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COUNSELING AND HUMAN  
DEVELOPMENT SERVICES

THE EXPERIENCE OF COMPLETION: FEMALE COUNSELOR EDUCATION  
GRADUATES' PROCESS OF DEGREE ATTAINMENT (212 pp.)

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This research was a constructivist grounded theory study exploring what experiences facilitated doctoral degree completion for female CES degree recipients. Researchers have discovered that women doctoral students are at greater risk for not completing their doctoral degrees. Additionally, there is a dearth of information related to how CES women doctoral graduates persist to degree completion. Therefore, the research question that guided the current study was: What doctoral education experiences facilitated degree completion for CES women doctoral degree recipients?

The researcher utilized purposeful sampling and sought a diverse sample of volunteer participants. Six female participants, one of whom was a woman of color, were selected for the study. Data were collected through interviews and analyzed consistent with the process of grounded theory. The theory, themes, categories, and subcategories emerged from the data.

Data revealed the overall theory to be: The Process of Completion as an Inter-Connected System of Experiences with Self and Others. The two main themes included in the theory were: (a) Relationships as Sources of Support and Catalysts for Growth and (b) Navigating Obstacles. The categories that comprise the theme Relationships as Sources of Support and Catalysts for Growth were: (a) Personal Growth

and Development Occurs through Relationships with Others and (b) Professional Growth and Development Occurs through Relationships with Others. The categories that comprise the theme Navigating Obstacles were: (a) Navigating Systemic Obstacles and (b) Navigating Individual Obstacles. The results of this research were discussed in relation to existing literature and implications for the CES field were identified.