Business and Marketing Education Doctoral Students' Perceptions of Their Profession

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Abstract

The future of the business and/or marketing education profession is dependent upon its future leadership. Many of those leaders are currently engaged in or have recently graduated from related doctoral programs. This study examined 22 doctoral students/recent graduates preparing for a career in business and/or marketing education and solicited their opinions on the future of their profession. Participants were surveyed and asked to identify what they believe to be true about future focus of instructional content, methods of teacher preparation, their commitment to their profession, and their opinions regarding the future of business and marketing education. Participants were in general agreement about future focus of instructional content and teacher preparation methods. While they tend to be committed to the profession, they had varying opinions of what that consists of; some will rely heavily on practitioner memberships, conferences, and publications, while others will focus more on those elements dedicated to scholarly endeavors.

Keywords: business and marketing education, doctoral students, profession, perceptions

1. Introduction

Doctoral education provides capabilities for one to better understand the knowledge and principles of specialized content fields. Researchers and professional associations continue to expand the content of these fields. In the past, teacher educators undertook a major role in providing leadership to content development, teacher preparation, and professional association direction. Today there are fewer career and technical education programs at the college and university level (Moye, 2009; Ritz & Martin, 2013), resulting in fewer faculty members available to work with the development of these specialized subject fields. New doctoral graduates will be challenged to assume many leadership roles (Ethrenberg, Jakubson, Groen, So, & Price, 2007). Some faculty members choose to be active in their professions and choose to provide leadership to them. Others are content to teach classes and undertake research. It is important to understand the perceptions of new doctoral graduates and their plans for their future and the future of their professions (Martin, Ritz, & Kosloski, 2014). Are new graduates planning to participate in the refinement of the contents of their specialized fields, working to improved methods of preparing teachers, and leading their professional associations that often guide their fields? The future of professions relies upon people who want to contribute to their activities and leadership (Wright, 1999).

1.1 Research Problem

This study sought to determine the perspectives of newly graduated/graduating doctoral students toward the secondary school subjects of business and marketing education. The researchers sought the newly prepared graduates' perspectives toward the content focus of these secondary school subjects, the methods for the preparation of future teachers, their planned professional involvement, and predictions of the future of these school subjects. This is done to project the "health" of the profession by the year 2025.

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The beneficiaries of this research should be teacher educators, CTE supervisors and administrators, newly graduating doctoral professionals, and professionals who plan to seek these degrees.

1.2 Research Objectives

Thus the following research questions were developed to guide this study:

RQ$_1$: What are new doctoral students'/graduates' opinions concerning the focus of instructional content to be learned in middle or high school business and marketing education programs?

RQ$_2$: How do new doctoral students/graduates believe business and marketing education teachers will be prepared in the near future?

RQ3: What is the commitment level of new doctoral students/graduates to their business and marketing education professions?

RQ4: What do new doctoral students/graduates expect to occur in the future to the business and marketing education professions?

2. Review of Literature

2.1 Doctoral Education

Fewer students seek to earn a doctoral degree in professional education fields than in the past (Allum, Bell, & Sowell, 2012). Those who have interests in teacher education, along with self-motivation, academic abilities, and a career purpose, undertake this advanced graduate degree work. In the area of career and technical education, doctoral students seek to specialize in the knowledge and principles of this field of study, while some specialize in particular career and technical education fields of knowledge (e.g., business and marketing education, family and consumer sciences). These specializations enable individuals to prepare future teachers for instructing secondary education students and to supervise them in career and technical education (CTE) programs.

2.2 Career and Technical Education

Career and technical education is pervasive in the United States. Approximately 25% of secondary educators teach CTE courses (Gray & Walter, 2001), while the Bureau of Labor Statistics (2015) reports that overall employment demands for CTE teachers is expected to grow by 9% through the year 2022. More than 7,000,000 students participate in middle school and secondary school programs (Association for Career and Technical Education [ACTE], 2013). In addition, The National Center for Education Statistics (2009) reports that virtually every student takes at least one CTE course during high school, and that more than one in two students takes at least three CTE courses within a specific program.

Formerly labeled vocational education, CTE is defined as:

Organized educational activities that offer a sequence of courses that provides individuals with coherent and rigorous content aligned with challenging academic standards and relevant technical knowledge and skills needed to prepare for future education and careers in current or emerging professions, provides technical skill proficiency, and industry-recognized credential, a certificate, or an associate degree, may include prerequisite courses (other than a remedial course) that meet other requirements; and include competency-based applied learning that contributes to the academic knowledge, higher-order reasoning and problem-solving skills, occupation-specific skills and knowledge of all aspects of an industry, including entrepreneurship, of an individual. (Brustein, 2006, p. 16)

Career and technical education programs fall under the umbrella of one of the following eight areas of study:

- Agricultural education
- Business education
- Marketing education
- Family and consumer sciences education
- Trade and industrial education
- Health science education
- Engineering and technology education
- Technical education (Gordon, 2014)

Career and technical education is generally characterized as vocational education, or education that prepares learners for careers that do not require a baccalaureate degree. However, while the definition and current legislation both address careers that may or may not include postsecondary education, it is becoming more common to include some type of proof of proficiency beyond high school preparation (Gordon, 2014). Learners are expected to leave high school being either college or career ready (National Business Education Association [NBEA], 2014).

2.2.1 Business Education

Formal business education found it roots 1823 when bookkeeping was introduced into the curriculum of the English High School of Boston. Because such a significant portion of clerical workers were male, this led to the introduction of business education programs in the high schools throughout the 1800s and 1900s (Scott & Sarkees-Wircenski, 2008). Eventually the Vocational Act of 1963 provided federal funds in support of individuals seeking employment in business and office occupations (Gordon, 2014). Today's business education exists for the purpose of helping to prepare youth and adult learners from middle school through postgraduate school to successfully enter the business community (ACTE, 2015a). While students enrolled in business education courses are preparing for the workforce, business education faculty in higher education institutions is preparing teachers to educate business education students. Content areas for business education fall into one of the following general categories: accounting, business law, career development, communication, computation, economics, entrepreneurship, information technology, international business, management, marketing, and personal finance (NBEA, 2014). Business education continuously changes its curriculum and instructional practices as a result of rapidly evolving business equipment, software, information management systems, and other elements of commonplace business practices (Gordon, 2014). Business education sometimes includes cooperative education or field experiences. Curricula are also reinforced by its primary student organization known as Future Business Leaders of America (FBLA, 2015).

2.2.2 Marketing Education

Marketing education was established in the early 1900s when the Women's Educational and Industrial Union in Boston established classes to help prepare women for jobs in retail selling. Continued national growth of related concepts throughout the next three decades eventually led to the creation of federally funded education in support of marketing occupations via the George-Deen Act of 1936 (Gordon, 2014). Modern-day marketing education provides students with foundational skills and knowledge for careers in marketing, management, entrepreneurship, and service (Scott & Sarkees-Wircenski, 2008). Typical course offerings in marketing education include marketing, management, entrepreneurship, communications, fashion marketing, sports and entertainment marketing, travel and tourism, hospitality marketing, and Internet marketing. Marketing education programs are offered from middle school through graduate school (ACTE, 2015b). Marketing education is offered in more than 7,000 high schools with more than 15,000 teachers providing instruction in marketing (Scott & Sarkees-Wircenski, 2008). Data show that 8.7 percent of high school graduates completing career and technical education courses have been enrolled in at least one marketing education course (Gordon, 2014). Marketing education is reinforced by DECA, An Association of Marketing Students, the co-curricular student organization that reinforces marketing concepts learned in the classroom (DECA, 2015). Marketing education is also heavily involved in cooperative education, or the learning strategy of placing students in work experiences that relate to the curriculum (CTE Resource Center, 2014).

2.3 Faculty Preparation

Doctoral education teaches one the theory and application of the knowledge which career and technical educators hold special. At this time, society holds career and technical education programs in a positive light, since these programs can provide job skills to youth while they are in high school (Cohen & Besharov, 2002; Lynch, 2015). These career pathways continue to be refined to guide the preparation and education for many jobs that need qualified workers. For those who seekto become a career and technical education faculty member, they can choose between two types of degrees. They can seek a professional (or teaching) degree or a research degree. Some associate the Ed.D. as a teaching and professional service degree and the Ph.D. as a teaching and research degree (Nelson & Coorough, 2010). However, both degrees have as their foundation the preparation of scholars (Walker, Golde, Jones, Bueschel, & Hutchings, 2008). It is important to determine how the degree will be used and in what type of setting before seeking to pursue one (Neumann, 2005; Sweitzer, 2009; Walker et al., 2008). Developing technical knowledge of their field is important to all doctoral study students.

By understanding and exploring this knowledge, doctoral graduates can add to this knowledge base both through research and application and can establish stronger footings for these professions and the preparation of others to work in these specialized fields (Shore, 1991; Walker et al., 2008). Those who plan to work in the academy will be required to contribute by teaching, undertaking research, and serving the university, school systems, and professional groups. Depending on the college/university and the academic unit, the percentage of workload per faculty may slightly vary. Most are expected to teach well and this may be a major percentage of their workload. Others might have defined research roles. Therefore, during graduate study it is necessary to develop an adequate understanding of their specific technical field. Refining instructional delivery is also essential. The depth of study in applying research methodologies varies between the Ed.D. and the Ph.D., although both of these degrees require the completion of a dissertation. Work at research intensive institutions require the seeking of grants and the publication of research findings. Teaching colleges and universities generally require some publication, but usually require greater participation in professional organizations and work with teachers and their administrators in regional school systems (Richlin & Essington, 2004). Higher education has realized that not all disciplines or faculty prepare their students well to take on careers in academia (Gaff, 2002). Some disciplines are research-project focused with future faculty spending much time in laboratories assisting their advisors on their funded technical research projects (e.g., sciences, engineering, agriculture, business). The only experience somedoctoral students may have of teaching is being a student. Because of this shortcoming in fully developing future faculty in some doctoral programs, a national movement began in 1993 that is known as*Preparing Future Faculty* (Adams, 2002).

The Preparing Future Faculty (PFF) program has three core features. These include:

First, PFF programs address the full scope of faculty roles and responsibilities that include teaching, research, and service, emphasizing how the expectations for these responsibilities often differ in different campus settings. Second, doctoral students participating in PFF programs have multiple mentors and receive reflective feedback not only for their research activities but also for their teaching and service activities. Third, PFF programs meet both of these goals in the context of a cluster of collaborating with various partner institutions or departments. The cluster might include, for example, a doctoral institution, a liberal arts college, a community college, and a master's university. Within the cluster, the partners work together to provide experiences that will allow the participating graduate students to learn about the roles and responsibilities of faculty members at each institution. (Council of Graduate Schools, n.d., para. 5) Although doctoral education programs mentorgraduate students, much depends on the mentoring relationship that exists with the advisor and other faculty in the department. Some programs have as a goal active professional involvement. At these institutions faculty are active within their professional organizations. With mentorship from these faculty types, students are expected to write papers for publication and to deliver papers at state, regional, and national/international conferences. Thus participating in professional organizations becomes a part of earning the degree.

2.4 Professionalism and Professional Associations

Belonging to professional organizations is an activity one may have observed before the notion arose to earn a terminal degree. Family activity may have shown involvement in groups who seek betterment for their members. Scouts, city council, church boards, and community clubs are all examples of organizations working for the betterment of their members. Professional organizations attract individuals who have a common purpose. There are many professional organizations that serve education, career and technical education, and the specialized subjects within career and technical education. These organizations provide leadership for the subject field, professional development of its members, advocacy for the subject, and resources for members and others (Berger, 2014). Professions are defined as a collection of self-selected, self-disciplined individuals (professionals) who share common identity and characteristics (Brock, Leblebici, & Muzio, 2014). By becoming members in professional organizations, a system is established for networking and learning from other members who have similar interests (Jacob et al., 2013).In addition, professional organizations provide a forum for releasing new content and methodological knowledge to members. Professionals involved in associations have a platform to share ideas and move the organization ahead.

2.5 Future of Professional Education Associations

While professional organizations establish a collecting place for members through conferences and chat-boards, they also provide a forum for members to publish their research and ideas related to the profession. This is done through annual meetings and through the association's publications.

Some new faculty members use these forums to present their research and scholarship ideas and findings. Others use the association for professional development gained through attending conferences and reading materials provided by the association. To continue to function and serve members, some members must be selected and nurtured to take on leadership roles for the associations. Leadership does not only involve the organization president and board of directors. Others have to serve on or chair committees that do the work of the organization (e.g., conference program, journal review boards, political advocacy, membership recruiting). How do people new to a professional organization find out about these committees and how to become actively involved? Schneider (2002) refers to members as social capital. Mentorship can provide the ins and outs of professional organizational structure to new contributors and assist them in becoming a part of the social capital of the organization. Overtime society changes and the needs of organization members change. Organizations need to understand the needs of their members, so they can change emphases with the time. If needs of members are not met, then they might migrate to memberships in other professional organizations that they believe will align with their developmental needs. Professional organizations need to build a sense of community for their members. This includes a sense of purpose, a commitment to organizational analysis with feedback, and a commitment to action (ASAE & Center for Leadership, 2000).

A recent problem noticed within some professional organizations is a decline in members (Martin, 2007) and a decline of those willing to serve in leadership roles. Ritz and Martin (2013) found that 37.5% of new doctoral graduates planned to seek leadership opportunities. However, 88% indicated that they would use association publications and conferences to advance their research in hopes of gaining tenure and promotion at their college/university. Why are memberships in professional organizations declining? The erosion of career and technical education in secondary schools and colleges and universities has been a continual problem. Academic standards and high stakes testing have become the focus of K-12 schooling (Vogler & Virtue, 2007). Career and technical education has worked to show that its courses and activities can reinforce the academics (Achieve, 2012), but school systems have moved their resources and have used these to focus more attention to the core academics. This has reduced career and technical education program offerings. In 2001, following 9/11, it became more difficult for teachers to attend conferences, so lower memberships in professional associations followed. The economic recession of 2008 continued to erode memberships since some lost teaching jobs and others had less money to spend on association membership. Overall membership numbers are down (Alotaibu, 2007; Bauman 2008; Putnam, 2008). To remain viable, associations have had to cut services to survive (Martin, 2007). Providing less educational services, how do professional associations remain viable options to their members? Today leaders continue to work to set strategic plans for change. Associations are also cultivating programs to identify and mentor future leaders (Skelton, Preston, & Good, 2010). This study sought to determine what new doctoral graduates feel about their professional fields and the future of their professions. With this information associations can self-analyze and plan for their future existence.

3. Methodologies

This study utilizes a non-experimental qualitative survey methodology. The researchers attempted to identify all American universities that prepare business and/or marketing education doctoral students through networking, personal knowledge, and extensive online secondary research. Program directors were contacted for each prospective college or university program and asked to identify students who were either currently enrolled in their program or those who had recently graduated within the past five years. Those program directors were subsequently asked to contact all eligible doctoral students/graduates and encourage them to take part in the study. The identified programs included Auburn University, Old Dominion University, University of Georgia, University of Idaho, University of South Florida, and Virginia Tech. While other institutions provide career and technical education doctoral programs, program directors responded that they either currently had no students/graduates specifically concentrating in business and/or marketing education, or else their programs did not emphasize a concentration specialty beyond the broader category of career and technical education. Program directors were asked not only to contact eligible students/graduates, but were also asked to identify the number of students they contacted. The sum of those eligible was the population for this study. As reported by program directors, a total of 23 students/graduates were contacted to take part in the study ($N = 23$).

Follow-up letters were sent to program directors on two separate occasions to encourage students/graduates to participate. Of the 23 eligible participants, 22 completed the survey ($n = 22$) for a 96% participation rate.

Based on research findings reported by Krejcie and Morgan (1970), the sample size represents a valid sample, with a confidence interval of 5 and a confidence level of 95%. The instrument used for this study contained 12 items designed from the research questions and 5 additional demographic items.   The invitational letter submitted to students/graduates ensured invitees that their participation was voluntary, that all responses would be anonymous and would be reported in aggregate only, and that the respondents would receive no direct benefit from participating in this study.

4. Findings

4.1 Demographic Data

Demographic data were collected from all 22 participants. Respondents consisted of 5 males (22.7%) and 17 females (77.3%).   The researchers categorized age groups into 20 – 30 ($n = 6$, 27.3%); 31 – 40 ($n = 7$, 31.8%); 41 – 50 ($n = 7$, 31.8%); 51 – 60 ($n = 2$, 9.1%). No participants reported being in the 61+ age group. Results showed that of the respondents, more were most closely affiliated exclusively with marketing education ($n = 10$, 45.5%), and a majority of their professional interests related to postsecondary education ($n = 13$, 59.1%). One person opted not to respond to the career interest item. Finally, more than half of the respondents were either currently employed as CTE supervisors/administrators ($n = 9$, 40.9%) or were currently full-time students ($n = 5$, 22.7%). A full compilation of the participants' demographic data can be seen in Table 1.

4.2 Focus of Instructional Content

The first four questions on the instrument focused entirely on Research Question 1, "What are new doctoral students'/graduates' opinions concerning the focus of instructional content to be learned in middle or high school business and marketing education programs?"

Table 1: Demographic Data of Participants

Demographic	Selection	Frequency	Percent
Gender	Male	5	22.7
	Female	17	77.3
Age	20 - 30	6	27.3
	31 - 40	7	31.8
	41 - 50	7	31.8
	51 - 60	2	9.1
	61+	0	0.0
Discipline	Marketing Education	10	45.5
	Business Education	6	27.3
	Marketing/Business Education	4	18.2
	Neither Business nor Marketing Education	2	9.1
Professional Interests	No response	1	4.5
	High School Educator	1	4.5
	Supervisor/Administrator	7	31.8
	Postsecondary	13	59.1
Current Position	Public School Teacher	2	9.1
	Supervisor/Administrator	9	40.9
	Teacher Educator	2	9.1
	Private Sector	1	4.5
	Full-time Student	5	22.7
	[a]Post-secondary, Non-marketing/business Educator	3	13.6
	Other	0	0.0

[a]Post-secondary, non-marketing/business educators identified themselves as university professors, but not in a field other than business/marketing education.

The first item asked participants, "What should be the focus of the content taught in a formalized middle or high school business or marketing education program?" Participants were instructed to select all that apply, with possible selections being workplace readiness, workforce education, principles of business and marketing, academic integration, and other.

Workplace readiness and principles of business and marketing were nearly unanimous choices with a 95.5% agreement ($n = 21$). Other majority selections were academic integration ($n = 15$, 68.2%) and workforce education ($n = 14$, 63.6%). Two participants selected other, and identified those specifically as soft skills (which may be construed as workplace readiness) and specific industry skills (which may be construed as a subset of workforce education). The second item asked respondents to identify, "What should be the focus of instructional strategies offered in a formalized middle or high school business or marketing education program?" Possible selections were project-based, simulations such as CTSOs(career and technical student organization), contextual, work-based, and other, and participants were asked to select all that apply. Responses were high for each of the selections, with the most being project-based ($n = 20$, 90.9%), followed by contextual ($n = 19$, 86.4%), simulation ($n = 18$, 81.8%), and work-based ($n = 17$, 77.3%). One respondent selected other with an explanation of "differentiated instructional strategies." The third item asked respondents, "Who should be the primary audience for a formalized instructional program in business or marketing education?" and participants were asked to select only one option that they felt best represented their beliefs. Options were middle school, high school, secondary (middle and high school), postsecondary, or all of the above. The response most often selected was high school ($n = 9$, 40.9%), followed by all of the above ($n = 7$, 31.8%), and secondary school ($n = 6$, 27.3%) No participants selected middle school or postsecondary as an exclusive primary audience.

Business and marketing education educators retain continuity with their profession, in part, by reading articles in relevant journals. As a result, the fourth and final question addressing Research Question 1 was, "Which of the following professional publications best describes you as a regular reader of that publication?" Options presented were *Techniques, Journal of Workforce Education, Journal of Career and Technical Education Research, Journal of Career and Technical Education, Journal for Research in Business Education*, and other, and participants were asked to select all that apply. The most often selected publication was *Techniques* ($n = 17$, 77.3%), which is considered to be a practitioner journal and provides stories, solutions to problems, case studies, and profiles of interesting people within the career and technical education community (ACTE, 2015c). The second most read selection was *Career and Education Research* ($n = 14$, 63.6%), also published by the research arm of ACTE. Readership dropped of fprecipitously following these with the next being *Journal for Research in Business Education* ($n = 14$, 63.6%), followed by *Journal of Career and Technical Education* ($n = 4$, 18.2%), and *Journal of Workforce Education* ($n = 3$, 13.6%). One participant selected other and identified himself/herself as a regular reader of *The Wall Street Journal* to help stay abreast of the field. Table 2 provides a summary of doctoral students'/graduates' perceptions regarding focus of content. Survey Questions 5 – 12 asked participants to place themselves in the year 2025 to project not only what they believe to be their personal plans for and commitment to the profession, but also to conjecture what they believe to be true about the profession itself in the year 2025.

4.3 Future Plans and Projections for the Profession

Questions 5 – 7 were asked to address Research Question 2, "How do new doctoral students/graduates believe business and marketing education teachers will be prepared in the near future?" Question 5 asked participants to identify the single primary characteristic that best describes how business and/or marketing educators will become certified (teacher licensed) as classroom teachers. Possible responses were: (a) a 4-year campus-based program, much like what we have today in education; (b) a 5-year campus-based program with a major in business

Table 2: Instructional Content Focus

Item	Selection	Frequency	Percent
Content Focus[a]	Workplace Readiness	21	95.5
	Workforce Education	14	63.6
	Content	21	95.5
	Academic Integration	15	68.2
	Other	2	9.1
Instructional Strategies[a]	Project-based	20	90.9
	Simulation	18	81.8
	Contextual	19	86.4
	Work-based	17	77.3
	Other	1	4.5
Primary Audience	High School	9	40.9
	Secondary	6	27.3
	Middle School	0	0.0
	Postsecondary	0	0.0
	All of the above	7	31.8
Publications Read[a]	*Techniques*	17	77.3
	Journal of Workforce Education	3	13.6
	Career and Technical Education Research	14	63.6
	Journal of Career and Technical Education	4	18.2
	Journal for Research in Business Education	5	22.7
	Other	1	4.5

[a]Percentage totals may equal more than 100% because respondents were permitted to select more than one response.

Marketing, or other similar content-oriented major; (c) licensure add-ons to an existing degree program; (d) documenting academic qualifications through professional certification testing; or (e) other. It appears to be clear that doctoral students believe the 4-year campus model will continue to be dominant, as the characteristic most commonly selected was a 4-year campus-based program ($n = 11$, 50%), while the second most frequent selection was professional certification testing ($n = 5$, 22.7%). Participants were then directed to project where this training will take place. Options were in brick and mortar university classrooms/laboratories, via distance learning technologies, hybrid systems that involved blended methods of instructional delivery, through an external testing organization, through a combination of campus-based and school-based experiences, or other. Respondents were asked to select all that apply. In spite of the fact that the majority of respondents believe that 4-year campus-based programs will be dominant, they also believe that these programs will be delivered off-campus via distance or blended methods. The most frequent choice was hybrid delivery methods ($n = 17$, 77.3%), followed closely by distance learning ($n = 16$, 72.7%). Brick and mortar locations were the third most frequent selection ($n = 10$, 45.5%). Remaining current with professional skills and knowledge is an ongoing consideration for business and marketing educators. As a result, Question 6 asked who would provide professional development for business and marketing educators. Participants were asked to select all that apply from state/district/city supervisors, commercial vendors, national professional associations, state professional associations, local professional associations, teacher education institutions, distance learning providers, or other. National professional associations ($n = 18$, 81.8%) and state professional associations ($n = 17$, 77.3%) recorded the most frequent responses, followed by supervisors ($n = 16$, 72.7%). The next closest response frequency was distance learning ($n = 11$, 50%). A summary of the responses to Questions 5 – 7 can be seen in Table 3.

4.4 Commitment to the Profession

Survey Questions 8 – 11 were established to gauge Research Question 3, "What is the commitment level of new doctoral students/graduates to their business and marketing education professions?" Questions were asked about current and future involvement with professional associations, professional conferences, and intent to publish in professional publications.

Because educational professional associations provide leadership (Berger, 2014), and leadership supports and sustains growth (Blaess, Hollywood, & Grant, 2012), Question 8 asked respondents to identify, "Which professional associations do you believe you will be a member of in 2025?" and asked them to select all that apply.   Participants were provided with nine relevant professional associations, with none of the respondents selecting the ninth, or "other" choice. The Association for Career and Technical Education (ACTE) was a clear choice of professional associations to affiliate with, as it recorded the highest frequency of responses (n = 16, 76.2%). Other professional associations with more than a third of the responses were state education associations (n = 11, 50%) and the Association for Career and Technical Education Research, the research arm of ACTE (n = 8, 36.3%).

Table 3: The Future of the Profession: Year 2025

Item	Selection	Frequency	Percent
Origin of Certification	4-year Campus-based Program	11	50
	5-year Program with Content Major	2	9.1
	Degree with Licensure Add-on	4	18.2
	Prof Certification Testing	5	22.7
	Other	0	0.0
Delivery Venues[a]	Brick & Mortar	10	45.5
	Distance Learning	16	72.7
	Hybrid	17	77.3
	External Orgs	1	4.5
	Combination	5	22.7
	Other	1	4.5
Origin of Professional Development[a]	Supervisors	16	72.7
	Vendors	4	18.2
	National Professional Associations	18	81.8
	State Professional Associations	17	77.3
	Local Professional Associations	10	45.5
	Higher Education Institutions	9	40.9
	Distance Learning	11	50.0
	Other	0	0.0

[a]Percentage totals may equal more than 100% because respondents were permitted to select more than one response.

The participants' commitment to their profession was also measured by their willingness to regularly attend professional conferences. Respondents were provided six business and/or marketing education conferences, with the seventh choice being "other." They were asked to select all of the conferences that they felt they would be regular attendees in the year 2025. The selection with the greatest frequency was ACTE (n = 15, 68.2%) and was the only conference that had a majority selection. It was followed by ACTER (n = 10, 45.5%), and state level conferences (n = 8, 36.4%). Content specific conferences gained considerably less support. None of the respondents selected "other." Professional and scholarly publications provide a venue for doctoral students/graduates to report on their research and add to the body of scholarly knowledge in their field and other tangential areas of interest. As a result, Question 10 asked the participants to identify the scholarly publications in which they plan to publish. They were then provided with a list of 11 relevant publications and asked to select all that apply. Again, ACTE's *Techniques* received the most selections (n = 14, 63.6%) in spite of the fact that it is considered a practitioner's journal rather than a scholarly journal. The publication that had the second highest frequency was ACTER's *Career and Technical Education Research* (n = 12, 54.5%), followed by *Journal of Career and Technical Education* (n = 11, 50.0%). *Online Journal of Workforce Education* (n = 8, 36.3%) and *Journal for Research in Business Education* (n = 7, 31.8%) had some support, while the remaining publications were selected infrequently. No participant selected *Tech* The final question addressing Research Question 3 asked the participants whether or not they envisioned themselves as being active in professional organizations related to business and/or marketing education. If they selected "yes," they were then asked to briefly explain their planned involvement. The majority of respondents said that they do plan to be active (n = 18, 81.8%), while 18.2% (n = 4) said they do not plan to be active.

None of the four who do not plan to be active added an explanation, so it remains nebulous as to why they plan to be inactive. Of those responding "yes," the most common ways they plan to engage with the organizations is through membership, presenting their research, and becoming an officer/leader within the organization.   The aggregate results relating to Research Question 3 can be found in Table 4.

Table 4: Commitment to the Profession: Year 2025

Category	Response	Frequency	Percent
Professional Associations[a]	International Vocational Education and Training Association	5	22.7
	Association for Career and Technical Education	16	72.7
	Association for Career and Technical Education Research	8	36.3
	Marketing Education Association	6	27.2
	National Business Education Association	5	22.7
	Association for Supervision and Curriculum Development	4	18.2
	State level business or marketing associations	2	9.1
	State level business or marketing education associations	11	50.0
	Other	0	0.0
Professional Conferences[a]	MBAResearch Conclave	4	18.2
	Association for Career and Technical Education	15	68.2
	Association for Career and Technical Education Research	10	45.5
	Marketing Education Association	1	4.5
	National Business Education Association	6	27.3
	State level business and marketing conferences	8	36.4
	Other	0	0.0
Plan to Publish[a]	*Career and Technical Education Research*	12	54.5
	Journal of Career and Technical Education	11	50.0
	Online Journal for Workforce Education	8	36.3
	Learning Performance Quarterly	1	0.4
	IVETA Journal of Vocational Education and Training	2	9.1
	ILS Journal of Workforce Education	2	9.1
	Journal for Research in Business Education	7	31.8
	Business Education Forum	4	18.2
	Techniques	14	63.6
	Tech Direction	0	0.0
	Other	0	0.0
Plan to Be Active	Yes	18	81.8
	No	4	18.2

[a]Percentage totals may equal more than 100% because respondents were permitted to select more than one response.

4.5 Future Expectations for the Profession

Question 12 addressed the fourth and final research question, "What do new doctoral students/graduates expect to occur in the future to the business and marketing education professions?" Participants were asked to select one of the following: (a) the profession will look very similar to what it looks like today, (b) the profession as we know it today will be integrated into other curricula, (c) the profession will assimilate business and marketing education, or (d) business and marketing education will disappear as a secondary school subject. Respondents were split over the future of business and marketing education, as eight felt that the profession will remain the same (36.4%), seven said it would be integrated into other curricula (31.4%), and six opined that business and marketing education would be assimilated (27.3%). Only one respondent (4.5%) believed that the programs would be eliminated.

5. Discussion and Summary

The researchers undertook this study with the understanding that future and new business and marketing education scholars will shape the future of the profession. What did the researchers learn about these future scholars?

Data revealed that they believe that workplace readiness and occupational skills are critical to future student success, and that content should be delivered in a variety of ways including using contextual, work-based, project-based, and through simulations such as CTSOs strategies.

A particular point of interest, however, is that in spite of a national push to integrate CTE with common core standards, nearly one in three (31.8%) of the sample of future or new scholars did not believe that academic integration should be a focus of the curricula. With continued pressure to validate CTE programs through the application and reinforcement of academics, does this represent a growth in awareness or rather a potential inadequacy? Given that each participant read at least one relevant journal and most read two or more, exposure to the importance of academic integration in business and marketing education is highly likely. Study participants did not indicate drastic differences in the way that current teachers obtain their license, with half believing that four-year institutions will continue to prepare teachers in the future. However, this group does believe that the way the instruction is delivered is evolving, and that distance learning and hybrid delivery methods will be the predominant delivery venue in the future for teacher preparation. While they also believe that professional development will continue to be provided largely by supervisors and professional conferences, they also believe that this, too, will be delivered via distance learning. Finally, this group of participants plans to be active and committed to the profession by way of being members in professional organizations, presenting at professional conferences, and publishing in professional publications. This is consistent with the fact that approximately two-thirds of the respondents aspire to careers in higher education. Interestingly, more participants selected ACTE membership, conferences, and publications over what would be deemed as more scholarly memberships, conferences, and publications. This could imply that contemporary scholars place applied research at the forefront. And if that is the case, it could also potentially explain why four of the participants do not plan to be active within the profession as defined within this study. It may be that they do plan to be active, but only within the confines of what impacts them the most, or their occupational responsibilities. Time will tell how this group will reshape the business and marketing education profession.

The first recommendation for future research is to replicate the study in five years. Doing so would provide empirical data regarding the increase or decrease in the number of students preparing for a career in business and marketing education with a terminal degree. It would also aid stakeholders in identifying the number of programs that are preparing those students, both of which would likely be indicative of the future direction of the profession. A second recommendation is to initiate a longitudinal study utilizing similar data to this study. Such research would not only enhance analysis of the future of the profession, but it would also help those involved in preparing future business and marketing education faculty and administrators to align learner outcomes with best practices. Doctoral programs can best do this not only by understanding students' perceptions, but also by seeing where those perceptions have led them in practice. They can then help to close the gap, if any, between the purpose of doctoral education and practice. Finally, this study could be replicated not only in business and marketing education, but in other career and technical education fields, as well. A recent study by Martin, Ritz, and Kosloski (2014) examined the perceptions of doctoral students in technology and engineering education. By examining other fields such as family and consumer sciences education, agricultural education, trade and industrial education, and health sciences education, stakeholders could take a much broader look into the future of career and technical education, examining the various CTE fields both individually and in aggregate.

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