

# Predicting & resolving non-completion in higher (online) education

## Citation for published version (APA):

Delnoij, L. E. C., Dirx, K. J. H., Janssen, J. P. W., & Martens, R. L. (2019). *Predicting & resolving non-completion in higher (online) education*. Poster session presented at Onderwijs research dagen , Heerlen, Netherlands.

## Document status and date:

Published: 28/06/2019

## Document Version:

Other version

## Please check the document version of this publication:

- A submitted manuscript is the version of the article upon submission and before peer-review. There can be important differences between the submitted version and the official published version of record. People interested in the research are advised to contact the author for the final version of the publication, or visit the DOI to the publisher's website.
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# PREDICTING & RESOLVING NON-COMPLETION IN HIGHER (ONLINE) EDUCATION

## BACKGROUND

### The non-completion problem:

- A considerable number of students in higher (online) education do not complete a study course or program.
- Next to financial consequences, this also has consequences for students' confidence and reputation of educational institutions.

### The present study:

- To our knowledge, there is not yet an overview of characteristics of interventions raising completion rates.
- In addition, to gain insight in the effectivity of these interventions, we need to know whether they are focusing on the most relevant factors related to non-completion.
- A literature review on modifiable predictors of (non-)completion (part a) and interventions to raise completion rates (part b) in higher (online) education was performed as a first step of a four-year design-based research project.

## KEYWORDS

- Higher education
- Design-based research
- Non-completion
- Predictors
- Interventions
- Review

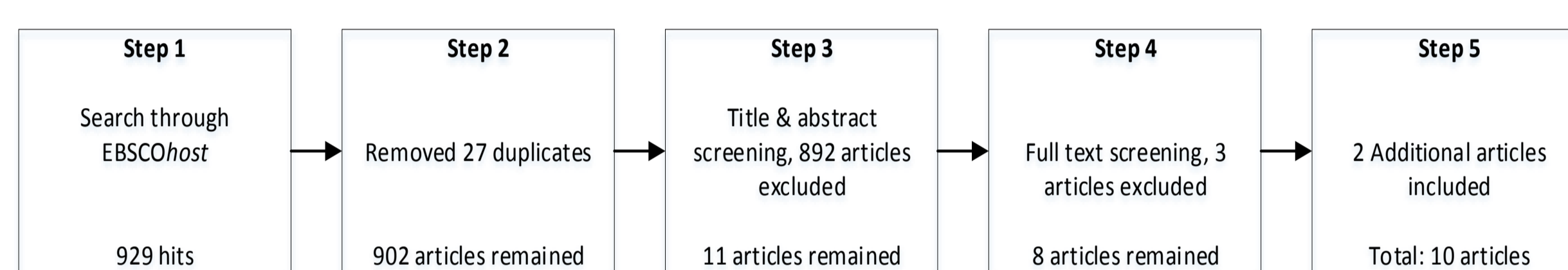


## RESEARCH QUESTIONS

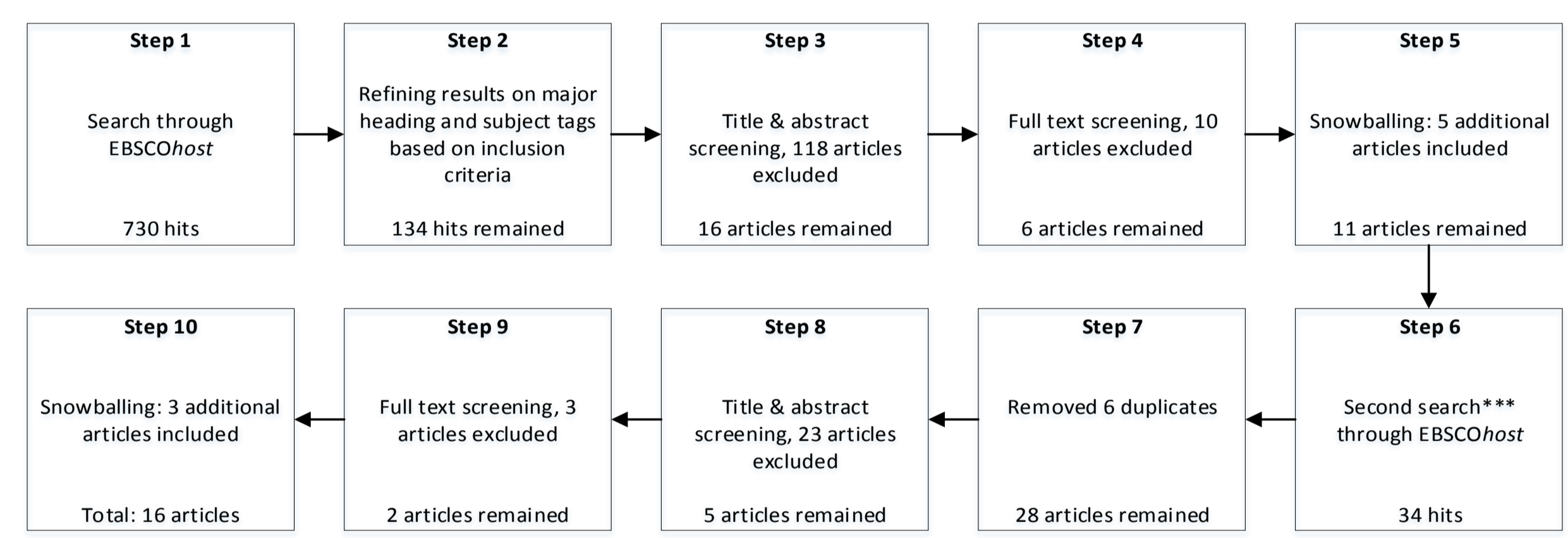
- A -** Which modifiable variables are most strongly related to non-completion in higher (online) education?
- B -** What are the key characteristics of effective and efficient interventions to raise completion rates in higher (online) education?

## METHOD

### Predictors

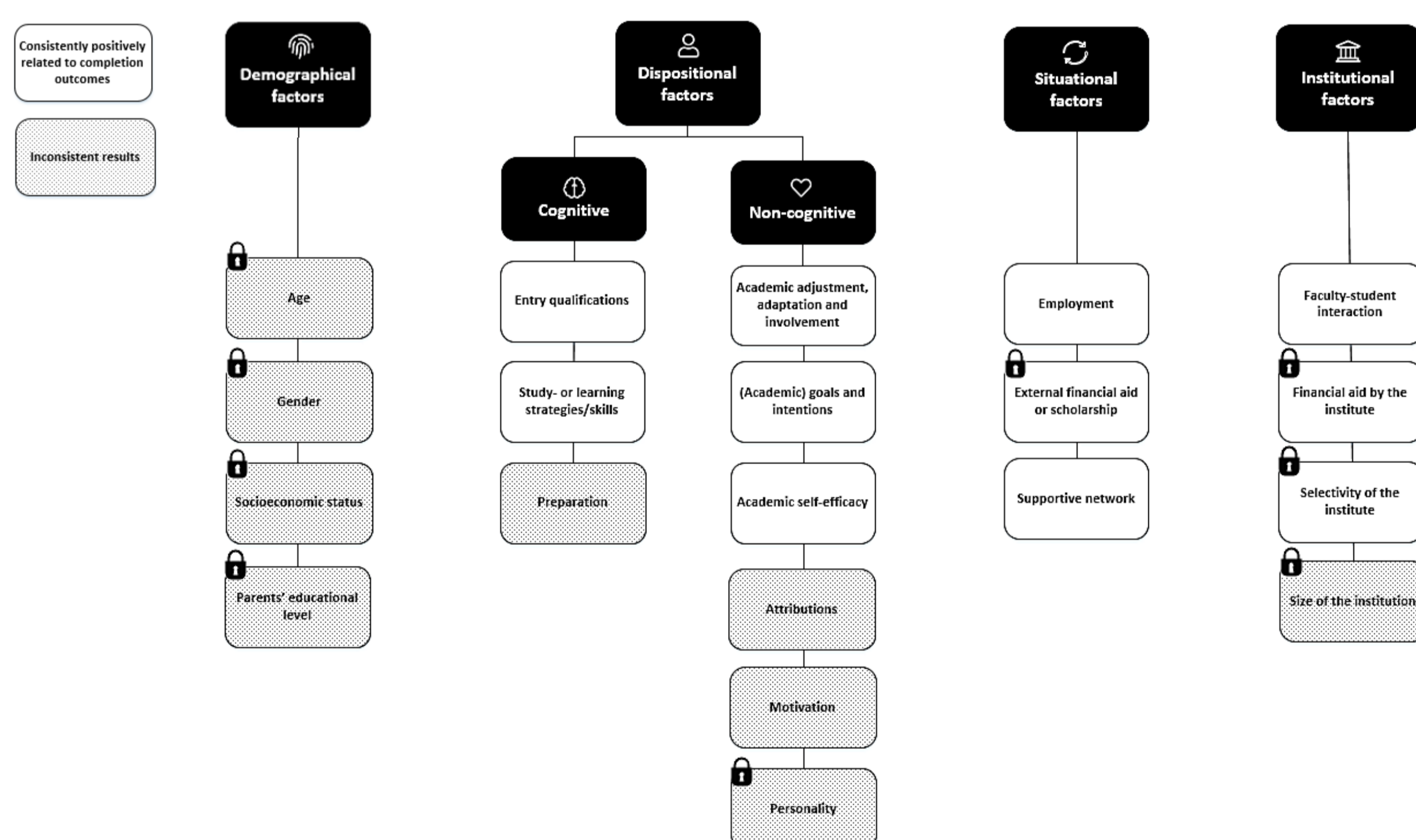


### Interventions



## RESULTS

### Predictors



### Interventions

Characteristics	Interventions				
	Coaching & Remedial teaching (K=6)	Peer mentoring (K=3)	Motivational contact (K=3)	Academic dismissal policies (K=3)	Interventions on instruction (K=1)
Impact on completion rates	↑ Increasing	↑ Increasing	↕ Inconsistent	↓ Decreasing	↑ Increasing
Effect size (Cohen's d)	Unknown	Unknown	Unknown	0.07	Unknown
Effect (min. and max. difference between groups or cohorts)	6%   54%	10%   48%	2%   25%	7%   8%	7%   22%
Duration (min. to max.)	One session   One year	One semester   One year	One course   One semester	One year	One course   One semester
Mode of intervention (online, face-to-face or blended)	Face-to-face   Online	Blended   Online	Online	Blended   Online	Online
Educational context (online or face-to-face educational context)	Face-to-face	Face-to-face	Face-to-face   Online	Face-to-face	Online
Target factor(s)*	👤   🧠	👤   🧠	🧠	👤   🧠   🏛️	👤   🧠

\* Target factors are based on the categories of the part a of this literature review.  
\*\* K is the number of intervention studies included in the corresponding category.

## CONCLUSION

### Conclusions:

- Modifiable consistent predictors of non-completion in higher (online) education are study- or learning strategies, academic self-efficacy, (academic) goals and intentions, institutional or college adjustment, employment, supportive network and faculty-student interaction.
- Interventions raising completion rates in higher (online) education significantly are coaching or remedial teaching and peer mentoring.
- Interventions raising completion rates significantly focus on dispositional cognitive and non-cognitive, and situational factors.

### Future directions:

- More systematic and aligned (i.e., to research on predictors) research on interventions is needed, which advocates for a design-based research approach.
- More scientific publications on interventions to raise completion rates are needed, in order to build a knowledge base on how to increase completion rates in higher (online) education.
- Especially for interventions prior to student enrolment.

## SHARE YOUR THOUGHTS OR QUESTIONS

