


# Chapter 7

## Fostering Dissertation Motivation: A Key to Doctoral Research Success

**Geemol John**

 <https://orcid.org/0000-0002-6196-9531>

*Lovely Professional University, India*

**Mohammad Amin Wani**

*Lovely Professional University, India*

### ABSTRACT

*Motivation is crucial for the successful accomplishment of doctoral research, especially in the dissertation phase. The chapter explains the intrinsic and extrinsic sources of motivation, such as interest in the topic, career growth, advisor support, institutional resources, and peer relationships. Issues such as imposter syndrome, loneliness, procrastination, and burnout usually hamper progress and cause a high rate of attrition. The chapter identifies evidence-based practices—goal setting, growth mindset, frequent advisor meetings, and work-life balance—to maintain motivation and persistence. It also underscores the institution's role in creating supportive environments and calls for more research on doctoral experiences in different disciplines and cultures to maximize student success.*

DOI: 10.4018/978-1-6684-4905-9.ch007

## **INTRODUCTION**

Doctoral training is a unique academic exercise that is founded on intellectual inquiry and rigorous self-discipline, coupled with high intrinsic drive (Lovitts, 2001; Golde, 2005). One of the major challenges faced by the PhD candidates is continuing to try to stay motivated during the long and often isolating process of dissertation research (Jairam & Kahl, 2012). The process of obtaining a PhD spans several years and traverses many stages such as initial proposal/plan, data collection, and writing of the document (Gardner, 2009). Motivation is one of the cornerstones ensuring the successful progress of doctoral students towards the completion of their research through their dissertation (Bair & Haworth, 2006). Completion of doctoral research requires more than mere technical knowledge; persistence, courage, and sustained motivation are necessary (Muller, 2014). It is one of the relevant factors standing between successful doctoral-postgraduate education and failure. Under factors prompting a student to carry on or to suspend research, motivation ranks high and, in many cases, underlies the challenges that arise in completing dissertation research (Ryan & Deci, 2000). Inadequate motivation is often seen as one of the foremost causes of dropout from doctoral programs (Lovitts, 2001). Therefore, knowledge on how to build and sustain motivation is paramount, with respect to the improvement of doctoral experience and its outcomes.

This chapter describes the importance of motivation among doctoral research, particularly dissertation writing. It also summarizes several motivation-facilitating factors for their relevance in the doctoral process while also offering several practical strategies to those students for developing and sustaining motivation. Hence, the chapter endeavours to allow doctoral candidates to smoothly rise above these tribulations and incongruities of the academic process so that they might be able to fulfil their goal towards successful completion of their dissertation.

## **BACKGROUND**

Doctoral education has a unique structure and demands that makes it unique from any other type. It requires large-scale research, significant independence in terms of intellectual thinking, and the deep commitment of generating new knowledge on a given area. The thesis or dissertation remains the largest aspect of doctoral education, considered as the ultimate fulfilment of academic pursuit. Nonetheless, the process takes a great amount of time and can be a very frustrating ordeal full of doubts and burnout. This is where motivation becomes of utmost importance.

20 more pages are available in the full version of this document, which may be purchased using the "Add to Cart" button on the publisher's webpage: [www.igi-global.com/chapter/fostering-dissertation-motivation/384931](http://www.igi-global.com/chapter/fostering-dissertation-motivation/384931)

## Related Content

---

### Using Economic Decision-Making Tools in Continuous Improvement

Murtadha Albuali (2020). *International Journal of Strategic Engineering* (pp. 36-47).  
[www.irma-international.org/article/using-economic-decision-making-tools-in-continuous-improvement/243667](http://www.irma-international.org/article/using-economic-decision-making-tools-in-continuous-improvement/243667)

### Overview of the Epistemological and Ontological Considerations

(2025). *Qualitative Inquiry in Doctoral Research: Pathways to Effective Design and Implementation* (pp. 31-66).  
[www.irma-international.org/chapter/overview-of-the-epistemological-and-ontological-considerations/377472](http://www.irma-international.org/chapter/overview-of-the-epistemological-and-ontological-considerations/377472)

### Creating a Support Structure for Academic Writing and Publication Support: The Rationale and Lessons Learned

Tonette S. Rocco, Lori Ann Gionti, Cynthia M. Januszka, Sunny L. Munnand Joshua C. Collins (2015). *Handbook of Research on Scholarly Publishing and Research Methods* (pp. 21-37).  
[www.irma-international.org/chapter/creating-a-support-structure-for-academic-writing-and-publication-support/120330](http://www.irma-international.org/chapter/creating-a-support-structure-for-academic-writing-and-publication-support/120330)

### The Contemporary Ethical and Privacy Issues of Smart Medical Fields

Victor Chang, Yujie Shiand Yan Zhang (2019). *International Journal of Strategic Engineering* (pp. 35-43).  
[www.irma-international.org/article/the-contemporary-ethical-and-privacy-issues-of-smart-medical-fields/230936](http://www.irma-international.org/article/the-contemporary-ethical-and-privacy-issues-of-smart-medical-fields/230936)

### Qualitative Data Analysis

(2021). *Approaches and Processes of Social Science Research* (pp. 203-223).  
[www.irma-international.org/chapter/qualitative-data-analysis/268731](http://www.irma-international.org/chapter/qualitative-data-analysis/268731)