

Journey into Doctoral Candidacy: A Grounded Theory Study of Doctoral Qualification Exam Process

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Abstract

The purpose of this study is to investigate the process doctoral students go through in qualification exam. Within a grounded theory design, a series of in-depth interviews were carried out with six doctoral candidates to inquire into their thoughts and experiences. Data collection started four months before the qualification exam and ended approximately a month after the exam had been taken. A total of 127 pages of interview transcripts were produced as a result of interviews. The data from these interviews were analysed in three stages: (1) initial coding and theorizing; (2) selective coding and theorizing; (3) theoretical codes. The theoretical codes were generated from the codes using the constant comparative method. The analysis revealed five interrelated phases students go through in the qualification exam: Ambiguity and procrastination; Getting lost and finding ways; Getting on with the unavoidable: taking the exam; Relief or burnout after the exam, and Looking back with mixed feelings.

Key words: *doctoral qualification exam; doctoral students; higher education; grounded theory.*

Introduction

Qualification (also known as preliminary or comprehensive) exam is considered as an important phase of doctoral education. Once this exam has been passed, doctoral students are considered doctoral candidates who are ready to engage in scientific research on their journey through getting the doctoral degree. The qualification process is challenging both intellectually and emotionally, and students seem to have

varied perceptions and experiences of this exam ranging from valuing the process professionally to finding it an unnecessary requirement. Since this exam is a must for almost all doctoral students, it is likely to have a large impact on graduate students' conception of and satisfaction with the doctoral programme to which they belong.

Qualification exam has a long history rooted in the thirteenth century Europe (Furstenberg & Nichols-Casebolt, 2001). The first qualification exam was conducted in the late 1800s at Yale University leading to the first doctoral degree (Rudolph, 1965). In general, students who complete the coursework successfully, take the comprehensive exam to demonstrate competency in research skills and knowledge of the field in which they specialize. Once they have passed this exam, they are entitled to carry out doctoral research study for the purpose of contributing to scientific knowledge in their respective field. The practices for taking the exam may vary by country, university, college, or even by department. For instance, some exams might contain a writing session including various coursework questions and an oral session directed by a committee from the department. Written work, like take-home assignments, proposals, articles or some combinations of these options may be other options in use in qualification exam format. The procedures of the exam are mainly decided by the committee in the departments.

Although there are different practices among universities and departments, the main purpose of the qualification exam is mostly stated as "assurance of quality" (Anderson, Krauskopf, Rogers, & Neal, 1984, p. 79). In line with this point, Schmidt, Homeyer and Walke (2009) mention that qualification exams are beneficial for internal and external programme evaluation.

Numerous research studies were conducted in relation to doctoral studies in terms of a number of dimensions (Barnes & Randall, 2012; Capa-Aydin, Aksoz, and Gelmez-Burakgazi, 2011; Gardner, 2010; Golde, 2000), but the qualification exam has rarely been the main focus in these studies. To begin with, Barnes and Randall (2012) analyzed the National Doctoral Programme Survey (NDPS) data so as to investigate the differences in the satisfaction levels of currently enrolled, recently graduated, and former graduate students in different academic disciplines. The analysis indicated that satisfaction with doctoral experiences seems to be similar across various disciplines (social sciences, humanities, and engineering). However, student satisfaction within disciplines varied significantly based on their academic experiences. In their studies, Capa-Aydin et al. (2011) explored the contribution of different components (knowledge, courses, qualification exam, relationship with advisor, academic tendency, relationship with faculty, administration, financial status, and services provided by university) of doctoral education to academic satisfaction. The sample of the study consisted of 350 PhD students. A hierarchical multiple regression analysis was conducted and results indicated that the students in Graduate School of Social Sciences are more academically satisfied than their peers in Graduate School of Natural and Applied Sciences. Relationships with their advisors, the knowledge,

qualification examination, and coursework were other significant predictors of academic satisfaction. Gardner (2010) interviewed 60 doctoral students in 6 different disciplines in one institution and explored their socialization experiences. Four themes emerged from the study: support, self-direction, ambiguity, and transition. However, the themes differed in terms of departmental support (departments with lower completion rates vs. departments with higher completion rates). Academic support/integration was also an important factor for the process of doctoral student attrition rate (Golde, 2000). What is more, academic integration had a greater role in doctoral student attrition rate than social integration.

A lack of sufficient research published on the purpose, use, and value of comprehensive exams has also been identified by Furstenberg and Nichols-Casebolt (2001), and Peterson, Bowman, Myer, and Maidl (1992). The studies on qualification exam mostly focused on the use of qualification exam in specific programmes such as nursing (Kim, McKenna, & Ketefian, 2006; Mawn & Goldberg, 2012), counseling programmes (Peterson et al., 1992), psychology (Khanna & Khanna, 1972; Tomeo & Templet, 1999), and criminology and criminal justice (Schafer & Giblin, 2008). Decades of literature published on doctoral students implied that qualification examinations caused stress (DiPietro et al., 2010; Kearns, Gardiner, & Marshall, 2008; Khanna & Khanna, 1972), anxiety (Barley, 1990; Khanna & Khanna, 1972), and were conceptualized as a hurdle (Kearns, Gardiner, & Marshall, 2008; Khanna & Khanna, 1972). What is more, the requirements of the exam were vague (DiPietro et al., 2010) and students felt alone during the period (DiPietro et al., 2010).

Although these studies were helpful in understanding different dimensions and influences of qualification exam, they fall short in explaining what processes students go through in the period of taking the exam. Therefore, this research aims to investigate the processes doctoral students go through during the qualification exam by explaining their cognitive, affective, social, and physical experiences. As a result, the specific research question was the following:

“What processes do doctoral students go through during qualification exam as presented in their cognitive, affective, social, and physical experiences?”

Methods

A qualitative grounded theory approach was used as the main perspective in this study to give shape to research question, method and analysis of the data. This approach “is particularly useful when little prior research in a specific area of inquiry” (McCann & Clark, 2003, p. 16) has been carried out. According to Glaser (1992), grounded theory is “...a package of research methods which includes data collection, coding and analyzing through memoing, theoretical sampling and sorting to writing, using the constant comparative method” (p. 12). Here, it is important to note that data collection and analysis in a grounded theory study establish a continuous cycle of searching, understanding and further exploration.

At the beginning of the study, researchers conducted purposeful sampling to choose “information – rich subjects” (Patton, 2002, p. 230) “because subjects can reliably inform the research question” (Houser, 2011, p. 424). As initial data were collected and analyzed, theoretical sampling was used for further data collection, that is, the sampling process was controlled by the outcomes of the data received from the initial sample. This resulted in a sample of participants directed by the emerging theory (Glaser, 1992). The sampling continues until theoretical saturation has been achieved (Glaser, 1978). Theoretical saturation, according to Morse (2004), “is the phase of qualitative data analysis in which the researcher has continued the sampling and analyzing data until no new data appear and all concepts in the theory are well-developed” (p. 1123).

Taking into consideration these perspectives of grounded theory studies, six doctoral students (five female, one male) studying curriculum and instruction at Middle East Technical University in Ankara, Turkey, participated in the study in 2011. They were at the stage of preparing for an upcoming doctoral qualification exam and were willing to participate in all three phases of the study. Their age interval was between 27 and 32 and they were all employed in either universities or companies. Three of the participants were married (P1, P2, P3), while the remaining three participants were single (P4, P5, P6). One of the participants (P1) had a child. Students were interviewed three times individually via interview guides. Interviews were recorded to prevent the potential threat of data loss resulting from merely taking notes.

Table 1

Example Questions from the Interview Protocols

First Interview Protocol

“Tell me, how do you define your feelings these days? Why do you think you feel like this?”

“How would you define *comprehensive examination process*? Is there any material, an activity or a living thing which would help you to define it? Why did you choose it?”

“What kind of effects have you experienced during comprehensive exam period? You might take emotional, cognitive, physical or social aspects into consideration...Could you give examples?”

Second Interview Protocol

“Could you please describe the process after our first interview? How do you feel cognitively and emotionally? Have you experienced any difference?”

“Are there any interests or personal needs (social and cultural activities, travelling, hobby, health, etc.) that you have postponed during the exam period?”

Third Interview Protocol

“Could you please describe the process after the comprehensive exam? How do you feel cognitively and emotionally? Have you experienced any difference?”

“After the exam, have you experienced any difference in your social relationships (family, friends, etc.)? Why do you think so?”

The interview protocols were developed by the researchers. In the semi-structured interview format, open-ended questions were employed to examine experienced effects of the examination on students’ lives. Table 1 represents example questions

from the interview protocols. The interview schedule was validated by expert review in terms of depth, scope, appropriateness for the participants, and compatibility with the research questions. The interview questions were checked by three individuals: a professor in the area of curriculum and instruction, who is also a member of the exam committee; a PhD candidate who had taken the exam before, and another PhD student who had completed her course requirements. Following the revisions within the context of expert review, the schedule was piloted with two PhD students who had passed the exam previously.

Doctoral students participated in 45- to 65-minute long, in-depth, open-ended interviews with 11 to 16 questions. The total data consisted of over 15 hours of interviews over a period of more than 5 months. The first round of interviews was conducted four months before the exam; the second round was conducted two weeks before the exam, while the final round of interviews was conducted within a month after the exam.

Table 2
An Example of Index of Coding Systems for Content

PHASE I	PHASE II	PHASE III	PHASE IV	PHASE V
Cognitive Effects	Cognitive Effects	Cognitive Effects	Cognitive Effects	Cognitive Effects
Inadequacy	Confusion	Fulfilling high expectations	Relief	Pretending not to have lived through the exam
Insecurity	Seeking advice in a blurry path	Never-ending insufficiency	Burn out	process
Procrastination	Setting priorities	Mind-blowing experience	Higher self-esteem	Regrets
	Concentration problems		Losing confidence	Growth in knowledge
	Trying to find relief		Blaming the process	Personal development
	Learning and forgetting		Confirming the need for qualification	
			Shutdown mode	
Affective Effects	Affective Effects	Affective Effects	Affective Effects	Affective Effects
Stress	Stress	Stress	Relief	Back to basics
Tension	Anxiety	Anxiety	Enjoyment	
Fear			Higher self-esteem	
Anxiety			Losing confidence	
Physical Effects	Physical Effects	Physical Effects	Physical Effects	Physical Effects
--	Health problems	Fatigue	Relief	Back to basics
	Fatigue	Headache	Fatigue	
	Insomnia	Sickness		
		Pain		
Social Effects	Social Effects	Social Effects	Social Effects	Social Effects
Limited time allocation for:	No time allocation for:	--	Back to basics:	Back to basics
Oneself	Oneself		Oneself	
Friends	Friends		Friends	
Family	Family		Family	
Business	Business		Business	

In order to generate or discover a theory ‘grounded’ in the data (Strauss & Corbin, 1998) the data were coded at three levels. At the first level, or in ‘open coding’, the major categories of information were defined; at the second level, or ‘axial coding’, the categories were created around the core phenomenon; and at the final step, ‘selective

coding, the categories were linked and described (Byrne, 2001; Creswell, 2007; Strauss & Corbin, 1998). Table 2 represents an example of the coding system.

Results

A Model of Qualification Exam Period

PhD students' qualification exam period can be defined through the background of a number of interacting effects, namely: cognitive, affective, social, and physical. These factors in combination affect the five phases of the qualification exam periods that emerged during the data analysis process: *Ambiguity and procrastination; Getting lost and finding ways; Getting on with the unavoidable: taking the exam; Relief or burnout: after the exam and Looking back with mixed feelings.*

Phase I: Ambiguity and Procrastination

This initial phase was evidenced in the first interviews, which were conducted four months before the exam. Five main groups of characteristics could be seen in the interview responses at this stage. These were: seeking support and gaining information and perspectives about the exam; problem of concentration; self-doubt and losing confidence; low sense of direction and questioning the purpose of qualification exam. This phase related to the types of procedures like communicating with other students who are going or have been through the same process and talking to faculties to learn more about the exam.

At this phase, four months before the exam, half of the students (P2, P3, and P4) stated that they had recently initiated their studies while the others had not done so yet. Students who shared their experiences were mainly those students who seemed to have a clear direction for studying for the exam. The others stated to be experiencing slight differences or no difference in their feelings at this time. However, all of the students mentioned that they were delaying their studies. As P1 stated:

The exam itself is perilous. Whenever I think about the exam I can't help feeling like this. It is simply frightening. Therefore, it is hard for me to initiate the studies. I just extend the time. I feel too much stress on me. The more I put off the studying, the more I experience the stress. It is like a vicious cycle.

Exam is found to be causing considerable stress and fear among students at this phase. However, the factors causing stress differed from student to student. For P4, one reason for stress was her fellowship grant which she would have to pay back if she failed. She further added that a failure would probably make her feel guilty towards the instructors in the department, which also put additional stress upon her. She said she felt she was losing confidence day by day. For P2, stress was even affecting her social relationships:

My husband said I was a bit aggressive towards our guests last week. Actually, he was right. Because while I was entertaining my guests, I could not stop thinking about the exam and I felt like I was wasting my studying time. It caused stress.

Similar to P1, P5 felt stress and fear when she thought of the exam, even though she had not started to prepare for the exam yet. She added that she had not experienced any cognitive or physical differences at this phase. Likewise, P1, P3, and P6 explained that they had not felt a physical effect so far. However, P4 expressed the negative physical conditions she had suffered:

The exam messed up my sleeping routine completely. The reason is not so much the studying itself. It is dreaming about the exam while sleeping, and this is not a comfortable kind of sleep anymore. Then, I have to wake up early in the morning and go to the office in this mode. This affects my whole day in a negative way.

Confusion and a low sense of direction were other changes the students experienced cognitively. The following quotation is what P3 said:

It is so difficult to decide what to study. It seems like a billion of subjects are waiting for me. I can't even focus. I wish we had something explicit to study. I believe that it would facilitate the process because the exam seems extremely difficult.

Interviewees at this phase were mainly grilling the purpose and procedures of the exam. All of the participants underlined that the exam was unnecessary and the procedures at their departments were not student-friendly. The results indicated that doctoral students in the study would like to remove the exam completely if they had any authority at the department. They suggested many alternative examinations like a take-home exam (P5), a project-based exam (P3 and P5), a dissertation-based exam (P4, P6, and P1), procedures like extending time for the exam (if the exam is still a "must") to a week-time (P5 and P6), or adding up a course to the programme like a "qualifying course", which gives an overall perspective as the exam is supposed to (P1). In the following quotation, P4 explains her concerns about the purpose and procedures of the exam:

I sometimes find myself questioning: "Why do we need to take this exam?" If they [the faculty at the department] want us to see the overall picture, ok, then give me a project covering the courses. I am fine with this. It is insane to take a 9-hour written exam. I have difficulty in finding the exact word to define it but it is "primitive", I guess. Yes, primitive. The procedures for the exam vary from department to department and most of them are much easier than ours, as we have heard. When they pass the exam, they are qualified just like we are. It is not fair anymore.

Phase 2: Getting Lost and Finding Ways

The second phase was based on the data obtained in the second round of interviews conducted two weeks before the exam. During the interview, students were asked about the experienced effects of the examination on their lives since the first round of interviews. This phase was related to becoming weary about their own performance

in vague requirements and the participants' navigations through life situations that they were faced with while going through qualification exam period at the same time. Students at this stage were setting priorities, browsing literature and deciding on the right learning strategy (reading, note-taking, starting from the subjects that are difficult for them, etc.).

P1, P5 and P6 stated their decision to initiate their studies at the beginning of September, which was two months before the exam. Two weeks before the exam most of the students reported they felt more ambiguity in comparison to the first interviews. Students were also suffering from a high level of exam anxiety and stress. P4 described she suffered from stress and anxiety because of the feeling of inadequacy:

I am surrounded by too much stress. It is unbelievable. Actually, I am struggling not to reflect this on my environment but sometimes I fail (...) I am suffering from a high level of anxiety. I am reading but I feel like I will not be able to recall the information. This puts more and more stress on me. I am not happy anymore.

P6 likewise stated:

I have never felt this much of anxiety in my life. Not even in master's and doctorate interviews, nor in thesis phases (...) There is a limited time which you cannot manage and it works completely against you. You are trying to catch it, running and running like a horse.

In order to manage their stress and anxiety levels, students explained that they tried to find some relief during the process. When they felt inadequate, they stated they consulted their friends and families. Moreover, they felt guilty when they did not study and did something else instead, like hanging out with friends or going to the cinema. P5 added that it was like it had been preying on her mind. Procrastination of academic studies, social and cultural activities, health issues, sports, hobbies, and travelling were also mostly mentioned by the participants. P1 explained how her life had changed during this period:

Currently, I have postponed everything to the end of the exam. I divided my life into two parts: before the exam and after the exam. Everything has frozen, there is a change in almost everything: let me see my friends: later; let me buy this: later; let me read a book: later; let me work on an article: later. Every single thing in my life has stopped until after the exam. I feel like I will be free as soon as the exam ends.

Physically, doctoral students' experiences differed from each other. However, almost all students, except P6, complained about fatigue. Health problems like migraine (P2), gaining weight (P5), sickness (P1, P4, P5), skin problems (P6) or sleep disorders (P3, P4 and P6) emerged among the participants at this phase.

Students criticized the fact that there were lots of things to study and they felt lost. Therefore, they tried to develop some strategies like reading from different sources (P5, P6); taking notes (P6); going from complex to easy subjects (P1, P2, P3, and P4);

visiting advisor and getting some help (P1, P2, P3, and P4), and talking to experienced students to find their paths (P1, P2, P3, P4, and P5).

In their social relationships students stated they had allocated limited time to their families, friends and even themselves, which was not as it used to be before the exam.

Phase 3: Getting on with the Unavoidable: Taking the Exam

This phase was based on the data from the third round of interviews conducted within a month after the exam. This phase related to students' written and oral exam experiences and strategies to cope with the harsh exam conditions. There was a one-day break between students' written and oral exam sessions. P5 and P6 passed the exam successfully. P3 and P4 failed and P1 and P2 passed the exam conditionally (they were required to take several PhD courses).

All of the participants criticized the procedures of the written exam, which lasted 9 hours (from 9 am to 6 pm). Their concerns were mostly related to their physical and cognitive conditions. For instance, P1 explained how she had difficulties, both physical and cognitive:

...from 9 am to 6 pm. Such an exam is unbelievable. There is not even an official break. I could just eat a sandwich and nothing then. I suffered from a pain in my shoulder after the exam. It was so tiring and mind-blowing. It is pure stress.

P5 explained she had a terrible headache soon after the "tiring written exam". For P6, writing for 9 hours was a "big problem" in the written session:

Written session was difficult. Physical conditions, time... I did not write much in comparison to others but my hand failed. I have not experienced this much writing before. You want to write more, you have something in your mind but your hand and wrist do not allow you to do so.

Similarly, P3 found it too boring to sit during long, long hours of the written exam. She added that she could not think logically after a while and that she did nothing then.

Participants agreed that the oral exam was more stressful than the written one. For P6, the written session was troublesome but oral exam was shorter and better than he expected.

To cope with the problems they were facing, especially during the written session, students tried to develop strategies. P6 implied he took notes while he was studying, just as he would be required to do during the exam. P5 explained she had made a plan before the written exam and reflected on it during the oral exam:

I decided to start from the question which I feel more comfortable with. I tried to plan when I would eat something or drink coffee. However, things did not go the way I had planned. Some questions required more time, therefore some responses were shorter. I thought that I could explain this in the oral part, and I did. I said I actually wanted to add these points to the questions during the written exam, but the time was limited.

For P4, the oral exam was an “unforgettable process”, too:

I was full of anxiety again. Some students who had taken the oral exam before me failed. Some of them passed conditionally. I consistently said to myself: “It will be OK, you will be OK”. I tried to calm myself because everybody was suffering from stress, just as I was.

Interestingly, the students who had passed the exam said that they still did not feel sufficiently qualified immediately after the exam. As P5 stated:

The committee declared that I had passed the exam. I was qualified. It is funny, but I was not sure. The exam had dominated my life during a few months and suddenly it was gone. I was happy but something was wrong. The feeling of unqualified or qualified. It was weird.

Phase 4: Relief or Burnout: After the Exam

This phase was mostly related to post-exam uncertainty, and the participants’ experiencing relief or burnout.

Considering the written exam, which lasted nearly nine hours, and then the oral exam in a week’s time, students thought that the exam was a physically tiring and stressful period. The healing process differed depending on the condition of passing the exam. For instance, P3 and P4 (they failed the exam) explained that they still had emotional fluctuations when they thought about the exam. P3 described how she had lost her confidence and gone into “shutdown mode” after the exam:

The exam was over and I was experiencing burnout. I was constantly crying. You are in your thirties and you have a certain position in the society. It is not nice to fail. Performance may be different from one person to another but you know how you dedicated yourself to this exam and you know that you did not deserve this anymore. This is ignored, I think. I sank into despair and felt demoralized. I minimized my communication with others. I did not want to talk for two or three days with anybody. I collapsed.

Similarly, P1 blamed the doctoral programme and explained how she was angry and disappointed immediately after the exam:

One of the committee members said that I had problems with basic concepts, therefore they found my exam performance insufficient. I needed to study more. It was so offensive to hear that. It is funny. Then, how come I had completed all the coursework successfully? How could I get high grades in the courses? What was I doing here? Are they kidding me?

In contrast to this, P2, P5 and P6 claimed that they had felt a relief physically, emotionally, and cognitively as soon as they had passed the exam. Participants agreed that this affected their social relationships. P6 mentioned how she got her life back immediately after the exam:

I was still tired but relaxed. I gained self-confidence and I feel more positive now. After the exam, we met with friends and went out to celebrate. It was

something I missed because I had procrastinated seeing my friends during the exam period. Before the exam I even used to eat meals in a hurry, but now I have tea with my family after the meals. I had preferred easy meals but now I cook whatever I want. I had been a member of a folk dances group before the exam, and after the exam I started to participate in the rehearsals again. I had some health problems which have now diminished. I can deal with them now.

Phase 5: Looking Back with Mixed Feelings: Self-Evaluation

This phase was a kind of a “self-evaluation” step for the participants. Adaptation to the life conditions was easier for students who had passed the exam in comparison to the ones who had failed. However, in a month’s time, all of the participants stated they had overcome the effects of the exam. P1 explained:

The exam was covering 80% or 90% of my life. I have a child but being with him was stressful, too because I was reflecting my stress on him. During every single day and night I was always thinking: “I need to study, I did not study, I must study, bla bla bla...”. Now, it is over. I am as free as a bird.

P3 added she felt like she had been stuck with increasing stress and overload in a tunnel during all this exam process. However, she was feeling the same from time to time as she could not pass the exam.

Students at this phase admitted that they sometimes could not force themselves to think about the exam: how they had studied, how much stress they had felt, how they had managed their lives under these “inhuman conditions” (P1), and how they had procrastinated their lives. Some of the participants had a smile on their faces when they looked back. Nevertheless, the exam left bittersweet memories (in favour of the bitter ones in some of the participants’ lives), as P3 stated:

I feel nothing now [a month after the exam]. Everything has changed. Now I am listening to myself, wasting time, doing nothing. I am not studying anymore. I am the girl I used to be before the exam and I pretend all those things have never happened.

Figure 1 indicates the cognitive, physical, social, and affective effects of the exam through the phases.

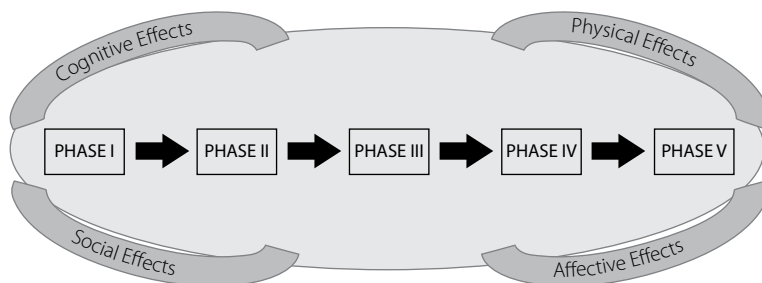


Figure 1. A Model of Doctoral Comprehensive Exam Period

Discussion and Conclusion

Qualification exam is considered a “rite of passage” (Estrem & Lucas, 2003) into the community of academicians. Students experience various feelings and perceptions in this process, and it is important to understand these experiences and see if they represent a pattern in terms of phases students go through. The results indicated that students who had participated in this study went through five phases in the qualification process when their cognitive, affective, social and physical experiences were taken into account: *Ambiguity and procrastination*; *Getting lost and finding ways*; *Getting on with the unavoidable: taking the exam*; *Relief or burnout: after the exam* and *Looking back with mixed feelings*.

The flow of the qualification exam experiences has not been highlighted in the literature, at least in this way. Therefore, we will discuss it in terms of relations among stages, explanations and interpretations. On their way to taking the qualification exam, doctoral students who participated in the study followed some clear steps which are dependent on the initial steps. A few months before the exam students had difficulties in explaining their cognitive, affective, social and physical experiences as they had not felt like that before. In the *ambiguity and procrastination* and *getting lost and finding ways* phases, students were mainly gaining information and perspectives about the exam, and browsing literature and setting their priorities. Over time, it was observed that the students were experiencing ambiguity in focus / feeling incompetent. Becoming weary and doubtful about their self-performance were other cognitive and affective experiences they had. Within the feeling of being cognitively “inadequate” they realized that the exam and the following phases depended on the failure or success in the exam. Relief and happiness vs. grief and inadequacy were the emerging categories after the exam. During this entire period, students were willing to share their feelings/ideas with others who were or had been through the same process. This might be explained by three reasons. First of all, students might have felt that they were not alone. Secondly, they could find a relief in this. Lastly, they were looking for the alternatives to find their ways when they felt lost. Further studies are needed to confirm or elaborate on these statements, especially in different doctoral programmes.

This grounded theory study uncovers the myriad of experiences of doctoral students during this exam period. The main value of this study lies in the data-based map of qualification exam period. Although the qualification exam literature contains several studies with the procedures and uses of the exam in the specific programmes, this study is distinctive in its systematic exploration of the phases of the doctoral qualification exam from the perspectives of doctoral students who had taken the exam. A theoretical model of the cognitive, emotional, and physical experiences of six participants was constructed through qualitative data analysis. Benefits could also lie in the opportunity to connect the study to existing literature which our model construction gives. The model enlightens, from various aspects and effects, the unknown patterns and phases of the doctoral qualification exam.

Participants in this study mainly experienced the qualification period in five phases: *Ambiguity and procrastination*, *Getting lost and finding ways*, *Getting on with the unavoidable: Taking the exam*, *Relief or burnout: after the exam*, and *Looking back with mixed feelings*. In our proposed model, these five phases cannot be clearly separated from one another.

One of the main experiences students had in the first phase was unclarity about the exam. Students criticized that there was not a written booklet covering the purpose, subjects, expectations, and previous exam questions. They were mainly informed by their advisors, instructors at the department, and other students who had taken the exam before. This confusion and a low sense of direction caused the failure in getting the things done on time for the participants. Procrastination as a problem has both internal (irritation, regret, despair, and self-blame) and external consequences (impaired work and academic progress, strained relationships, and lost opportunities) (Burka & Yuen, 1983). Specifically, doctoral students' procrastination of obligations may result in their failure to complete their studies (Muzsynki & Akamatsu, 1991). As discussed by Anderson, Krauskopf, Rogers, and Neal (1984), such uninformative conditions about the purpose of the examination might produce anxiety among students. Here, we echo the position of Anderson et al. (1984), since most of the responses directed us to do so. For the participants, the requirements for the exam are vague or elusive. Peterson et al. (1992) also emphasized this issue: "Students are not given very specific direction in preparing for their qualification exams. (...) these objectives should be made available to students" (p. 126). Furthermore, DiPietro et al. (2010) explain that stressful contexts and anxiety might even cause procrastination or giving up:

The process is stressful and requirements are often vague or elusive. In some cases the exam creates so much anxiety that students delay its completion or even avoid it all together and remain ABD (All But Dissertation) (p. 25).

Decades of qualification exam literature have been pointing out that students suffer from high level of exam anxiety and stress (Anderson et al., 1984; DiPietro et al., 2010; Furstenberg & Nichols-Casebolt, 2001). Another problem students (P1, P2, P3, P4, and P6) emphasized was their other work-related commitments. Students worked at different universities and companies, and most of them believed that they would be more successful if they were not working or working as research assistants in the department in which they would take the qualification exam. Therefore, most of the students explained they needed to share their grief with each other during this period. Students' advisors were not among the people with whom the feelings were shared. Advisors were mainly there to be asked formal, course-related questions, or to proceed academic related work.

Alternative examinations such as take-home papers, projects, portfolios, or articles were suggested by the participants during the interviews. Doctoral students emphasized the need for improvement in the procedures and format of the examination. Alternative

examinations are believed to reduce students' stress level and this might lead to better contribution to academic work (DiPietro et al., 2010; Kearns, Gardiner, & Marshall, 2008).

The implications of this study are two-fold: first of all, departments should review their policies on qualification exams periodically to better meet the needs of students in their academic development as well as developing strategies to cope with this stage more effectively. Standardization among the universities in terms of the goals, structure, and process might be another consideration to enhance better exam experiences. Secondly, students should be provided with clearer guidelines and information to assist them in preparing for the exams. These precautions might help to lessen doctoral students' stress, anxiety, ambiguity, and other side effects they had experienced. In an effort to mitigate the stress and anxiety and clarify the process, departments could also offer additional courses in which PhD candidates can participate.

Future studies might include a more diverse population encompassing different universities, faculties and departments from multiple regions of the country, and contain quantitative data besides the qualitative ones with doctoral students. The results are expected to provide a useful contextual view on PhD students' cognitive, affective, social, and physical phases during the qualification exams. In the preceding studies, the emergent information was non-existent. Therefore, this new perspective will hopefully serve to increase the understanding of these phases.

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Putovanje kandidata za doktorski studij: istraživanje postupka polaganja kvalifikacijskog dokorskog ispita metodom utemeljene teorije

Sažetak

Svrha je ovog istraživanja ispitati proces koji studenti dokorskog studija moraju proći kako bi mogli položiti kvalifikacijski ispit. Primjenom dizajna istraživanja koji se koristi metodom utemeljene teorije, proveden je niz produbljenih intervjuja sa šest kandidata za doktorski studij kako bi se ispitala njihova mišljenja i iskustva. Prikupljanje podataka započelo je četiri mjeseca prije kvalifikacijskog ispita i završilo je otprilike mjesec dana prije polaganja ispita. Nakon provedenih intervjuja, napisano je otprilike 127 stranica transkribiranog teksta. Podaci dobiveni u intervjuima analizirani su u tri faze: (1) inicijalno kodiranje i teroretiziranje, (2) selektivno kodiranje i teoretiziranje, (3) teorijsko kodiranje. Teorijski kodovi stvoreni su iz kodova primjenom konstantne komparativne metode. Analiza je pokazala pet međusobno povezanih faza kroz koje studenti prolaze tijekom pripreme za kvalifikacijski ispit: Nejasnoće i odgađanje, Gubljenje i pronalaženje, Pomak prema neodgodivom: polaganje ispita, Olakšanje ili sagorijevanje nakon ispita, Pogled unatrag s pomiješanim osjećajima.

Ključne riječi: kvalifikacijski dokorski ispit; studenti dokorskog studija; visoko obrazovanje; utemeljena teorija.

Uvod

Kvalifikacijski ispit (preliminarni ili opsežni ispit) smatra se važnim dijelom dokorskog obrazovanja. Kada ga polože, studenti dokorskog studija smatraju se kandidatima koji su spremni upustiti se u znanstvena istraživanja kako bi stekli doktorat. Kvalifikacijski proces pun je intelektualnih i emocionalnih izazova. Čini se da doktorandi imaju različita shvaćanja i iskustva s tih ispita, koji variraju od toga da ispit smatraju profesionalnim procesom do toga da ga smatraju nepotrebnim uvjetom. Kako su gotovo svi studenti dokorskog studija obvezni položiti taj ispit,

on će vjerojatno imati velik utjecaj na njihove dojmove i zadovoljstvo doktorskim studijem koji su upisali.

Kvalifikacijski ispit ima dugu povijest utemeljenu u Europi još u trinaestom stoljeću (Furstenberg i Nichols-Casebolt, 2001). Prvi kvalifikacijski ispit proveden je u kasnom devetnaestom stoljeću na Sveučilištu Yale, nakon čega je dodijeljena doktorska diploma (Rudolph, 1965). Općenito, doktorandi koji uspješno ispune sve zadatke tijekom studija, polažu sveobuhvatni ispit kako bi pokazali svoje kompetencije u području istraživačkog rada i u području u kojem se specijaliziraju. Kada polože ispit, imaju pravo započeti doktorski istraživački rad kako bi doprinijeli razvoju znanstvenog znanja u svojem području. Praksa polaganja ispita može biti drugačija u različitim državama, na sveučilištima, višim školama ili čak unutar odsjeka na istom fakultetu. Na primjer, neki ispiti mogu se sastojati i od pismenog dijela koji sadrži pitanja iz raznih dijelova dokorskog studija, i od usmenog dijela koji provodi povjerenstvo određenog odsjeka. Pisani radovi, poput testova koji se rješavaju kod kuće, prijedloga, članaka ili nekih kombinacija navedenih radova, mogu predstavljati ostale mogućnosti provođenja kvalifikacijskog ispita. O postupku provođenja ispita uglavnom odlučuje povjerenstvo odsjeka.

Iako praksa provedbe ispita nije ujednačena na svim sveučilištima i odsjecima, kao glavna svrha kvalifikacijskog ispita uglavnom se navodi „osiguranje kvalitete” (Anderson, Krauskopf, Rogers i Neal, 1984, str. 79). U skladu s tim, Schmidt, Homeyer i Walke (2009) navode da su kvalifikacijski ispiti korisni za unutarnje i vanjsko vrednovanje programa.

Provedena su mnoga istraživanja o doktorskim studijima i njihovim mnogobrojnim dimenzijama (Barnes i Randall, 2012; Capa-Aydin, Aksoz, i Gelmez-Burakgazi, 2011; Gardner, 2010; Golde, 2000), no do sada je kvalifikacijski ispit rijetko bio u središtu interesa tih istraživanja. Na primjer, Barnes i Randall (2012) analizirali su podatke dobivene istraživanjem o Nacionalnom programu dokorskog studija kako bi ispitali različite stupnjeve zadovoljstva studenata koji su nedavno upisali doktorski studij, studenata koji su nedavno doktorirali i bivših studenata iz različitih akademskih disciplina. Analiza je pokazala da je stupanj zadovoljstva iskustvom stečenim tijekom dokorskog studija u različitim disciplinama (društvenim znanostima, humanističkim znanostima i inženjerstvu) uglavnom sličan. Međutim, zadovoljstvo studenata unutar disciplina značajno se razlikovalo s obzirom na njihova akademska iskustva. Capa-Aydin i sur. (2011) ispitali su utjecaj različitih sastavnica (poput znanja, kolegija, kvalifikacijskog ispita, financijskog statusa i usluga koje sveučilište pruža) dokorskog obrazovanja na stupanj akademskog zadovoljstva. Uzorak u istraživanju obuhvatio je 350 studenata dokorskog studija. Provedena je hijerarhijska višestruka regresijska analiza čiji su rezultati pokazali da studenti na Fakultetu društvenih znanosti imaju veći stupanj akademskog zadovoljstva od svojih kolega na Fakultetu prirodnih i primijenjenih znanosti. Odnos sa savjetnicima, znanje, kvalifikacijski ispit i rad tijekom studija bili su ostali važni prediktori akademskog zadovoljstva. Gardner

(2010) je intervjuirao 60 studenata doktorskog studija u 6 različitim disciplinama unutar jedne institucije i ispitao njihova iskustva socijalizacije. U istraživanju su se pojavile četiri teme: podrška, samousmjeravanje, neodređenost i tranzicija. Međutim, teme su se razlikovale s obzirom na podršku od odsjeka (odsjeci s većom stopom završavanja studija nasuprot studija s nižom stopom završavanja studija). Akademska podrška/integracija također je bila važan faktor koji može utjecati na stopu odustajanja studenata od doktorskog studija (Golde, 2001). Štoviše, akademska integracija imala je veću ulogu u stopi odustajanja studenata od doktorskog studija nego društvena integracija.

Furstenberg i Nichols-Casebolt (2001) i Peterson, Bowman, Myer i Maidl (1992) primijetili su da ne postoji dovoljan broj objavljenih istraživanja o svrsi, upotrebi i vrijednosti sveobuhvatnih ispita. Istraživanja o kvalifikacijskim ispitima uglavnom su se usredotočila na upotrebu kvalifikacijskih ispita u posebnim programima kao što su sestrinstvo (Kim, McKenna, i Ketefian, 2006; Mawn i Goldberg, 2012), savjetovanje (Peterson i sur. 1992), psihologija (Khanna i Khanna, 1972; Tomeo i Templet, 1999), kriminalistika i kazneno pravosuđe (Schafer i Giblin, 2008). Literatura koja se desetljećima objavljuje o studentima doktorskog studija ukazuje na to da kvalifikacijski ispiti uzrokuju stres (DiPietro i sur. 2010; Kearns, Gardiner i Marshall, 2008; Khanna i Khanna, 1972), tjeskobu (Barley, 1990; Khanna i Khanna, 1972) i da su koncipirani kao niz prepreka (Kearns, Gardiner Marshall, 2008; Khanna i Khanna, 1972). Nadalje, zahtjevi koji se postavljaju pred studente doktorskog studija su nejasni (DiPietro i sur., 2010), pa se studenti osjećaju izolirano tijekom tog razdoblja (DiPietro i sur., 2010).

Iako su ta istraživanja bila od velike pomoći za razumijevanje raznovrsnih dimenzija i utjecaja kvalifikacijskog ispita, nisu uspjela objasniti kroz koje procese prolaze studenti doktorskog studija tijekom pripreme za taj ispit. Stoga ovo istraživanje ima za cilj ispitati procese kroz koje prolaze studenti doktorskog studija tijekom pripreme za polaganje ispita tako što će objasniti njihova kognitivna, afektivna, društvena i fizička iskustva. Stoga se kao specifično pitanje u ovom istraživanju nametnulo sljedeće pitanje:

„Kroz koje procese prolaze studenti doktorskog studija tijekom pripreme za kvalifikacijski ispit, kako pokazuju svoja kognitivna, afektivna, društvena i fizička iskustva?”

Metode

Kvalitativni pristup metodom utemeljene teorije koristio se kao glavna perspektiva, kako bi se oblikovali pitanje istraživanja, metode i analiza podataka. Takav pristup „je posebno koristan kada je malo istraživanja u tom posebnom području” (McCann i Clark, 2003, str. 16) provedeno do sada. Prema Glaseru (1992), utemeljena teorija „... je paket istraživačkih metoda koji obuhvaća prikupljanje podataka, njihovo kodiranje i analizu pisanjem bilješki (engl. *memoing*), teorijskim uzorkovanjem, sortiranjem i pisanjem, primjenom konstantne komparativne metode” (str. 12). Ovdje je važno

napomenuti da prikupljanje i analiza podataka u utemeljenoj teoriji tvore neprekidan krug istraživanja, razumijevanja i daljnjeg istraživanja.

Na početku istraživanja istraživači su proveli svrhovito uzorkovanje kako bi odabrali „ispitanike koji obiluju informacijama” (Patton, 2002, str. 230) „jer ispitanici mogu dati pouzdane informacije o istraživačkom pitanju” (Houser, 2011, str. 424). Kada su podaci prikupljeni i analizirani, koristilo se teorijsko uzorkovanje za daljnje prikupljanje podataka, tj. postupkom uzorkovanja upravljali su rezultati podataka dobivenih iz inicijalnog uzorka. To je rezultiralo uzorkom sudionika koji je usmjeravala nova teorija (Glaser, 1992). Uzorkovanje se nastavlja dok se ne postigne teorijsko zasićenje (Glaser, 1978). Teorijsko zasićenje, prema Morseu (2004), je „faza kvalitativne analize podataka u kojoj istraživač nastavlja uzorkovanje i analizu podataka sve dok se ne prestanu pojavljivati novi podaci i dok svi pojmovi u teoriji ne budu dobro razrađeni” (str. 1123).

Uzimajući u obzir te perspektive istraživanja s pomoću metode utemeljene teorije, šest studenata (pet ženskog spola, jedan muškog spola) doktorskog studija koji su proučavali kurikulum i nastavni proces na Srednjoistočnom tehničkom sveučilištu u Ankari u Turskoj sudjelovalo je u istraživanju 2011. godine. Bili su u fazi pripreme za nadolazeći kvalifikacijski doktorski ispit i bili su voljni sudjelovati u sve tri faze istraživanja. Njihova dob bila je u rasponu od 27 i 32 godine, a svi su bili zaposleni ili na sveučilištima ili u kompanijama. Troje od njih bilo je oženjeno/udano (S1, S2 i S3), a preostalih troje sudionika bili su neoženjeni/neudani (S4, S5 i S6). Jedna od sudionica (S1) imala je dijete. Studenti su bili intervjuirani tri puta pojedinačno s pomoću vodiča za intervju. Intervjui su snimani kako bi se spriječio mogući gubitak podataka do kojeg može doći kada se samo vode bilješke.

Tablica 1

Primjer pitanja iz protokola intervjua

Prvi protokol intervjua

„Recite mi kako biste opisali svoje osjećaje ovih dana? Što mislite, zašto se tako osjećate?”

„Kako biste definirali *postupak polaganja sveobuhvatnog ispita*? Postoji li ikakav materijal, aktivnost ili živo biće kojim biste ga mogli opisati? Zašto ste to odabrali?”

„Kakve ste učinke ispita osjetili na sebi tijekom pripreme za ispit? Možete razmotriti emocionalne, kognitivne, fizičke ili društvene aspekte... Možete li navesti primjere?”

Drugi protokol intervjua

„Možete li, molim vas, opisati proces koji se odvijao nakon našeg prvog intervjua? Kako se osjećate, u kognitivnom i emocionalnom smislu? Jeste li osjetili nekakvu razliku?”

„Postoje li bilo kakvi interesi ili osobne potrebe (društvene i kulturne aktivnosti, putovanja, hobiji, zdravlje itd.) koje ste odgodili tijekom pripreme za ispit?”

Treći protokol intervjua

„Možete li, molim vas, opisati razdoblje nakon polaganja sveobuhvatnog ispita? Kako se osjećate, u kognitivnom i emocionalnom smislu? Jeste li osjetili neku razliku?”

„Jeste li nakon ispita osjetili ikakvu razliku u svojem društvenom životu (obitelj, prijatelji itd.)? Zašto mislite da je do toga došlo?”

Protokole intervjua izradili su istraživači. Oblik intervjua bio je polustrukturirani intervju, a sastojao se od pitanja otvorenog tipa kako bi se utvrdili utjecaji ispita na život studenata. Tablica 1. prikazuje primjere pitanja iz protokola intervjua. Raspored intervjua s obzirom na dubinu, opseg, prikladnost i kompatibilnost s istraživačkim pitanjima odobrio je stručni recenzent. Pitanja iz intervjua provjerena su od triju osoba: profesora iz područja kurikula i nastavnog procesa, a koji je također i član ispitnog povjerenstva; kandidata za doktorski studij koji je već položio ispit i studentice doktorskog studija koja je ispunila studijske obveze.

Poštujući promjene koje je dala stručna recenzija, intervju je pilotiran na dva studenta doktorskog studija koji su već prije položili ispit.

Tablica 2

Primjer indeksa sustava kodiranja sadržaja

FAZA I	FAZA II	FAZA III	FAZA IV	FAZA V
Kognitivni utjecaji	Kognitivni utjecaji	Kognitivni utjecaji	Kognitivni utjecaji	Kognitivni utjecaji
Neodređenost	Zbunjenost	Ispunjavanje velikih očekivanja	Olakšanje	Pretvaranje da se proces polaganja ispita uopće nije dogodio
Nedoraslost	Traženje savjeta na nejasnom putu	Beskrajna inkompetentnost	Sagorijevanje	Žaljenje
Nesigurnost	Određivanje prioriteta	Šokantno iskustvo	Veći stupanj samopoštovanja	Povećano znanje
Odgadjanje	Problemi s koncentracijom		Gubitak samopouzdanja	Osobni razvoj
	Nalaženje načina za olakšanje		Okrivljavanje procesa polaganja ispita	
	Učenje i zaboravljanje		Potvrđivanje potrebe za kvalifikacijom	
			Isključivanje iz svega	
Afektivni utjecaji	Afektivni utjecaji	Afektivni utjecaji	Afektivni utjecaji	Afektivni utjecaji
Stres	Stres	Stres	Olakšanje	Povratak na staro
Napetost	Tjeskoba	Tjeskoba	Uživanje	
Strah			Veći stupanj samopoštovanja	
Tjeskoba			Gubitak samopouzdanja	
Fizički utjecaji	Fizički utjecaji	Fizički utjecaji	Fizički utjecaji	Fizički utjecaji
--	Zdravstveni problemi	Umor	Olakšanje	Povratak na staro
	Umor	Glavobolja	Umor	
	Nesanica	Bolest		
		Bol		
Društveni utjecaji	Društveni utjecaji	Društveni utjecaji	Društveni utjecaji	Društveni utjecaji
Ograničeno vrijeme za: Samog sebe	Nema vremena za: Samog sebe	--	Povratak na staro: Povratak samom sebi	Povratak na staro
Prijatelje	Prijatelje		Prijatelji	
Obitelj	Obitelj		Obitelj	
Posao	Posao		Posao	

Studenti doktorskog studija sudjelovali su u produbljenim intervjuiima koji su se sastojali od 11 do 16 pitanja otvorenog tipa, a postupak intervjuiranja je trajao od 45 do 65 minuta. Ukupna količina prikupljenih podataka sastojala se od više od 15 sati

intervjua provedenih u razdoblju dužem od 5 mjeseci. Prvi krug intervjua proveden je četiri mjeseca prije ispita; drugi krug intervjua proveden je dva tjedna prije ispita, a finalni je krug intervjua proveden u roku od mjesec dana nakon polaganja ispita.

Da bi se stvorila ili postavila teorija „utemeljena” na podacima (Strauss i Corbin, 1998), podaci su kodirani na tri razine. Na prvoj razini, ili „otvorenom kodiranju”, definirane su glavne kategorije informacija; na drugoj razini, „aksijalnom kodiranju”, izrađene su kategorije s obzirom na glavni fenomen; na posljednjoj razini, „selektivnom kodiranju”, kategorije su povezane i opisane (Byrne, 2001; Creswell, 2007; Strauss i Corbin, 1998). Tablica 2. prikazuje primjer sustava kodiranja.

Rezultati

Model razdoblja pripreme za kvalifikacijski ispit

Razdoblje pripreme studenata doktorskog studija za kvalifikacijski ispit može se opisati preko pozadine u kojoj se isprepleću i međusobno djeluju mnogi faktori: kognitivni, afektivni, društveni i fizički. Ti faktori u kombinaciji imaju utjecaj na pet faza razdoblja pripreme za kvalifikacijski ispit koje su se pojavile tijekom procesa analize podataka: *Nejasnoće i odgađanje; Gubljenje i pronalaženje; Pomak prema neodgodivom: polaganje ispita; Olakšanje ili sagorijevanje nakon ispita, Pogled unatrag s pomiješanim osjećajima.*

1. faza: Nejasnoće i odgađanje

Ta početna faza utvrđena je u prvim intervjuima koji su provedeni četiri mjeseca prije ispita. U toj fazi moglo se uočiti pet glavnih skupina karakteristika u odgovorima na pitanja u intervjuu: traženje potpore, dobivanje informacija i ispitivanje gledišta o samom ispitu; problemi s koncentracijom; sumnja u samog sebe i gubitak samopouzdanja; nizak stupanj usmjerenosti i ispitivanje svrhe kvalifikacijskog ispita. U toj fazi ispitivale su se vrste procedure polaganja ispita putem komunikacije s drugim studentima koji trenutno prolaze ili su već prošli isti postupak pripreme za ispit i putem razgovora s fakultetima kako bi se saznalo nešto više o samom ispitu.

U toj fazi, četiri mjeseca prije ispita, pola studenata (S2, S3 i S4) izjavilo je da su nedavno započeli s učenjem, a drugi to još nisu bili učinili. Studenti koji su podijelili svoja iskustva uglavnom su bili oni koji su izgleda imali jasno usmjeren proces učenja za ispit. Ostali su naveli da osjećaju male ili da ne osjećaju nikakve promjene u tom trenutku. Međutim, svi studenti su spomenuli da odgađaju učenje. Ispitanica S1 navela je:

Sam ispit je opasan. Kada god pomislim na ispit, tako se osjećam. Jednostavno je zastrašujuć. Stoga mi je teško početi s učenjem. Samo odugovlačim. Osjećam da sam pod prevelikim stresom. To je začarani krug.

Utvrđeno je da u toj fazi ispit izaziva znatan stres i strah kod studenata. Međutim, faktori koji uzrokuju stres razlikovali su se od studenta do studenta. Za studenticu S4, jedan od razloga za stres bila je stipendija koju bi morala vratiti u slučaju da ne položi ispit. Dodala je da bi je neuspjeh vjerojatno natjerao na to da osjeća krivnju prema

nastavnicima na odsjeku, što joj je uzrokovalo dodatni stres. Rekla je da osjeća da gubi samopouzdanje svakim danom. Za S2 stres je čak utjecao na njezin društveni život:

Moj suprug je rekao da sam bila malo agresivna prema našim gostima prošlog tjedna. On je, zapravo, u pravu, jer, dok smo se družili s gostima, ja nisam mogla prestati misliti na ispit i osjećala sam kao da gubim dragocjeno vrijeme za učenje. To je bilo stresno.

Slično njoj, studentica S5 osjećala je stres i strah kada god je pomislila na ispit, iako se za njega još nije počela pripremati. Dodala je da nije osjetila nikakve kognitivne ili fizičke promjene u toj fazi. Slično njoj, studenti S1, S3 i S6 objasnili su da do sada nisu osjetili nikakve fizičke promjene. Međutim, studentica S4 opisala je negativne fizičke promjene koje je osjetila:

Ispit je potpuno poremetio moje navike spavanja. Razlog tomu nije toliko samo učenje, nego snovi o ispitu, pa to nije više ugodno spavanje. Onda ujutro moram rano ustati i takva ići u ured. To na negativan način utječe na cijeli moj dan.

Zbunjenost i neusredotočenost bile su druge promjene koje su studenti iskusili u kognitivnom smislu. Evo što je rekla studentica S3:

Teško je odlučiti što učiti. Čini mi se da me čeka milijardu predmeta. Ne mogu se uopće usredotočiti. Voljela bih da imamo nešto eksplicitno za učenje. Smatram da bi nam to olakšalo cijeli proces jer se ispit čini iznimno teškim.

Sudionici su u toj fazi uglavnom kritički preispitali postupak pripreme za ispit i njegovu svrhu.

Svi su naglasili da je ispit nepotreban i da procedura kroz koju na svojem odsjeku moraju proći nije ugodna za studente. Rezultati su pokazali da bi studenti doktorskog studija koji su sudjelovali u istraživanju ukinuli ispit u potpunosti kada bi imali ikakvog utjecaja na svojem odsjeku. Predložili su mnoge alternativne ispite poput testova koji se rješavaju kod kuće (S5), ispita koji se temelji na projektu (S3 i S5), ispita koji se temelji na dizertaciji (S4, S6 i S1), raznih postupaka koji omogućavaju više vremena za pripremanje ispita (pod uvjetom da je ispit još uvijek obavezan), uvođenje dodatnog kolegija u doktorski studij koji bi bio svojevrsan „kvalifikacijski kolegij” i koji bi pružio opću perspektivu, jednako kao što bi to trebao i kvalifikacijski ispit (S1). U sljedećem citatu studentica S4 izražava svoja razmišljanja o svrsi i postupku pripreme za polaganje ispita:

Ponekad pitam samu sebe: „Zašto moram položiti taj ispit?” Ako žele [nastavnici na odsjecima] da dobijemo cjelokupan uvid, u redu, no onda nam trebaju zadati projekt koji će obuhvatiti gradivo svih kolegija. To mi nije problem. Nije normalno pisati ispit koji traje 9 sati. Teško mi je pronaći odgovarajući termin za tako nešto, no mislim da bi prava riječ bila „primitivno”. Da, primitivno. Postupak polaganja ispita može varirati od jednog odsjeka do drugog, a u većini njih je taj postupak lakši nego kod nas, prema onome što smo čuli. Kada njihovi studenti polože ispit, jednako su kvalificirani kao i mi. To više nije pošteno.

2. faza: Gubljenje i pronalaženje

Druga faza temelji se na rezultatima dobivenima u drugom krugu intervjua koji su provedeni

dva tjedna prije ispita. Tijekom intervjua studentima su postavljana pitanja o promjenama koje je ispit izazvao u njihovim životima nakon provedenog prvog kruga intervjua. Ta faza bila je povezana s njihovom iscrpljenošću i nezadovoljstvom vlastitim uspjehom u ispunjavanju nejasnih zahtjeva ispita i njihovim snalaženjem u svakodnevnim životnim situacijama kroz koje su prolazili dok su se pripremali za polaganje kvalifikacijskog ispita. Studenti su u toj fazi određivali prioritete, čitali literaturu i pronalazili pravu strategiju učenja (čitanje, pisanje bilješki, započinjali su s učenjem težih predmeta itd.).

Studenti S1, S5 i S6 spomenuli su svoju odluku da započnu s učenjem početkom rujna, što je bilo dva mjeseca prije ispita. Dva tjedna prije ispita većina studenata izjavila je da osjećaju više nejasnoća nego što je to bio slučaj u prvom krugu intervjua. Studenti su također patili od visoke razine stresa i tjeskobe zbog ispita. Studentica S4 objasnila je da pati od stresa i tjeskobe zbog toga što je osjećala da nije dorasla zadatku:

Okružena sam prevelikim stresom. To je nevjerojatno. Zapravo, trudim se da to ne projiciram na svoju okolinu, ali ponekad u tome ne uspijevam (...) Patim od velike tjeskobe. Čitam, ali imam osjećaj da se neću moći prisjetiti ničega. To mi uzrokuje još veći stres. Više nisam sretna.

S6 je također rekao:

Nikada u životu nisam osjećala ovakvu tjeskobu. Čak ni tijekom razgovora za magistarski i doktorski studij, ni u fazi izrade magistarskog rada (...) Postoji ograničeno vrijeme kojim ne možete upravljati i koje radi potpuno protiv vas. Pokušavate ga sustići, trčeći kao konj na utrkama.

Da bi kontrolirali razinu stresa i tjeskobe koju osjećaju, studenti su rekli da su pokušali pronaći načine da si olakšaju život tijekom pripreme za ispit. Kada su smatrali da nisu dorasli zadatku, izjavili su da su razgovarali s obitelji i prijateljima. Štoviše, osjećali su krivnju kada nisu učili jer su radili nešto drugo, poput druženja s prijateljima ili odlaska u kino. Studentica S5 dodala je da je imala osjećaj kao da ispit vrebao na njezin um. Odgađanje akademskih obveza i učenja, društvenih i kulturnih aktivnosti, zdravstvenih pregleda, sportova, hobija i putovanja također su bili među navedenim promjenama. Studentica S1 objasnila je kako se njezin život promijenio tijekom tog razdoblja:

Trenutno sam odgodila sve dok ne položim ispit. Podijelila sam svoj život na dva dijela: prije ispita i poslije ispita. Sve je zamrznuto, promjene se osjete u svemu: idem se naći s prijateljima: kasnije; kupit ću nešto: kasnije; pročitat ću knjigu: kasnije; pisat ću rad: kasnije. Sve u mojem životu je stalo dok ne položim ispit. Osjećam se kao da ću biti slobodna kada ispit prođe.

Što se tiče fizičkih promjena, iskustva sudionika bila su različita. Međutim, svi studenti, osim S6, požalili su se na iscrpljenost. U toj su fazi kod studenata zabilježeni zdravstveni problemi poput migrene (S2), debljanja (S5), bolesti (S1, S4, S5), problema s kožom i tenom (S6) ili poremećaja spavanja (S3, S4 i S5).

Sudionici su kritizirali činjenicu da postoji puno toga što moraju naučiti i osjećali su se izgubljeno. Stoga su pokušali osmisliti strategije poput čitanja iz različitih izvora (S5, S6), pisanja bilješki (S6), učenja najprije težih, a onda lakših kolegija (S1, S2, S3 i S4), posjećivanja mentora i traženja pomoći (S1, S2, S3 i S4), razgovora siskusnim studentima kako bi pronašli pravi način učenja (S1, S2, S3, S4 i S5).

Što se tiče društvenog života, studenti su rekli da su odredili ograničeno vrijeme za svoje obitelji, prijatelje, pa čak i za sebe same, što nije bio slučaj prije ispita.

3. faza: Pomak prema neodgodivom: polaganje ispita

Ta faza temelji se na podacima dobivenima u trećem krugu intervjua provedenih u roku od mjesec dana nakon polaganja ispita. Ona se odnosila na iskustva studenata s pismenog i usmenog ispita i na strategije koje su im pomogle u nošenju s teškim uvjetima polaganja ispita. Između pismenog i usmenog dijela ispita imali su jedan dan odmora. Studenti S5 i S6 uspješno su položili ispit. Studenti S3 i S4 nisu položili ispit, a studetni S1 i S2 uvjetno su položili ispit (oni su još morali upisati nekoliko kolegija doktorskog studija).

Svi sudionici kritizirali su postupak provedbe pismenog ispita koji je trajao 9 sati (od 9 sati ujutro do 6 sati popodne). Njihovi komentari uglavnom su se odnosili na njihovo fizičko i kognitivno stanje. Na primjer, S1 je objasnila kako joj je bilo teško, i u fizičkom i u kognitivnom smislu:

...od 9 ujutro do 6 popodne. Takav je ispit nevjerojatan. Čak ne postoji ni službena pauza. Mogla sam samo pojesti sendvič i ništa više. Nakon ispita me boljelo rame. Bilo je iscrpljujuće i šokantno. To je čisti stres.

S5 je rekla da je imala strašnu glavobolju odmah nakon „iscrpjujućeg pismenog ispita”. Za S6 pisati 9 sati bio je „velik problem” u pismenom dijelu:

Pismeni ispit bio je težak. Fizički uvjeti, vrijeme... Nisam napisao puno u usporedbi s drugima, ali ruka me nije slušala. Nikada nisam u životu toliko pisao. Želiš napisati više, imaš svašta na pameti, ali ti ruka i zapešće to ne dopuštaju.

Slično tome, studentica S3 smatrala je dosadnim sjediti na pismenom ispitu toliko puno sati.

Dodala je da nakon nekog vremena nije više mogla logički razmišljati, pa onda nije radila ništa.

Sudionici su se složili da je usmeni ispit bio puno stresniji od pismenog. Za S6 pismeni ispit bio je problematičan, no usmeni ispit bio je kraći i bolji nego što je očekivao.

Da bi se mogli uspješno nositi s problemima s kojim su bili suočeni, posebno tijekom pismenog ispita, studenti su pokušali izraditi razne strategije. S6 je rekao da je vodio bilješke tijekom učenja, baš kao što je bilo potrebno tijekom ispita. S5 je objasnila da je prije pismenog ispita napravila plan kojega se prisjetila tijekom usmenog ispita:

Odлучila sam početi od pitanja koje mi je bilo najlakše. Pokušala sam planirati kada ću nešto pojesti ili popiti kavu. Međutim, stvari nisu išle onako kako sam ja planirala. Za neka pitanja bilo mi je potrebno više vremena, pa su odgovori bili kraći. Mislim da ću to imati priliku objasniti na usmenom ispitu, a tako je i bilo. Rekla sam da sam zapravo sve to htjela dodati u odgovore tijekom pismenog ispita, no vrijeme je bilo ograničeno.

Za S4 usmeni ispit je također bio „nezaboravno iskustvo“:

Opet sam osjećala veliku tjeskobu. Neki studenti koji su na usmeni ispit izašli prije mene nisu ga položili. Neki od njih su ga uvjetno položili. Stalno sam si govorila: „Bit će sve u redu, bit će dobro.“ Pokušala sam se smiriti jer su svi patili od stresa, baš kao i ja.

Zanimljivo je reći da su studenti koji su položili ispit rekli da se još uvijek nisu osjećali kvalificiranima odmah nakon ispita. S5 je rekla:

Povjerenstvo je objavilo da sam položila ispit. Bila sam kvalificirana. Smiješno je reći, ali nisam bila sigurna u to. Ispit je upravljao mojim životom nekoliko mjeseci, a sada ga odjednom više nije bilo. Bila sam sretna, ali nešto nije bilo u redu. Osjećaj nekvalificiranosti, kvalificiranosti. Bilo je to jako čudno.

4. faza: Olakšanje ili sagorijevanje nakon ispita

Ta faza uglavnom se odnosila na neizvjesnost nakon ispita, kao i na osjećaje sudionika koji su osjećali olakšanje ili sagorijevanje.

Razmišljajući o pismenom ispitu koji je trajao gotovo devet sati, a onda i o usmenom ispitu nakon tjedan dana, studenti su smatrali da je to razdoblje bilo fizički zamorno i stresno. Trajanje razdoblja oporavka ovisilo je o tome je li student položio ispit ili nije. Na primjer, S3 i S4 (koje nisu položile ispit) objasnile su da su im osjećaji još uvijek bili uzburkani kada su pomislile na ispit. S3 je izjavila da je izgubila samopouzdanje i da se isključila iz svega nakon ispita:

Ispit je bio gotov, a ja sam osjećala da sam potpuno sagorjela. Stalno sam plakala. Imaš tridesetak godina i određeni status u društvu. Nije ugodno pasti na ispitu. Uspjeh na ispitu može se razlikovati od osobe do osobe, ali znaš da si se potpuno posvetio tom ispitu i znaš da to više ne zaslužuješ. Mislim da je taj aspekt zanemaren. Pala sam u očaj i bila sam demoralizirana. Sveta sam komunikaciju s ljudima na najmanju moguću mjeru. Nisam ni s kim željela razgovarati dva ili tri dana. Potpuno sam kolabirala.

Slično njoj S1 je također okrivljavala program doktorskog studija i opisala kako se osjećala ljuto i razočarano odmah nakon ispita:

Jedan od članova povjerenstva rekao je da imam problema s osnovnim pojmovima i da stoga smatraju da ne mogu položiti ispit. Trebala sam više učiti. Bilo je tako uvredljivo čuti te riječi. Smiješno je. Kako sam onda mogla uspješno odraditi sve svoje obveze na kolegijima? Kako sam onda mogla te kolegije položiti s visokom ocjenom? Što sam uopće tamo radila? Šale li se oni sa mnom?

Za razliku od nje studenti S2, S5 i S6 rekli su da su osjećali fizičko, emocionalno i kognitivno olakšanje čim su položili ispit. Sudionici su se složili da je to utjecalo na njihov društveni život. S6 je spomenuo da je ponovno počeo živjeti odmah nakon ispita:

Još uvijek sam bio umoran, ali i opušten. Dobio sam samopouzdanje i osjećao sam se pozitivnije. Nakon ispita našao sam se s prijateljima i izašli smo van proslaviti. To mi je jako nedostajalo jer sam tijekom pripremanja za ispit odgađao druženje s prijateljima. Prije ispita sam čak jeo na brzinu, ali sada popijem i čaj sa svojom obitelji nakon jela. Prije sam više volio jednostavna jela, ali sada skuham što god poželim. Prije ispita sam plesao u folklornoj skupini, a nakon ispita sam ponovno počeo ići na probe. Imao sam neke zdravstvene probleme koji su sada puno manji. Mogu živjeti s njima.

5. faza: Pogled unatrag s pomiješanim osjećajima: samoevaluacija

Ta faza bila je svojevrsna samoevaluacija za sudionike. Privikavanje na životne uvjete bilo

je lakše studentima koji su položili ispit nego onima koji ga nisu položili. Međutim, nakon mjesec dana, svi su sudionici rekli da su preboljeli utjecaj ispita na svoj život. S1 je objasnila:

Ispit je uzimao 80% ili 90% mojeg života. Imam dijete, no vrijeme provedeno s njim bilo je također stresno, jer sam ja svoj stres prenosila na njega. Tijekom dana i noći stalno sam razmišljala: „Moram učiti, nisam učila, moram učiti, bla, bla, bla...” Sada je tome kraj. Slobodna sam kao ptica.

Studentica S3 dodala je da se tijekom pripreme za ispit osjećala kao da je zaglavila u nekom tunelu sa sve većim stresom i opterećenjem. Međutim, s vremena na vrijeme se i dalje tako osjećala jer nije uspjela položiti ispit.

Studenti su u toj fazi priznali da se ponekad nisu mogli natjerati na to da misle o ispitu: kako su i koliko učili, koliko su bili pod stresom, kako su živjeli u takvim „neljudskim uvjetima” (S1) i kako su odgađali svoj privatni život. Neki od sudionika su se prisjećali tog vremena s osmjehom na licu. Ipak, ispit je ostavio gorko-slatke uspomene (u životima nekih sudionika bilo je više gorkih uspomena), kako je S3 navela:

Sada ne osjećam ništa [mjesec dana nakon ispita]. Sve se promijenilo. Sada slušam samu sebe, gubim vrijeme, ne radim ništa. Više ne učim. Ponovno sam djevojka kakva sam i bila prije ispita i pravim se da se to sve nikada nije dogodilo.

Na Prikazu 1 mogu se vidjeti kognitivne, fizičke, društvene i afektivne promjene nastale zbog ispita u navedenim fazama.

Prikaz 1

Rasprava i zaključak

Kvalifikacijski ispit smatra se svojevrsnim „obredom prijelaza” (Estrem i Lucas, 2003) u akademsku zajednicu. Studenti u tom procesu imaju priliku iskusiti različite osjećaje i steći različite percepcije pa je važno razumjeti ta iskustva i vidjeti jesu li ona obrazac faza kroz koje svi studenti prolaze. Rezultati su pokazali da su studenti koji su sudjelovali u ovom istraživanju prošli kroz pet faza u kvalifikacijskom procesu, uzimajući u obzir njihova kognitivna, afektivna, društvena i fizička iskustva: *Nejasnoće i odgađanje; Gubljenje i pronalaženje; Pomak prema neodgodivom: polaganje ispita; Olakšanje ili sagorijevanje nakon ispita i Pogled unatrag s pomiješanim osjećajima.*

Tijek iskustava stečenih tijekom pripreme za kvalifikacijski ispit nije do sada na ovakav način bio opisan u literaturi. Stoga ćemo ga opisati s obzirom na odnose između pojedinih faza, objašnjenja i interpretacije. Na svom putu prema kvalifikacijskom ispitu studenti doktorskog studija koji su sudjelovali u istraživanju prošli su određene jasno objašnjene korake koji ovise o prethodnim koracima. Nekoliko mjeseci prije ispita studenti su imali poteškoće pri objašnjavanju svojih kognitivnih, afektivnih, društvenih i fizičkih iskustava jer se nikada prije nisu tako osjećali. U fazama *Nejasnoće i odgađanje* i *Gubljenje i pronalaženje* studenti su uglavnom prikupljali informacije i iskustva s ispita te prelistavali literaturu i određivali vlastite prioritete. S vremenom je uočeno da su studenti imali problema s nejasnoćama u vezi s tima na što se trebaju usredotočiti/s osjećajem nekompetentnosti. Iscrpljenost i sumnja u vlastite sposobnosti bili su ostali kognitivni i afektivni utjecaji koje su sudionici iskusili. Kada se govori o osjećaju kognitivne „nedoraslosti”, sudionici su shvatili da ispit i sljedeće faze ovise o uspjehu ili neuspjehu na ispitu. Olakšanje i sreća nasuprot tuge i nedoraslosti bile su glavne kategorije koje su se pojavile nakon ispita. Tijekom cijelog razdoblja studenti su bili voljni podijeliti svoje osjećaje/ideje s ostalima koji su već prošli ili koji su prolazili kroz taj proces. To se može objasniti trima razlozima. Kao prvo, studenti su možda tako osjećali da nisu jedini koji moraju proći kroz taj proces. Kao drugo, to im je donijelo olakšanje. Kao treće, tražili su alternativna rješenja kada su osjetili da su se izgubili. Potrebna su daljnja istraživanja da bi se navedene tvrdnje potvrdile ili razradile, pogotovo u različitim programima doktorskog studija.

Ovo istraživanje polazeći od utemeljene teorije otkriva mnoštvo različitih iskustava studenata doktorskog studija tijekom razdoblja pripreme za kvalifikacijski ispit. Njegova glavna vrijednost jest u prikazu prikazu pripreme za kvalifikacijski ispit koji je utemeljen na podacima. Iako literatura o kvalifikacijskom ispitu sadrži nekoliko istraživanja o proceduri i upotrebi ispita u određenim programima, ovo se istraživanje od njih razikuje po sustavnom ispitivanju faza pripreme za kvalifikacijski doktorski ispit iz perspektive studenata doktorskog studija koji su taj ispit polagali. Teorijski

model kognitivnih, emocionalnih i fizičkih promjena koje je šestero sudionika iskusilo izrađen je s pomoću kvalitativne analize podataka. Korisnost ovog istraživanja također je i u mogućnosti povezivanja s postojećom literaturom. Model rasvjetljava, s različitih gledišta i utjecaja, nepoznate obrasce i faze doktorskog kvalifikacijskog ispita.

Sudionici u ovom istraživanju uglavnom su pripremu za kvalifikacijski ispit prošli u pet faza: *Nejasnoće i odgađanje; Gubljenje i pronalaženje; Pomak prema neodgodivom: polaganje ispita; Olakšanje ili sagorijevanje nakon ispita i Pogled unatrag s pomiješanim osjećajima*. U modelu koji predlažemo, tih pet faza ne mogu se jasno međusobno razdvojiti.

Jedno od glavnih iskustava studenata tijekom prve faze su nejasnoće u vezi s ispitom. Studenti su bili kritični prema činjenici da ne postoji pisana brošura ili vodič za ispit koji bi opisao svrhu, predmete, očekivanja i pitanja s prijašnjih ispita. Informacije su uglavnom dobivali od svojih savjetnika i nastavnika na odsjeku, kao i od drugih studenata koji su već polagali ispit. Zbunjenost i nedovoljna usmjerenost doveli su do neuspjeha u pravodobnom izvršavanju obveza. Odgađanje je problem koji ima i unutarnje (iritacija, žaljenje, očaj, samookrivljanje) i vanjske posljedice (zaostajanje s poslom i usporeno akademsko napredovanje, zategnuti odnosi i izgubljene prilike) (Burka i Yuen, 1983). Dakle, kada studenti doktorskog studija odgađaju svoje obveze, to može dovesti do njihova neuspjeha u akademskom smislu (Muzsynki i Akamatsu, 1991). Kako su raspravljali Anderson, Krauskopf, Rogers i Neal (1984), takvo neinformiranje studenata o svrsi ispita moglo bi kod njih izazvati tjeskobu. Ovdje podržavamo stajalište Andersona i suradnika (1984), jer su nas odgovori koje smo dobili od studenata u to uvjerali. Sudionicima u istraživanju uvjeti ispita bili su nejasni ili nedostižni. Peterson i sur. (1992) su također naglasili tu činjenicu: „Studentima se ne daju jasne upute za pripremu za kvalifikacijske ispite. (...) studentima bi ciljevi trebali biti poznati i dostupni.” (str. 126) Nadalje, DiPietro i sur. (2010) objašnjavaju da stresne situacije i tjeskoba mogu dovesti do odgađanja ili odustajanja:

Proces je stresan, a uvjeti su često nejasni ili nedostižni. U nekim slučajevima ispit stvara toliku tjeskobu da studenti odgađaju njegovo polaganje ili ga u potpunosti izbjegavaju i ostaju SOD (Sve osim dizertacije). (str. 25)

Literatura koja je kroz desetljeća napisana o kvalifikacijskom ispitu ističe da studenti pate od visoke razine stresa i tjeskobe uzrokovane ispitom (Anderson i sur. 1984; DiPietro i sur. 2010; Furstenberg i Nichols-Casebolt, 2001). Drugi problem koji su studenti (S1, S2, S3, S4 i S6) naglasili bile su njihove obveze vezane uz posao. Studenti su radili na različitim sveučilištima i u različitim kompanijama pa je većina njih smatrala da bi bili uspješniji kada ne bi radili kao znanstveni novaci na odsjecima na kojima su polagali kvalifikacijski ispit ili kada ne bi radili uopće. Stoga je većina studenata objasnila da su morali dijeliti tugu jedno s drugim tijekom tog razdoblja. Njihovi savjetnici nisu bili među ljudima s kojima su dijelili tugu. Savjetnici su samo odgovarali na službena pitanja vezana uz kolegije ili uz nastavak akademskog rada.

Sudionici su u intervjuima spomenuli i alternativne oblike ispita kao što su testovi koji se rješavaju kod kuće, projekti, mape (porfolio) ili članci. Istaknuli su potrebu poboljšanja postupka polaganja ispita kao i njegova oblika. Smatra se da bi alternativni oblici ispita smanjili razinu stresa kod studenata i rezultirali njihovim većim doprinosom akademskom radu (DiPietro i sur. 2010; Kearns, Gardiner i Marshall, 2008).

Implikacije ovog istraživanja su dvostruke: kao prvo, odsjeci sveučilišta trebali bi s vremena na vrijeme revidirati svoju politiku polaganja kvalifikacijskih ispita kako bi mogli bolje odgovoriti na potrebe studenata u njihovu akademskom napredovanju, kao i razviti strategije koje bi im pomogle da se bolje i učinkovitije snađu u toj fazi. Standardizacija kvalifikacijskih ispita na sveučilištima s obzirom na ciljeve, strukturu i proces pripreme za polaganje ispita također bi se mogla razmotriti kako bi se došlo do boljih iskustava s polaganjem kvalifikacijskog ispita. Kao drugo, studentima bi se trebale dati jasne smjernice i informacije kako bi im one bile od pomoći u pripremanju za ispit. Takve mjere mogle bi pomoći u smanjenju razine stresa, tjeskobe, nejasnoća i ostalih promjena koje su studenti iskusili. Kako bi ublažili stres i tjeskobu te razjasnili sam proces, odsjeci na sveučilištima također bi mogli ponuditi dodatne kolegije koje bi kandidati za doktorski studij mogli upisati.

Buduća istraživanja mogla bi uključivati raznovrsniju populaciju na različitim sveučilištima, fakultetima i odsjecima u više regija u državi, a osim kvalitativnih podataka mogla bi sadržavati i kvantitativne podatke o studentima dokorskog studija. Očekivani rezultati trebali bi omogućiti kontekstualni uvid u kognitivne, afektivne, društvene i fizičke faze kroz koje prolaze studenti dokorskog studija tijekom pripreme za kvalifikacijski ispit. U prijašnjim istraživanjima nisu postojale informacije o tome. Stoga će, nadamo se, ta nova perspektiva pomoći boljem razumijevanju faza pripreme za kvalifikacijski doktorski ispit.