A PhD is a PhD is a PhD - or?
On potential differences in publication patterns among industrial and conventional PhD students
Wisborg, Julie Riisom; Larsen, Asger Væring; Drachen, Thea Marie; Wien, Charlotte

Publication date: 2017

Citation for published version (APA):

General rights
Copyright and moral rights for the publications made accessible in the public portal are retained by the authors and/or other copyright owners and it is a condition of accessing publications that users recognise and abide by the legal requirements associated with these rights.

• Users may download and print one copy of any publication from the public portal for the purpose of private study or research.
• You may not further distribute the material or use it for any profit-making activity or commercial gain
• You may freely distribute the URL identifying the publication in the public portal

Take down policy
If you believe that this document breaches copyright please contact us providing details, and we will remove access to the work immediately and investigate your claim. Please direct all enquiries to puresupport@bib.sdu.dk

Download date: 03. Aug. 2019
A PhD is a PhD – or?
- On potential differences in publication patterns among industrial and conventional PhD students

Introduction

The Danish PhD program is divided into two different programs: a conventional PhD where the student is employed solely at the university, and an industrial PhD where the student divides his or her time between the university and a company which the thesis is written in cooperation with. The purpose of this paper is to search for systematic differences in publication behaviour between conventional and industrial PhD students regarding quantity of publications.

Methods

Two samples of PhD students were obtained. The first consisted of all the industrial PhD students who finished within a specific year-span (12) at Social Sciences SDU. For the composition of the second sample we tried to match the composition of the first in terms of timespan and departmental affiliation (an industrial PhD student from political science should be matched with a conventional PhD student from the same field). Data was gathered via searches in Web of Science, Scopus, Sociological Abstract and the University of Southern Denmark PURE research repository. The searches were limited primarily by first name initial and last name. The process of searching led to 24 individual publication lists for each former PhD student. To improve the validity of the data, the PhD students were asked to validate their own list. 58% (14 out of 24) returned validated publication lists. The data is analyzed with simple, bivariate tests comparing the mean of the two groups on different variables.

Hypothesis

Our assumption is that conventional PhD students produce a higher quantity of publications than industrial PhD students, because conventional PhD students to a higher degree than industrial PhD students aim at careers in research, and that the latter, conversely, are assumed to aim for jobs in business more frequently. Thus:

H0: There is no difference in the quantity of publications produced by industrial PhD students and conventional PhD students

Results

Conventional PhD students publish more during the PhD, even when removing an extreme outlier. The p-value of the one-sided t-test is 0.037, i.e. statistically significant at a 95% level. When the outlier is removed the p-value is 0.077, i.e. statistically significant at a 90% level. However, the remaining tests (number of publication after the PhD is finished and the total number of publications during and after the PhD) do not show statistically significant differences.

Conclusion

On the basis of our findings for these 24 PhD students we cannot reject our H0 and instead must conclude that our evidence points in the direction that our initial assumption was wrong. Considering the whole career during and after the PhD, conventional PhDs do not seem to produce more publications than do industrial PhDs. However, some difference does exist since after all there is a statistically significant difference in output during the PhD period, if not after.

Authors

Julie Riisom Wisborg1,*
ORCID 0000-0001-7773-158X

Asger Væring Larsen2
ORCID 0000-0002-9967-2637

Thea Marie Drachen2
ORCID 0000-0003-4760-5536

Charlotte Wien2
ORCID 0000-0002-3257-2084

* corresponding author: juliewisborg@gmail.com

Affiliations: 1) Faculty of Business and Social Sciences, University of Southern Denmark, Campusvej 55, Odense, Denmark
2) University Library of Southern Denmark, University of Southern Denmark, Campusvej 55, Odense, Denmark.