Voluntary Research Collaboration Among Student Researchers: An Exploration of Three Interactionism ‘Situations’ at Universities

Public defense to obtain the degree of
DOCTOR OF EDUCATIONAL SCIENCES

of

Ms. Sisi LI

which will take place on
29 June 2018: 14.00-16.00pm
Promotiezaal D.2.01
Brussels Humanities, Sciences & Engineering Campus (Etterbeek)

How to reach the VUB: http://www.vub.ac.be/campus/brussels-humanities-sciences-engineering-campus
Pleinlaan 2 – 1050 Brussel

Please confirm your attendance before: 26/06/2018 via (lisisi0212@gmail.com)

Jury:
INTERNAL:
Prof. dr. Willem Elias, (Chair) (Vrije Universiteit Brussel, Faculty of Psychology and Educational Sciences)
Prof. dr. Katia Segers, (Vrije Universiteit Brussel, Department of Communication Sciences)
Prof. dr. Xinning Song, (Vrije Universiteit Brussel, Faculty of Political Sciences & Renmin University of China, Jean Monnet Chair)

EXTERNAL:
Prof. dr. John Taylor (Lancaster University, Department of Educational Research)
Prof. dr. Yaşar Kondakçı (Middle East Technical University, Department of Educational Sciences)

Promotors:
Prof. dr. Chang Zhu (Vrije Universiteit Brussel, Department of Educational Sciences)
Summary

The aim of this PhD dissertation voluntary research collaboration among student researchers is to examine what factors affect student researchers’ inclination to participate or deter from participating in voluntary research collaboration.

Research collaboration activities are valued nowadays because they help meet the expanding requirements of academic output for individual researchers. To date, however, no study has devoted to exploring voluntary research collaboration, a collaboration type that requires no strict formalization, no obvious leadership or hierarchy, but initiated and processed by freewill. For this reason, this research focuses on investigating voluntary research collaboration, the most common and spontaneous behaviors among student researchers.

The research first explores what personal attributes affect student researchers’ perceived voluntary research collaboration prerequisites and collaboration practices. Second, it examines what ‘in-team’ factors could affect student researchers’ voluntary research collaboration inclination. Third, it inquires how international student researchers perceive their voluntary research collaboration practices.

The results show that researchers’ different attributes may affect their different preferences of collaboration partners. However, the link between voluntary research collaboration practices and the prediction of research output may not be definitive. Inclusive team climate, strong team relationship, and strong collaboration motivation may enable student researchers for more voluntary research collaboration practices. Nevertheless, strong in-team evaluation may exacerbate peer pressure among student researchers, hence inhibit voluntary research collaboration. This research also suggests an inclusive and supportive research community may encourage student researchers to engage in voluntary research collaboration practices.

Curriculum Vitae

Sisi Li, born in 1987, began her PhD research journey under the guidance of Prof. dr. Chang Zhu, at Vrije Universiteit Brussel since November, 2014.

Before she began her PhD, She had obtained her bachelor degree and master degree on educational management at Hunan Normal University (‘211’ university in China), faculty of educational sciences. She published 4 research papers during master studies.

Her research interests are in the domain of higher education culture and organization, university governance, research mobility and research collaboration, and higher education sociology.

During her PhD research, she has written 10 manuscripts, among which, one article has been published in SCI-expanded journal, and the other studies are under review. She has been involved in 4 research projects, two in China and the other two related to EU projects.