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Determination of Factors that Contribute to Postgraduate Students' Delay in their Thesis/Dissertation Completion

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ABSTRACT

Most postgraduate students in federal and state universities rarely complete their thesis/dissertation at the appropriate time. It therefore becomes necessary to determine the factors that contribute to postgraduate students' delay in their thesis/dissertation completion in federal and state universities in south east, Nigeria. The study was guided by two research questions and two hypotheses were tested at 0.05 level of significance. Descriptive survey research design was utilized to assess 1,254 students sampled from a population of all the postgraduate students in federal and state universities, south east, Nigeria using multistage sampling procedure. Questionnaire titled ''Factors that Contribute to Delay in Postgraduate Students' Thesis/Dissertation Completion (FCDPSTDC)'' was used for data collection. The research questions were answered using mean and standard deviation and the hypotheses were tested using t-test. The findings of the study revealed among others that supervisors and students' related factors contribute to the delay of postgraduate students' completion of their thesis/dissertation in federal and state universities, south east, Nigeria. Based on the findings, it was recommended among others that university management should organize mandatory yearly orientation programme for postgraduate students to equip them with research skills and also guide them on how to properly write and complete thesis/dissertation at the stipulated time.

INTRODUCTION

University education is indispensable in developing and supplying the needed manpower of the society. In the same vein, Olunkwa and Nwokolo (2018) stressed that university education plays a key role of providing high level human resources for driving the economy and ensuring rapid societal transformation. It also plays essential roles in producing reliable independent scholar. This is in line with the views of university education held globally. Universities the world over are recognized as institutions established for the advancement of knowledge, scholarship and innovation (Olibie, Agu & Uzoechina, 2015). Universities offer post graduate programmes which play a leading role in development of scholars in various dicipline.

The three postgraduate studies in most Nigerian universities are postgraduate diploma, masters and doctorate degree programmes. Similar to this, Uduak (2016) noted that postgraduate programme which is the higher level of education provided after bachelor's degree exists in three levels of Postgraduate Diploma or certificate, Master's degree and Doctor of Philosophy (Ph.D) degree. There are variation in duration of postgraduate programmes in different universities and countries. Postgraduate students of most Nigerian universities are expected to complete their programme within a year and six months for masters' programmes and three years for doctorate programme. The provision of postgraduate education takes the form of course work or a combination of course work and thesis writing (Uduak, 2016). Postgraduate students in Nigerian universities are required to complete course and research works within the stipulated duration of the programmes. The courses works include seminar and written examinations, while the research work is called thesis or dissertation. The project (for Post Graduate Diploma), thesis (For Masters Degree) or dissertation (for Doctorate degree) investigates educational changes or developments that are being planned to define the way of improving situations innovation (Olibie, Agu & Uzoechina, 2015). In thesis/dissertation writing, students identify and research on a problem worthy of investigation. The identified research problem is required to be commensurate with the students' competence, availabile time data and financial resources. Post graduate students are expected to complete and submit thesis/dissertation as part of partial fulfillment of the academic requirements for the award of degree. According to Akparep, Jengre and Amoah (2017), thesis or dissertation is purely an academic exercise that is expected to be the

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original idea of a postgraduate research student and serves as a core component of the requirements for the award of degree in one's area of study.

A postgraduate student with the help of the supervisor is expected to select a researchable topic, write chapters one to three and propose the work to experts who correct, certify and recommend that the candidate should proceed to the next level (4-5) (Ugwu, Ifeanyieze and Agbo, 2015). Ugwu et al added tht there are five chapters of a thesis which are chapter one comprising the introduction/background to the study, statement of the problem, purpose of the study, significance of the study, research questions and hypotheses; chapter two is the reviewof related literature and chapter three methodology while chapters four and five comprises such areas as presen-tation, analysis, findings and discussion of the findings in addition to the summary, conclusions and recommendation. The exercise of writing thesis/dissertation enables students to develop scientific skills in solving a problem. Santi, Nanik, Qonita, Marida, Savitri and Wijayanti (2020) stressed that the process of writing the thesis or dissertation provides students the opportunities to learn independently, apply their knowledge in research, and develop communication and problem-solving skill. Thesis/dissertation has a significant role at postgraduate level, because it reflects students" degree of academic knowledge and their ability to manipulate and elaborate new ideas and to write correctly and academically (Anderson & MacLaughlin cited in Divsar, 2018). However, most of the students are unable to graduate on stipulated time as a result of delay in completion of their thesis. What accounts for this delay have remains a source of worry to the researchers. A single factor may not be responsible for the postgraduate students delay in their thesis/dissertation completion rate. Student deficiencies, supervisors related factors and school environment may not be left out among the factors.

Every post graduate student is assigned a supervisor to provide the necessary guidance and professional advice during the research work. The roles of a supervisor include to help student identify a researchable topic, mentoring, monitoring, technical support, read the manuscript on time and offer constructive criticism. A supervisor is expected to be accessible, respectful, understandable, eager to interact with the students, good listener, patience, open-mindeness and counsellor. Among other qualities of a good supervisor include; reliability, ability to listen, ability to encourage and share information and have free interaction with the supervisee (Ndayambaje, 2018). A good supervisor is also expected to sufficient knowledge of research topic and the research methodology, ensuring continuous supportive and prompt feedback. Supervisors' interpersonal relationship with supervisees and availability are important during research work. Deane and Peterson (2011) noted that a very basic factor in supervision is the supervisor's availability, where availability does not only refer to frequent physical presence, but also to having frequent meetings with the postgraduate student, and providing timely answers to questions and feedback on the student's written work. However, some supervisors are inaccessible to their supervisees. Some supervisors are rare seen on campus; they instructed their supervisees never to call them on phone and could only meet on appointment. It seems that some supervisors are overloaded with much works that limit the available time to supervise the students' research work. Akparep et al (2017) observed that some supervisors are not trained on the newest research methods that could help them in guiding their students in the postgraduate studies which results in their inability to apply and transfer the appropriate skills and research expertise to their supervisees. The relationship between some supervisors and students are not cordial which make it difficult for them to engage in meaningful interaction that would enhance of thesis/dissertation completion.

Students' completion of thesis/dissertation could be influenced by personal factors such as research skills, interest and availability of time among others. Olibie, Agu and Uzoechina (2015) observed that many of the students experienced a large array of problems related to writing and information retrieval skills and presenting original work.Ho, Wong & Wong (2010) pointed out poor knowledge of data related processes, lack of understanding of the thesis writing process, and student- supervisor personal qualities could be major determinants to thesis completion. Some students combine work with their studies which limit the availability time to concentrate in their thesis/dissertation writing. Etika and Hasibuan cited in Santi et al (2020) averred that the problems experienced by students in writing thesis/dissertation could include; lack of writing ability, inadequate academic ability, lack of interest in conducting research, the difficulty in proposing ideas for research, the difficulty in finding relevant literature, limited funds, anxiety when approaching the supervisor, insufficient and poor time management, and feeling tired and lazy.

Some of the students who fail graduate on stipulated time due to day in their research work abandon the programme. Rooij, Fokkens-Bruinsma and Jansen (2019) observed that high dropout rates,

delay, and dissatisfaction among postgraduate students are common problems in tertiary institution. A delay in thesis/dissertation completion is undesirable for postgraduate students and also detrimental to universities (Schoot, Yerkes, Mouw & Sonneveld, 2013). It could results to attrition which constitute educational wastages in terms of time, energy and financial resources expended by the students during the programmes. Schoot et al added that it is also a loss of valuable time and resources because of all the training and supervision invested in the candidates. Akparep et al (2017) averred that this is a source of worry not only to continuing students, the institution and supervisors but prospective applicants as it breeds apathy on their part of not willing to apply to study at universities for fear of abandoning their programme or not graduating on record time. This prompted the study to determine the factors that contribute to the delay of postgraduate students' completion of their thesis/dissertation in federal and state universities, South east, Nigeria.

Purpose of the Study
The main purpose of the study is to determine the factors that contribute to the delay of postgraduate students' completion of their thesis/dissertation in federal and state universities, South east, Nigeria. Specifically, the study sought to determine:
1. Supervisors' related factors that contribute to the delay of postgraduate students' completion of their thesis/dissertation in federal and state universities, south east, Nigeria.
2. Students' related factors that contribute to the delay of postgraduate students' completion of their thesis/dissertation in federal and state universities, south east, Nigeria.

Research Questions
The following research questions guided the study
1. What are the supervisors' related factors that contribute to the delay of postgraduate students' completion of their thesis/dissertation in federal and state universities, south east, Nigeria?
2. What are students' related factors that contribute to the delay of postgraduate students' completion of their thesis/dissertation in federal and state universities, south east, Nigeria?

Hypotheses
The following hypotheses were tested at 0.05 level of significance.
1. There is no significant difference in the supervisors' related factors that contribute to the delay of postgraduate students' completion of their thesis/dissertation in federal and state universities, south east, Nigeria.
2. There is no significant difference in the students' related factors that contribute to the delay of postgraduate students' completion of their thesis/dissertation in federal and state universities, south east, Nigeria.

METHOD
Descriptive survey research design was utilized for the study. The area is south east, Nigeria which comprised of five states namely; Abia, Anambra, Ebonyi, Enugu and Imo States. The area is bounded in the east by Benue and Cross River States, in the west by Delta State, in the North by Kogi State and in the South by Akwa Ibom and Rivers States. The people of the area are mainly Igbo speaking areas of Nigeria. The area is home to numerous people of different religions, tribes and culture. The zone is known for its high value on education as evidenced by many education institutions. The population for the study consisted of all the postgraduate students of federal and state universities in south east, Nigeria. A sample size of 1,254 postgraduate students was drawn out of the population using multistage sampling procedure involving simple random, stratified and purposive sampling techniques. The average age range of students in the sample is between 28 and 55 years. The participants are mostly Christians of different denominations, Igbos by ethnic grouping and the language spoken is Igbo, though English is used as a second language.

The instrument for data collection was questionnaire titled ''Factors that Contribute to Delay in Postgraduate Students' Thesis/Dissertation Completion (FCDPSTDC)''. FCDPSTDC contains 22 items divided into two parts namely A and B which consisted of 12 and 10 items on supervisors and students related factors that contribute to the delay of postgraduate students' completion of their thesis/dissertation respectively. All the items in the two parts are structured on a four-point rating scale of Strongly Agree (SA),

Agree (A), Disagree (D) and Strongly Disagree (SD) weighted 4, 3, 2 and 1 respectively. The instrument was subjected to face validation by three experts, two in the Department of Educational Management and Policy, and one in Measurement and Evaluation in the Department of Educational Foundations, all in the Faculty of Education, Nnamdi Azikiwe University. The experts suggested that two items should be expunged, six items should be re-structured and more items added to the instruments. The experts' suggestions were used to produce the final version of the instrument. The internal consistency of the instrument was estimated using Cronbach alpha which yielded 0.74 and 0.78 for parts A and B respectively.

A total of 1,254 copies of the questionnaire were administered by the researchers and two research assists. Out of these, only 1,219 copies representing 97% Return rate were properly completed, retrieved and used for data analysis. The research questions were answered using mean and standard deviation and the hypotheses were tested using t-test. The decision on the research questions was adjudged on the basis that any mean score of 2.50 or above was taken to indicate agreement while any mean score that falls below 2.50 was taken as disagreement. For decisions on the hypotheses, if the probability (P) value obtained is greater than the significant level of 0.05, the hypothesis was rejected, whereas a hypothesis was not rejected if the probability (P) value obtained is less than the significance level of 0.05.

FINDINGS

Research Question 1: What are the supervisors' related factors that contribute to the delay of postgraduate students' completion of their thesis/dissertation in federal and state universities, South east, Nigeria?

Table 1: Mean Ratings and Standard Deviation Scores of Postgraduate Students in Federal and State Universities on the Supervisors' Related Factors that Contribute to Delay on their Thesis/Dissertation Completion

/N	ITEMS	Federal Universities (N =667)			State Universities (N =552)		
		Mean	Sd	Decision	Mean	Sd	Decision
1	Insufficient research skills	2.58	1.03	Agree	2.62	1.10	Agree
2	Inaccessibility when needed	2.78	1.14	Agree	2.89	1.05	Agree
3	Delay in reading submitted works	2.67	1.10	Agree	2.60	1.01	Agree
4	Imposing of topics on supervisees	2.55	1.21	Agree	2.63	1.12	Agree
5	Poor guidance in topic selection	2.45	1.06	Disagree	2.48	1.16	Disagree
6	Poor knowledge of topics undertaken by students	2.64	1.18	Agree	2.59	1.08	Agree
7	Frequent changes of the research topics	2.81	1.14	Agree	2.78	1.06	Agree
8	Failure to keep to time scheduled for discussion of research work	2.54	1.09	Agree	2.65	1.11	Agree
9	Poor interpersonal relationship with the supervisors	2.64	0.98	Agree	2.58	1.03	Agree
10	Poor feedback on work progress	2.40	1.04	Disagree	2.36	1.05	Disagree
11	Failure to provide additional information to enhance the research completion	2.67	1.07	Agree	2.45	1.14	Disagree
12	Improper guideline on written works	2.72	1.16	Agree	2.61	1.19	Agree
	Cluster Mean	**2.62**	**1.10**	**Agree**	**2.60**	**1.09**	**Agree**

Data presented on Table 1 indicated that all items with exception of 5 and 10 had mean scores above the acceptable mean score of 2.50 showing agreement with the statements by respondents as supervisors' related factors that contribute to the delay of postgraduate students' completion of their thesis/dissertation in federal and state universities, South east, Nigeria. State postgraduate students disagreed with the federal counterpart on item 11. The overall standard deviation scores of 1.10 and 1.09 for federal and state universities postgraduate students respectively indicated that there is homogeneity amongst their responses. The cluster mean scores of 2.62 and 2.60 for federal and state universities postgraduate students respectively

indicated that students' related factors contribute to the delay of postgraduate supervisors' completion of their thesis/dissertation in federal and state universities, South east, Nigeria.

Research Question 2: What are the students' related factors that contribute to the delay of postgraduate students' completion of their thesis/dissertation in federal and state universities, South east, Nigeria?

Table 2: Mean Ratings and Standard Deviation Scores of Postgraduate Students in Federal and State Universities on the Students' Related Factors that Contribute to the Delay on their Thesis/Dissertation Completion

Results on Table 2 showed that items 13-16, 18, 21 and 22 were rated above the mean score of 2.50 showing agreement with the statements as the students' related factors that contribute to the delay of postgraduate

/N	ITEMS	Federal Universities (N =667)			State Universities (N =552)		
		Mean	Sd	Decision	Mean	Sd	Decision
13	Poor interest in research works	2.69	1.07	Agree	2.76	1.03	Agree
14	Untimely submission of corrections	2.75	0.95	Agree	2.71	1.11	Agree
15	Difficulty in getting research topic	2.89	1.14	Agree	2.91	1.07	Agree
16	Poor research skills	2.81	1.06	Agree	2.79	1.10	Agree
17	Insufficient time to conduct the study	2.42	1.09	Disagree	2.38	1.14	Disagree
18	Difficulty in combining work and research	2.64	1.03	Agree	2.58	1.15	Agree
19	Anxiety when approaching the supervisors	2.67	1.05	Disagree	2.61	1.00	Disagree
20	Unwillingness to work hard	2.45	1.02	Disagree	2.48	1.08	Agree
21	Insufficient funds to conduct a research	2.81	1.06	Agree	2.91	1.17	Agree
22	Insufficient access to literature	2.92	1.11	Agree	2.88	1.07	Agree
	Cluster Mean	**2.71**	**1.06**	**Agree**	**2.70**	**1.09**	**Agree**

students' completion of their thesis/dissertation in federal and state universities, South east, Nigeria. Items 17 and 19 were rated below the acceptable mean score of 2.50 by postgraduate students of state and federal universities in Nigeria. Federal postgraduate students disagreed with the state counterpart on item 20. The overall standard deviation scores of 1.06 and 1.09 for federal and state universities postgraduate students respectively indicated that there is homogeneity amongst their responses. The cluster mean scores of 2.71 and 2.70 for federal and state universities postgraduate students respectively indicated that students' related factors contribute to the delay of postgraduate students' completion of their thesis/dissertation in federal and state universities, South east, Nigeria.

Ho₁: There is no significant difference in the supervisors' related factors that contribute to the delay of postgraduate students' completion of their thesis/dissertation in federal and state universities, south east, Nigeria

Table 3: Summary of t-test of No Significant Difference in the Mean Ratings of Federal and State Universities Postgraduate Students on Supervisors' Related Factors that Contribute to the Delay in Completion of their Thesis/Dissertation

S/N	ITEMS	Respondents	Mean	SD	t-cal	t-crt.	Remark
1	Insufficient research skills	Fed.Uni.	2.58	1.03	0.63	1.96	Not Sig.
		State Uni.	2.62	1.10			
2	Inaccessibility when needed	Fed.Uni.	2.78	1.14	1.75	1.96	Not Sig.
		State Uni	2.89	1.05			
3	Delay in reading submitted works	Fed. Uni.	2.67	1.10	1.11	1.96	Sig.
		State Uni	2.60	1.01			
4	Imposing of topics on supervisees	Fed. Uni.	2.55	1.21	1.27	1.96	Not Sig.
		State Uni	2.63	1.12			
5	Poor guidance in topic selection	Fed. Uni.	2.45	1.06	0.48	1.96	Not Sig.
		State Uni	2.48	1.16			
6	Poor knowledge of topics undertaken by students	Fed. Uni.	2.64	1.18	0.79	1.96	Not Sig.
		State Uni	2.59	1.08			
7	Frequent changes of the research topics	Fed. Uni.	2.81	1.14	0.79	1.96	Not Sig.
		State Uni	2.78	1.06			
8	Failure to keep to time scheduled for discussion of research work	Fed. Uni.	2.54	1.09	1.75	1.96	Not Sig.
		State Uni	2.65	1.11			
9	Poor interpersonal relationship with the supervisors	Fed. Uni.	2.64	0.98	1.09	1.96	Not Sig.
		State Uni	2.58	1.03			
10	Poor feedback on work progress	Fed. Uni.	2.40	1.04	0.63	1.96	Not Sig.
		State Uni	2.36	1.05			
11	Failure to provide additional information to enhance the research completion	Fed. Uni.	2.67	1.07	3.49	1.96	Sig.
		State Uni	2.45	1.14			
12	Improper guideline on written works	Fed. Uni.	2.72	1.16	1.55	1.96	Not Sig.
		State Uni	2.61	1.19			
	Overall	Fed. Uni.	**31.45**	**13.20**	**0.28**	**1.96**	**Not sig.**
		State Uni	**31.24**	**13.10**			

Table 3 shows that there is no significant difference in the mean scores of postgraduate students of federal and state universities for all items except 11 as the supervisors' related factors that contribute to the delay in completion of their thesis/dissertation The over all calculated p-value of 0.28 is less than the critical p-value of 1.96 at 0.05 level of significance and 1,217 degree of freedom. The null hypothesis was not rejected. This means that there is no significant difference in the supervisors' related factors that contribute to the delay of postgraduate students' completion of their thesis/dissertation in federal and state universities, South east, Nigeria.

Ho2: There is no significant difference in the supervisors' related factors that contribute to the delay of postgraduate students' completion of their thesis/dissertation in federal and state universities, south east, Nigeria.

Table 4: Summary of t-test of No Significant Difference in the Mean Ratings of Federal and State Universities Postgraduate Students on Students' Related Factors that Contribute to the Delay in Completion of their Thesis/Dissertation

/N	ITEMS	Respondents	Mean	SD	t-cal	t-crt.	Remark
13	Poor interest in research works	Fed. Uni.	2.69	1.07	1.11	1.96	Not
		State Uni.	2.76	1.03			Sig.
14	Untimely submission of corrections	Fed. Uni.	2.75	0.95	0.73	1.96	Not
		State Uni	2.71	1.11			Sig.
15	Difficulty in getting research topic	Fed. Uni.	2.89	1.14	0.32	1.96	Sig.
		State Uni	2.91	1.07			
16	Poor research skills	Fed. Uni.	2.81	1.06	0.32	1.96	Not
		State Uni	2.79	1.10			Sig.
17	Insufficient time to conduct the study	Fed. Uni.	2.42	1.09	0.63	1.96	Not
		State Uni	2.38	1.14			Sig.
18	Difficulty in combining work and research	Fed. Uni.	2.64	1.03	0.95	1.96	Sig.
		State Uni	2.58	1.15			
19	Anxiety when approaching the supervisors	Fed. Uni.	2.67	1.05	0.63	1.96	Not
		State Uni	2.61	1.00			Sig.
20	Unwillingness to work hard	Fed. Uni.	2.45	1.02	0.48	1.96	Sig.
		State Uni	2.48	1.08			
21	Insufficient funds to conduct a research	Fed. Uni.	2.81	1.06	1.59		Not
		State Uni	2.91	1.17			Sig.
22	Insufficient access to literature	Fed. Uni.	2.92	1.11	0.63	1.96	Not
		State Uni	2.88	1.07			Sig.
	Overall	Fed. Uni.	**27.05**	**10.58**	**0.06**	**1.96**	**Not**
		State Uni	**27.01**	**10.92**			**sig.**

The data presented on table 4 indicated that there is no significant difference in the mean scores of postgraduate students of federal and state universities for all items on the students related factors that contribute to the delay in completion of their thesis/dissertation The over all calculated p-value of 0.06 is less than the critical p-value of 1.96 at 0.05 level of significance and 1,217 degree of freedom. The null hypothesis was not rejected. This means that there is no significant difference in the students' related factors that contribute to the delay of postgraduate students' completion of their thesis/dissertation in federal and state universities, south east, Nigeria.

DISCUSSIONS

The finding of this study indicated that supervisors related factors contribute to the delay of postgraduate students' completion of their thesis/dissertation in federal and state universities, south east, Nigeria. The supervisors related factors that contribute to the delay of postgraduate students' completion of their thesis/dissertation include; insufficient research skills, Inaccessibility when needed, delay in reading submitted works, imposing of topics on supervisees, poor knowledge of topics undertaken by students, frequent changes of the research topics, failure to keep to time scheduled for discussion of research work, poor interpersonal relationship with the supervisors and improper guideline on written works. This is in line with the result of Ndayambaje (2018) which revealed that supervisors are contributing factor to students' completion of thesis/dissertation. This is also supported by the finding of Rooij, Fokkens-Bruinsma and Jansen (2019) which indicated that supervisors' characteristics, academic support, personal support, autonomy support, availability, high expectations and relationship are supervisors' related factors that influence students' thesis/dissertation completion. The agreement between the findings could be due to the fact that the supervisors in different geographical locations display similar attitude. Some supervisors in federal and state universities, south east, Nigeria have insufficient research skills to guide the students during their writing of their work. After reading the supervisees' works, some supervisors make comments

such as revisit and recast instead of explain to the students what they are required to do to enhance the completion of their thesis/dissertation. The supervisors have numerous works such as teaching conducting exams and marking the scripts of both postgraduate and undergraduate students. Due to these numerous tasks, they have insufficient time to guide and provide prompt feedback on students' works. It also makes it difficult for supervisors to have face-to-face meetings with supervisees to discuss way forward in their research work. These insufficient skills make it difficult for them to help and guide students on how to identify researchable topics and search related literature to timely complete their studies. It was also reported that there is no significant difference in the supervisors' related factors that contribute to the delay of postgraduate students' completion of their thesis/dissertation in federal and state universities, south east, Nigeria. This is an indicated that similar supervisors' related factors contribute to the delay of postgraduate students' completion of their thesis/dissertation in federal and state universities in the area of the study.

The result of this study showed that students' related factors contribute to the delay of postgraduate students' completion of their thesis/dissertation in federal and state universities, south east, Nigeria. The students' related factors that contribute to the delay of postgraduate students' completion of their thesis/dissertation include poor interest in research works, untimely submission of corrections, difficulty in getting research topic, poor research skills, difficulty in combining work and research, insufficient funds to conduct a research and insufficient access to literature. This agreed with the finding of Akparep et al (2017) which reported that students contributed almost equally to the delay in the completion of thesis. The finding supported that of Mohammad and Mohammad (2017) which revealed that inadequate knowledge and experience in research, insufficient time and financial resources to conducted a study contribute to challenges in students' thesis/dissertation completion. This also corroborated the finding of Agu and Oluwatayo (2013) which showed that job, family, lack of training; personal and academic problems with supervisor, lack of funds, lack of discipline, inadequate knowledge of the field and the type of research, difficulties in consulting with the supervisor and progress review, academic culture, low self-esteem and knowledge, dislike for the writing process, difficulty in concentrating, and fear of the evaluation of their work are students' related factors that contribute to the delay in completion of their thesis. The possible explanation for the agreement between the findings is that the two studies were conducted in the same country. Some postgraduate students have the impression that research work is very difficult and time consuming. This impression discourages them from taking up the challenges of completing their research work on time. Funds are required to conduct a research, in the geographical location of this study; students are rarely render financial assistant or research grants to conduct a study. Sourcing of funds to conduct the study contribute to the delay in postgraduate students' completion of their research work. Further finding revealed that there is no significant difference in the students' related factors that contribute to the delay of postgraduate students' completion of their thesis/dissertation in federal and state universities, south east, Nigeria. This finding is probably due to Nigerian universities have similar outlook, policy and mode of operation. This finding is evidence that similar students' related factors contribute to the delay of postgraduate students' completion of their thesis/dissertation in federal and state universities in the area of the study.

CONCLUSION
Based on the findings, it was concluded that supervisors and students' related factors contribute to the delay of postgraduate students' completion of their thesis/dissertation in federal and state universities, south east, Nigeria. It is regrettable to acknowledge that students are discouraged to enroll for postgraduates studies due to these factors. If these supervisors and students related factors are inadequately managed, it can undermine the universities efforts in producing world first class and independent scholar that can research and proffer solution to the pandemic, poverty and economic recession in the world.

Recommendations
Based on the finding, it was recommended among others that
1. University management should organize mandatory yearly orientation programme for postgraduate students to equip them with research skills and also guide them on how to properly write and complete thesis/dissertation at the stipulated time.

2. University management should organize annual workshops on research for lecturers to enable them exchange ideas and acquire requisite competencies that will promote timely completion of students' thesis/dissertation.
3. University management should design an operational policy that mandate supervisors to read and return supervisees' thesis/dissertation within two weeks of submission.
4. The management of postgraduate studies should ensure supervisors/supervisee adhere strictly to policy of thesis/dissertation supervision through proper monitoring and reinforcement mechanism.
5. Quality assurance unit on research affairs should be established in all federal and state universities to handle all complains related to delay in completion of postgraduate students' thesis/dissertation.

Limitations of the Study

There are some limitations that were evident in the study. The study was conducted in only public universities in south east; Nigeria thus, the result might not be generalized to students to private universities in the zone. The use of only questionnaire for data collection was another the major limitation in this study. Observation would have helped the researchers to have first-hand experience of factors that contribute to the delay in students' thesis/dissertation completion. However, despite these limitations, this study is deemed to have achieved its purpose as it did not invalidate the findings of the study.

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