ability to complete their doctoral programs successfully.

The originality of this inquiry lies in its focus on a specific yet pivotal aspect of doctoral education that has been largely overlooked. Existing literature has extensively covered traditional doctoral pathways and the general requirements of PhD programs. However, candidates' unique needs and challenges in the Doctoral by Published Works model have yet to receive adequate attention. By highlighting the inadequacies in guidance documents, handbooks, and recruiter information, this research brings to light a critical barrier to the success of these candidates.

The significance of this inquiry is multifaceted. Firstly, it aims to bridge the gap in understanding the specific needs of doctoral candidates pursuing this non-traditional route. Providing clear and comprehensive guidance on constructing a compelling exegesis and cohesive portfolio can enhance the quality and coherence of candidates' submissions, directly impacting their academic success. Secondly, by addressing these guidance shortcomings, the study has the potential to influence institutional practices, leading to improved support systems for doctoral candidates. This insight can contribute to higher completion rates and the overall effectiveness of doctoral programs.

The novelty of this research also stems from its practical implications. Unlike traditional doctoral theses, the Doctoral by Published Works model allows experienced researchers to leverage their existing publications. The requirement to produce an exegesis that contextualizes these works and articulates their collective significance is a unique challenge that demands specific skills and understanding. This study identifies the gaps in current support systems and suggests practical solutions for enhancing candidate guidance. These solutions could include detailed guidelines, workshops, and mentorship programs tailored to the needs of candidates in this doctoral pathway.

3.3. Practical and Social Significance

This inquiry holds substantial practical and social significance within the domain of doctoral education. Addressing the need for more comprehensive guidance for candidates pursuing a Doctoral or PhD by Published Works is essential for several reasons. Practically, the study aims to enhance the quality of support provided to doctoral candidates in this non-traditional route, which needs to be adequately addressed in existing literature. By identifying the gaps in current guidance documents, handbooks, and recruiter information, the research highlights a critical barrier that can impede the academic success of these candidates. Providing detailed guidelines and practical support, such as workshops and mentorship programs, can significantly improve the coherence and quality of candidates' submissions. This enhancement is crucial for their successful completion of doctoral programs and subsequent academic contributions.

4. The Doctoral Exegesis

A doctoral exegesis for a doctorate by published works is a scholarly document accompanying a collection of the candidate's previously published research papers, articles, creative works, or other academic works. It is an alternative to a traditional doctoral dissertation, particularly associated with doctoral programs by publication or creative works. Unlike the traditional dissertation, which typically involves a single, cohesive volume of original research, a doctoral exegesis is a reflective and critical document that accompanies a portfolio of published works or creative outputs (Batty & Brien, 2017; Perry, 1998; Fletcher & Mann, 2004). A doctoral exegesis serves as a commentary or synthesis that ties together the various components of a candidate's research portfolio. Its primary purpose is to contextualize the individual publications or

creative works, explain the overarching theme or contribution of the entire body of work, and reflect on the significance and impact of the research (Batty & Brien, 2017; Perry, 1998; Fletcher & Mann, 2004).

While a traditional dissertation is a single, cohesive document, a doctoral exegesis is a reflective piece that integrates multiple publications or creative works. It provides a narrative that connects these works, offering a holistic view of the candidate's research contributions (Batty & Brien, 2017; Perry, 1998; Fletcher & Mann, 2004). In the doctoral exegesis model, the research is often disseminated through peer-reviewed journal articles or other scholarly publications during the doctoral program. This completion requirement contrasts with the traditional model, typically presenting the research as a single thesis or dissertation. The exegesis model offers greater flexibility, allowing candidates to demonstrate their research impact through various forms of scholarly output (Batty & Brien, 2017). The required deliverables can include journal articles, book chapters, conference papers, artworks, performances, or other creative works.

The doctoral exegesis serves several functions and encompasses various elements (Arnold, 2005):

- It provides a reflective foundation for the published or creative work.
- It offers insights into the individual creative process with references to relevant literature.
- It is a scholarly piece of writing that articulates interactions with the discipline, addresses supervisors, examiners, and wider discipline readers, and clarifies new contributions to scholarship.
- It supports the creative work by exploring ideas differently and providing a reflective piece on the creative process.
- It is a cultural contribution of substantial significance, moving away from the traditional notion of original contribution to knowledge.

- An exegesis should utilize traditional academic discourse and scholarly research commentary.

- An exegesis should display systematic discovery and discourse supported by a scholarly bibliography.

- An exegesis should demonstrate selection, sorting, asking questions, defining, and decision-making skills.

- An exegesis should record and document the process of turning information into knowledge and reflect upon the writing and development processes.

- An exegesis should explore the place of narrative in research, address ideas of ‘truth’ in writing, and clarify ideas about readers and writers.

- An exegesis should situate thoughts, ideas, and processes within relevant scholarly literature.

4.1. The Exegesis Advantages

For candidates in fields where publication and practical application are highly valued, the exegesis model aligns closely with professional practices and career goals. It allows candidates to build a publication record and gain visibility in their field during their doctoral studies. Candidates gain experience in publishing and navigating the peer-review process, which can enhance their academic and professional credentials. Research findings are disseminated earlier, contributing to the field, and allowing real-time feedback and engagement with the academic community. The portfolio of publications or creative works can serve as a robust demonstration of the candidate’s expertise and impact in their field.

4.2. The Exegesis Challenges

Ensuring that the various publications or creative works form a coherent and unified body of research can be challenging. Managing multiple projects and publications simultaneously requires strong organizational

and time management skills. The exegesis demands a high level of critical reflection and the ability to synthesize and contextualize diverse pieces of work effectively. Students often need significant guidance on constructing and completing a successful doctoral exegesis. As a result of these challenges, several self-efficacy theories provide context for the importance and need for more specific guidance for doctoral students required to write an exegesis.

4.2.1. Self-Efficacy Theory

Self-efficacy theory emphasizes the role of belief in one’s capabilities to achieve specific goals and tasks (Schunk & DiBenedetto, 2016). Self-efficacy significantly influences academic motivation, learning, and achievement (Schunk & DiBenedetto, 2016). This theory is particularly relevant to doctoral programs that offer completion through the publication process and require an exegesis. Candidates in these programs must compile a collection of their previously published works and submit them with a comprehensive commentary that contextualizes and synthesizes their research. The gap in comprehensive guidance for constructing an acceptable exegesis presents a notable challenge.

Self-efficacy theory identifies several elements that can help address this issue: mastery experiences, vicarious experiences, social persuasion, and emotional and physiological states (Schunk & DiBenedetto, 2016). Mastery experiences, or the successful completion of related tasks, can enhance candidates’ confidence in compiling and presenting their research effectively. Observing peers who have successfully navigated the exegesis process, known as vicarious experiences, can also boost self-efficacy. Social persuasion, including encouragement and constructive feedback from mentors, advisors, and peers, can reinforce candidates’ belief in their

capabilities. Finally, managing emotional and physiological states, such as reducing anxiety and stress through adequate preparation and support, can further strengthen self-efficacy. By understanding and leveraging these elements of Self-Efficacy Theory, doctoral programs can develop more comprehensive guidance documents and support systems. This level of guidance can help candidates overcome the challenges of presenting their work coherently and confidently, ultimately improving the quality and coherence of their submissions and increasing their likelihood of successfully completing their doctoral programs.

4.2.2. Task-specific Self-Efficacy

Task-specific self-efficacy refers to an individual's belief in their ability to successfully perform and complete a particular task (Niemivirta & Tapola, 2007). In doctoral programs offering completion through the publication process and requiring an exegesis, task-specific self-efficacy is crucial for candidates. These candidates must compile a collection of their previously published works and submit them as the core component of their doctoral thesis. Alongside these publications, they are required to write a comprehensive commentary or synthesis, known as the exegesis, which contextualizes their publications, elucidates the overarching theme or contribution of their work, and reflects on the significance of their research.

The need for clearer and more comprehensive guidance on constructing an acceptable exegesis presents a notable challenge for these candidates. Task-specific self-efficacy involves several elements that can significantly impact candidates' success. These elements include mastery experiences, vicarious experiences, social persuasion, and emotional and physiological states (Niemivirta & Tapola, 2007). Mastery experiences involving

completing related tasks can build confidence and enhance self-efficacy. For doctoral candidates, previous success in publishing research articles can strengthen their belief in their ability to compile these works into a cohesive and compelling portfolio.

Vicarious experiences also play a critical role in task-specific self-efficacy (Niemivirta & Tapola, 2007). Observing peers or mentors who have successfully navigated the exegesis process can provide valuable models for candidates, boosting their confidence in their ability to achieve similar success. This element underscores the importance of having access to examples of successful exegeses and receiving mentorship from experienced researchers who can guide candidates through the process.

Social persuasion is another important element of task-specific self-efficacy (Niemivirta & Tapola, 2007). Encouragement and constructive feedback from advisors, mentors, and peers can reinforce candidates' belief in their capabilities. Effective guidance documents, handbooks, and recruiters are crucial in providing this support, offering detailed instructions and clear expectations for constructing an acceptable exegesis. Positive reinforcement from these sources can help candidates feel more capable and motivated to complete their doctoral programs.

Emotional and physiological states influence task-specific self-efficacy (Niemivirta & Tapola, 2007). Managing stress and anxiety through adequate preparation and support can enhance candidates' confidence in their task performance. Creating a supportive environment that addresses their emotional and physiological needs is essential for candidates facing the challenge of compiling and presenting their research. This support can include stress management resources, counseling services, and workshops on effective writing and research presentations.

In summary, task-specific self-efficacy is critical for candidates pursuing a Doctoral or PhD by Published Works. Understanding and addressing the elements that influence self-efficacy include mastery experiences, vicarious experiences, social persuasion, and emotional and physiological states. Doctoral programs can develop more comprehensive guidance and support systems. This approach can help candidates overcome the challenges of presenting their work coherently and confidently, ultimately improving the quality and coherence of their submissions and increasing their likelihood of successfully completing their doctoral programs. This inquiry highlights a significant gap in academic literature and suggests that enhancing guidance and support based on task-specific self-efficacy can benefit doctoral candidates pursuing this alternative pathway.

5. Method

This inquiry employed a rigorous mixed-methods approach, combining document analysis and individual interviews to uncover the common elements of a successful exegesis for a Doctoral or PhD by Published Works. The primary aim was to develop clear, evidence-based guidance for current and future doctoral students pursuing this pathway. The research ensured a comprehensive understanding of the elements contributing to successful doctoral submissions by triangulating data from document analysis and interviews.

5.1. Document Analysis

The first component of the research involved a detailed document analysis of one hundred exegeses from various doctoral programs that offer completion through the publication process. These exegeses were selected to represent various disciplines and institutions, ensuring diversity and comprehensiveness in the data set. Each

exegesis was systematically reviewed to identify recurring structures, contents, and approaches that characterized successful submissions. The analysis focused on aspects such as the coherence of the narrative, the integration of published works, the articulation of the overarching research contribution, and the reflection on the significance of the research.

5.2. Individual Interviews

The second component comprised individual interviews with ten doctoral chairs who supervised students completing publication-based doctorates. These experienced academic leaders were selected based on their extensive involvement in overseeing doctoral candidates and expertise guiding students through publication. The semi-structured interviews allowed for in-depth exploration of each chair's perspectives on what constitutes a successful exegesis. Topics included students' challenges, effective strategies for integrating publications into a cohesive narrative, and critical elements contributing to the submission's overall quality and acceptance.

5.3. Triangulation and Rigor

The document analysis and individual interviews provided a robust framework for triangulating the results. Triangulation is a methodological approach that enhances the credibility and validity of research findings by cross-verifying data from multiple sources. In this study, triangulation was achieved by comparing the structures, formats, and insights derived from the exegesis analyses with the expert opinions and experiences shared by the doctoral chairs. This method validated the findings and offered multiple perspectives on the key elements of a successful exegesis. This triangulated approach validated the findings and provided practical insights that can provide clear, evidence-based guidance for current and future doctoral students.

6. Results on the Structure and Content of the Exegesis

Following the analysis of the documents and the interviews, in terms of sections and themes, the results are set out below.

6.1. Writing style

The narrative or summary elements of the exegesis, which is usually chapter one, should follow a sound approach.

Participant 4 explained this in commentary and wrote on the board, “*Students should follow the M.E.A.L. Writing Approach. Plenty of videos on YouTube and the Internet explain the writing approach. The M.E.A.L. approach is a structured method for crafting well-organized and coherent paragraphs in academic writing.*”

The participant wrote on the board: It stands for Main idea, Evidence, Analysis, and Link, and helps ensure that each paragraph serves a clear purpose and contributes to the paper’s overall argument. The elements include:

- ❖ Main Idea- Start with a clear topic sentence introducing the paragraph’s main idea. This sentence sets the stage for the paragraph’s discussion and connects it to the overarching thesis or research question.

- ❖ Evidence- Provide supporting evidence for the main idea. This can include data, quotes, examples, or references from credible sources. At the doctoral level, it is crucial to integrate evidence from scholarly literature to substantiate your claims.

- ❖ Analysis- Analyze the evidence presented. Explain how it supports the main idea and its significance in the context of your argument. This is where critical thinking comes into play – interpreting the evidence, identifying patterns, and discussing implications.

- ❖ Link- Conclude the paragraph by linking it back to the main thesis or transitioning to the next point. This ensures coherence and helps the reader follow your line of reasoning.

The writing approach should encompass Bloom’s Taxonomy. Bloom’s Taxonomy is a hierarchical model used to classify educational learning objectives into levels of complexity and specificity. It consists of six levels: Remember, Understand, Apply, Analyze, Evaluate, and Create. This scholarly level focuses on the higher-order thinking skills: Analyze, Evaluate, and Create. The elements of Bloom’s Taxonomy that apply to this include:

- ❖ Analyze- Break down information into components, identify relationships and patterns, and interpret data. This involves examining arguments, comparing theories, and identifying underlying principles.

- ❖ Evaluate- Assess the validity and reliability of information, arguments, and methodologies. This includes making judgments based on criteria and standards, critiquing existing research, and discussing strengths and weaknesses.

- ❖ Create- Generate new ideas, theories, or solutions. This involves synthesizing information from various sources, proposing new frameworks, and developing original research questions or hypotheses.

Applying M.E.A.L. and Bloom’s Taxonomy to Academic Writing and Research – when writing at the doctoral level, combining the M.E.A.L. approach with Bloom’s Taxonomy ensures that your paragraphs are well-structured and demonstrate high-level critical thinking and analysis. Here is how they can be integrated:

- Main Idea (Remember and Understand) – Begin with a clear topic sentence that encapsulates the main idea and shows comprehension of the topic. This aligns with the ‘Remember’ and ‘Understand’ levels of Bloom’s Taxonomy.

- Evidence (Apply) – Present evidence to support your main idea, demonstrating your ability to apply theoretical concepts to real-world examples or data. This corresponds to the ‘Apply’ level of Bloom’s Taxonomy.

➤ Analysis (Analyze and Evaluate) – Critically analyze the evidence, explaining its relevance and significance. This involves breaking down complex ideas and assessing their validity, aligning with the ‘Analyze’ and ‘Evaluate’ levels of Bloom’s Taxonomy. Discussing the implications of the evidence and how it fits into the broader context shows depth of understanding and critical engagement.

➤ Link (Create) – Conclude the paragraph by linking to your thesis or the next point. This often involves synthesizing information and generating new insights or connections. It aligns with the ‘Create’ level of Bloom’s Taxonomy, demonstrating your ability to contribute original thoughts and perspectives.

6.2. Structure and Content

A review of the documents and interviews with the subject matter experts outlined that Chapter 1 of an Exegesis should include:

1. Introduction
2. Significance of the Research or Published Works
3. Original Contribution to Knowledge of the Research or Published Works
4. Reflective Analysis of the Research or Published Works
5. Literature Review
6. Key Terms

Introduction Section – The Exegesis should have a strong introduction section.

Participant 1 stated, *“The exegesis begins with an introduction that situates the candidate’s research within the broader academic field. It provides background information and outlines the research questions or problems addressed by the published works. This section also clarifies the research objectives and the inquiry’s scope, setting the stage by providing information about the research objectives.”*

Participant 10 stated, *“It is insufficient to simply state the context and focus of a student’s research or doctoral topic and the motivation to pursue this research. The reader needs to understand why your research is significant and worth undertaking. This can be effectively achieved by identifying a gap in the existing literature and addressing a problem that requires attention. One common mistake is to justify research solely based on personal interest or from a perspective grounded in personal feelings, observations, and experiences. While these elements are important to any research project and contribute to the researcher’s passion and persistence, academic writing must transcend personal interest to articulate the broader necessity and relevance of the research. To convincingly argue the need for your research, you should begin by identifying critical aspects of your topic that the reader must understand from the outset. This involves reviewing and referencing your topic’s most current and influential research.”*

Significance of the Research or Published Works Section – The Exegesis should include a section explaining the work’s significance.

Participant 1 stated, *“This section should explain how your research or published works have contributed to advancing knowledge in your specific field. This section should include a discussion of the implications of your findings and how they address existing gaps in the literature.”*

Participant 2 stated, *“This section should highlight any practical applications of your research. Explain how your findings can be applied in real-world scenarios, influencing practices, policies, or further research. This section should include a discussion of the broader implications of your research. This might include potential societal benefits, artistic influences, public policy contributions, or industry practice advancements.”*

Participant 4 stated, *“This section should describe the new insights or perspectives your research brings to the field. Explain how your work challenges existing theories or introduces new concepts. This requires highlighting any innovative methods or approaches you used in your research. Explain how these methods differ from traditional approaches and why they are important.”*

Original Contribution to Knowledge of the Research or Published Works Section – The Exegesis should have a section that explains what was contributed by your work that is unique, new, or novel.

Participant 3 stated, *“This section should outline the impact of your research or published work. This section should detail any unique findings or results that distinguish your work from previous studies. Explain why these findings are important and how they contribute to the advancement of your field. This section should also describe the creative approaches you employed in conducting your research. This could include unique experimental designs, new theoretical frameworks, or novel data analysis techniques. You should point out any discoveries or conclusions reported for the first time through your research. Explain their significance and how they add to the existing body of knowledge. This evidence could include commentary from others.”*

Reflective Analysis of the Research or Published Works Section – The Exegesis should include a section that provides context for the research or published works.

Participant 7 stated, *“This section should explain how your published work collection forms a cohesive body of research. You should discuss the overarching theme that ties your publications together and how each piece contributes to this theme. This section requires students to contextualize their publications within the broader field.*

Discuss how each publication fits into the existing literature and its specific contributions.”

Participant 8 stated, *“This section should provide a reflective analysis of your research journey. Discuss the evolution of your ideas, the development of your research questions, and the growth of your understanding over the course of your publications. Describe your learning breakthroughs and lessons learned.”*

Literature Review Section – The Exegesis should include a section that provides an overview of the theories, models, concepts, frameworks, and research that influence the published works or provide context about the research topic or published works.

Participant 10 stated, *“The exegesis includes a review of relevant literature to establish the theoretical framework underpinning the research. This situates the candidate’s work within existing scholarship and highlights its contributions to the field. This section should identify gaps in the existing literature that the candidate’s research aims to fill or address in its own unique way. In this section, the researcher should clearly identify the completed literature review type (rapid, narrative, scoping, or systematic). This section should include keywords used, strategy, inclusion and exclusion strategy, databases used, number of different references used, number within the last five years or less, and the number of peer-reviewed references if applicable.”*

Key Terms Section – The Exegesis should have a section that lists the key terms, and their definitions supported by references used throughout the exegesis and the published.

Participant 9 stated, *“Not all readers may be familiar with the specific terms used in your field of study. By defining key terms upfront, you ensure that all readers, regardless of background, can understand the content. This section*

provides context and clarity. It provides a reference point for readers to consult when encountering unfamiliar terms. It ensures that your terminology is used consistently throughout the document, reducing potential confusion.”

Participant 1 stated, *“Academic research often involves specialized language. Providing precise definitions helps avoid ambiguity and ensures that your readers understand exactly what you mean when you use certain terms.”*

6.3. Chapter 2 of an Exegesis – Publications or Public Works 1

Participant 2 stated, *“Before each published work is presented, each publication or creative work is summarized, emphasizing how it contributes to the overall in a few paragraphs. It should also include a critical examination that briefly explains the findings and arguments presented in the published works. It reflects on the significance of the results and their implications for the field. The candidate should also briefly discuss the broader impact of their work, including its contributions to knowledge, practice, and policy. This section may also consider the practical applications of the research. Suggestions for future research and potential directions for further investigation are provided. After this is done for each published work, the published work should follow in its own separate chapter. Chapter 1 is assessment and impact part of the published works in the exegesis, chapter 2 would be article 1, chapter 3 would be article 2, and chapter 4 would be article 3, Each additional chapter, including 3, 4, 5, etc., should follow the same format.”*

7. Conclusions

The findings from this study underscore the critical need for comprehensive guidance in the exegesis component of a Doctorate or PhD by Published Works programs in Business,

Technology, Healthcare, and Creative Works. Despite the availability of numerous programs offering this completion pathway, there remains a significant gap in the detailed instructions provided to candidates. This lack of guidance presents substantial challenges, potentially undermining the quality and coherence of candidates’ submissions and hindering their success in completing their doctoral programs.

The doctoral exegesis is meticulously structured to encapsulate the candidate’s published works while providing a comprehensive framework for evaluation and impact assessment. Chapter 1 serves as the foundational assessment, critically analyzing the significance and influence of the candidate’s body of published works within the broader academic discourse. This initial chapter sets the stage for the subsequent presentations of individual articles, establishing a coherent narrative that underscores the cumulative contribution of the research.

Chapter 1 of the exegesis should include key sections such as the introduction, significance of the research or published works, original contribution to knowledge, reflective analysis, literature review, and key terms. Participants emphasized the necessity of a strong introduction that situates the candidate’s research within the broader academic field, clarifies the research objectives, and identifies gaps in existing literature. The significance section should highlight the research’s practical applications and broader implications, while the originality section should detail unique findings and novel contributions to the field. Reflective analysis should provide context and cohesiveness to the collection of published works, and the literature review should establish the theoretical framework and identify gaps the research aims to fill. The key terms section ensures clarity and consistency in the terminology used throughout the exegesis.

Following this introductory chapter, Chapters 2, 3, and 4 are dedicated to presenting each published article sequentially. Each chapter adheres to a consistent format, wherein the publication is prefaced by a succinct summary that highlights its relevance to the overarching themes of the exegesis. This summary not only delineates the key findings and arguments articulated within the work but also engages in a critical examination of its implications for the field.

The structure of the exegesis ensures that each published work is presented in its own dedicated chapter, thereby allowing for a thorough exploration and defense of each article in the final defense, akin to a traditional doctoral dissertation. This systematic approach not only enhances the clarity and coherence of the exegesis but also reinforces the candidate's scholarly contributions to their respective field.

Recommendations based on these findings include developing detailed guidance documents and handbooks that

clearly outline the expectations and components of a successful exegesis. These resources should provide step-by-step instructions on constructing each exegesis section, including examples and templates. Additionally, doctoral programs should offer workshops and mentorship programs to support candidates in navigating the complexities of the exegesis process. These initiatives will enhance the quality and coherence of candidates' submissions and improve their overall experience and success rates in completing their doctoral programs.

By addressing these gaps and providing comprehensive support, institutions can better prepare candidates for the challenges of compiling and presenting their published works. This approach will advance knowledge and scholarship within their respective fields, ensuring that the pathway to doctoral by published works remains a viable and respected alternative to traditional doctoral programs.

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