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Experiences of Student-Supervisor Interactions in Public Universities in Kenya

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improve student-supervisor interaction in graduate studies. The study was guided by interpersonal theory. The target population in this study were 310 participants comprising of 60 supervisors and 250 supervisees from the school of education. The study used stratified sampling to sample universities, simple random sampling to sample graduate students and heads of departments, while purposive sampling was used to sample the supervisors and deans. The study adopted descriptive survey research design which enabled the researcher to explore and describe student-supervisor interaction. The study employed the use of questionnaires and interview schedules to collect data for the study. Data were presented using frequency tables. The study findings indicated that 42(76.4%) of the supervisors and 144(60%) of the graduate students held that the universities could deal with challenges facing student-supervisor interaction at a greater extent. The findings also revealed that the universities should strictly adhere to rules and regulations governing graduate supervision process 128(53.3%) of the graduate students and 39(70.9%) of the supervisors agreed. Further, qualitative results concluded that supervisors were allocated more graduate students than the rules and regulations allowed affecting graduate students thesis completion time. Policies guiding graduate student-supervisor interaction should be revised to meet up-to-date challenges facing student-supervisor interaction. The universities should provide seminars, workshops and trainings to both supervisors and graduate students to enhance student-supervisor interaction. The findings of the study will be useful for the university managements in understanding the student-supervisor interaction in graduate studies. The findings will also provide information to interested researchers in related topics in graduate studies.

Background of the Study

Student-supervisor interaction in graduate studies in public universities in Kenya has drawn a lot of interest in recent research in higher education institutions globally (Mukhwana, Oure, Too, & Some, 2016). When something goes wrong with this key interaction, many aspects of a student's life, including livelihood, work status, study status, career prospects, and in turn, mental health get affected (Li and Seale, 2007). The graduate student experience revolves to a large extent around the interaction between a graduate student and his/her supervisor (Mainhard, van der Rijst, van Tartwijk, and Wubbels, 2009).

The number of graduate student issues that were brought to various university bodies each year suggests that there were ongoing issues in relation to student-supervisor relations (Ombudsperson for Students, 2013, 2014). A positive student supervisory interaction and experience is often key to success in graduate studies, it is complex, subtle, pivotal and responsible (Zhao, 2003). It must be remembered that there remains very little systematic preparation or support for life as a doctoral student or an academic mentee. (Amundsen and McAlpine, 2009). Heath (2002) pointed out that the success of any graduate system strongly rely on the supervisors who should provide expertise, mentorship, time, counseling and moral support to enhance the students research

Abstract

Student-supervisor interaction is an important aspect in graduate studies supervision. This is because when something goes wrong with the interaction process, many aspects of the graduate student's life affects completion time. The purpose of this study was to look at student-supervisor interaction in graduate studies in public universities in Kenya. The study sought to examine practices that would

skills and attitudes so as to ensure good production of quality thesis.

Supervision is a perplexing social experience which includes two parties with both converging and diverging interests. In this manner, adjusting these interests was extremely significant to the productive supervision of graduate research ventures (Grant & Graham, 1999). Departments have also been recognized as being so profitable in this issue and as imperative places of learning and change that exist inside bigger associations: resources/schools inside universities (Boehe, 2016). Foundations consolidate degrees of assorted variety similarly as to graduate populaces and divisions. Curiously, various graduate schools check shorter events to and larger amounts of fruition to completion than other colleges (Elgar, 2003).

Seagram, Gould and Pike (1998) exhibited that a good student-supervisor affiliation was the key factor in the accomplishment of graduate studies exploration work. As a ground-breaking supervisor, there were certain fundamental practices that should be set up in supervisory system in order to enhance research and supervision needs. Non appearance of information and principle in the supervisory system brought this issue out. For postgraduate studies with hypothesis program, there was a basic prerequisite for a fruitful supervisory structure.

Graduate students experienced lots of inconveniences in the midst of their assessment technique. Some of them were not familiar with the research process and nonappearance of data about research system. Of course, supervision was one of the essential parts that should be considered while discussing postgraduate studies. A postgraduate student was as often as possible his/her supervisor's nearest partner (McAlpine and Weis, 2000). Subsequently, postgraduate encounters of the graduate studies can be emphatically impacted by the nature and degree of arrangement with the supervisor, just as by qualities, for example, sex and ethnicity (Acker, Hill and Black, 1994; Ellis, 2014). Perception from this subject must be genuinely looked into so as to guide postgraduate students to finish their research on time. University education in Kenya began in 1963 with just 571 students enrolled in Nairobi University College (Weidman, 1995). Since then, the system has undergone considerable expansion as of 2016 there were 22 public universities, 14 chartered private universities and 13 universities with Letter of Interim Authority (LIA).

Statement of the Problem

It is a privilege to hold a faculty position and supervise students; nonetheless, this comes with a great responsibility associated with great expectations from the students. The expectations are targeted to supervisors and the institutions of learning. Although there is still an imbalance on power relationships between supervisors and students, especially in developing countries, supervisors still need to understand and know the student expectations. This way, they can build professionally and healthy long lasting relationships than can spread beyond the supervision period.

However, the rapid expansion in the number of universities and student enrolments has led to what many term as a crisis of quality in higher education and poor completion rates (Oanda and Jowi, 2013). Declining quality of educational outcomes was primarily driven by rising student to staff ratio which in practical terms implied poor mentorship and supervision of graduate students. In Kenya there are 5,186 lecturers for the 160,000 students in public universities, indicating 1 lecturer for 70 students compared to the international standard of 1 to 25. The low percentage of PhDs among the academic staff has a number of implications for the overall quality of degree programs. The ability to mount effective post-graduate degree programs was compromised, both in terms of teaching quality, and also the ability to design and undertake quality research.

Further, the postgraduate student experience revolves to a large extent around the interaction between a student and his/her supervisor (Mainhard et al, 2009). Therefore, due to the fact that graduate students have different faculty advisors, lab supervisors, and dissertation chairs, some students will have better mentors than other students (Gopaul, 2011). Negative outcomes can be linked to a poorly matched wish to draw from the interaction (Dysthe, Samara & Westrheim, 2006). These has led to increased number of postgraduate students' issues brought to various university bodies each year. This suggests that there are ongoing issues in relation to student-supervisor interaction (Ombudsperson for Students, 2012, 2013, 2014)

Objective of the Study

The objective of the study was to establish the experiences of student-supervisor interactions in public universities in Kenya.

Research Question

What were the experiences of student-supervisor interactions in public universities in Kenya?

Justification of the Study

The rate and the quantities of postgraduate students being created were deficient to address national issues that incorporate staffing the expanded number of universities, replacing a maturing personnel, and the expert frameworks required in government, the private part, worldwide organizations and the Non Governmental Organization (NGO) community,(Too et al, 2016). This study therefore aimed to shed light on student-supervisor interaction and socialization in graduate studies in public universities in Kenya.

Theoretical Review

This study was guided by interpersonal theory by Harry Stack Sullivan (1953).

Interpersonal Theory

The circumplex custom in relational psychology was inspired by the relational hypothesis of Harry Stack Sullivan (1953) and made progressively express and available to inquire about by Timothy Leary (1957), who presented the roundabout requesting of factors known as the relational circumplex. Relational hypothesis includes three strands of driving thoughts: the rule of complementarity, the standard of vector length, and the guideline of circumplex structure. The first strand of relational hypothesis is the rule of complementarity which battles that individuals in dyadic collaborations arrange the meaning of their relationship through verbal and nonverbal prompts. This arrangement happens along the accompanying lines: prevailing agreeableness welcomes accommodating kind disposition, and the other way around, though overwhelming antagonistic vibe welcomes compliant threatening vibe, and the other way around. The second strand of relational hypothesis is the standard of vector length, which fights that inside judgments of identity type on the relational circle, vector length (a proportion of measurable aberrance) is a record of psychopathology (mental abnormality; Robins, 1989). When all is said and done, individuals with unbending, resolute identities have more issues - regardless of whether such individuals were unyielding in a cordial heading while individuals with adaptable, versatile identities have less issues regardless of whether such individuals were commonly more unfriendly than friendly.

The third strand of relational hypothesis is the standard of circumplex structure, which fights that factors that measure relational relations were masterminded around a hover in two-dimensional space (Leary, 1957). A circumplex could be seen in three progressively increasingly prohibitive and testable ways. Initial, a circumplex could be seen as just a valuable pictorial portrayal of a specific space. Second, a circumplex could be seen as inferring round request, to such an extent that factors that fall near one another were more related than factors that fall further separated on the hover, with inverse factors being adversely related and factors at right points being inconsequential (symmetrical). Third, a circumplex could be seen as suggesting definite circumplex structure, with the end goal that all factors were similarly divided around the circle (Wiggins and Trobst, 1997). Advanced psychometric and geometric tests could be connected to decide if a circumplex meets the criteria for correct circumplex structure (Acton and Revelle, 1998).

The theory was deemed relevant to the study because it explain the factors that affect interaction between two individuals. It explains also the types of interactions including dyadic interactions where those involved arrange the meaning of their relationship through verbal and nonverbal signs. For this situation transaction happens along the accompanying lines: dominant friendliness invites submissive friendliness, and the other way around, while dominant hostility invites submissive hostility, and the other way around. Dyadic interaction depends on how individuals treat each other in this study when the graduate student acts friendly to the supervisor also the supervisor will be friendly and when the student becomes hostile the supervisor will also treat them hostilely. The theory also describes personality types which affect the level of interaction. Individuals with rigid, resolute identities have more issues regardless of whether such individuals were rigid an inviting way while individuals with adaptable, versatile identities have less issues regardless of whether such individuals were commonly more unfriendly than well disposed. The theory was good in guiding the understanding of the drive of the study.

Conceptual Framework

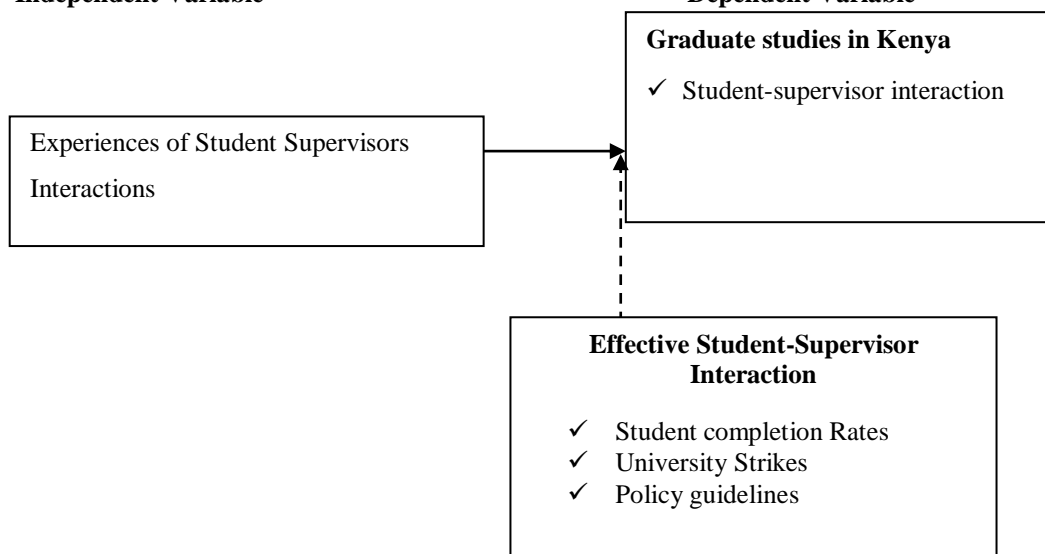
The study employed the following conceptual framework to illustrate how the independent and dependent variable interact in the study on student-

supervisor socialization interaction in graduate

studies in Kenya

Independent Variable

Dependent Variable



Review of Related Literature

Experiences of Student-Supervisor Interactions

Experiences of student-supervisor interactions include the problems and challenges encountered by graduate students during graduate studies. Some of the problems and challenges encountered during their studies are just but experiences of graduate school.

Zuber-Skerritt et al. (1994) summarized the main problems/challenges in graduate supervision as: (1) inadequate supervision: supervisors’ lack of experience, commitment, and/or time; (2) emotional and psychological problems: students’ intellectual and social isolation; their insecurity to fulfill the standards and lack of confidence in their ability to complete their theses within the specified time or not at all; (3) lack of understanding and communication between supervisor and graduate student; and (4) graduate students’ lack of knowledge, skills, training or experience in research methods.

Another problem/challenge is that the role of supervision and the motive for supervision also seems to be unclear. In the first instance the role of supervision is being described as the most advanced level of teaching (Connell, 1985), critical conversation (Knowles, 1999) and mentorship (Taylor, 1995), and in the second case supervisor motives might incorporate knowledge attainment, joint publications and recognition (self-esteem)

each motive carrying different expectations of students (Hockey, 1996). Spear (2000) concludes that one of the most common complaints from research graduate students concerns infrequent or erratic contact with supervisors, who might be too busy with administrative or teaching responsibilities, have too many students or be away from the university too often. Therefore, the supervisor should make equal information, time and energy available to all students (Brown & Krager, 1985) and should also meet regularly with students (Hockey, 1996; Russell, 1996). Research has shown that constant, thoughtful supervision and availability is the key to successful graduate program completion (Donald et. al., 1995; Holdaway, 1991).

McAlpine and Norton (2006) found that a student voice is seldom heard in research on graduate studies. Lin and Cranton (2005) described the process of graduate study as growing from a scholarship student to becoming a responsible scholar, which Lovitts (2005) refers to as a critical transition. The graduate growth process is not always a fluent and untroubled transition. The growth that takes place by working through what Malfroy (1998) refers to as a necessary creative tension and the development of independence, critical thinking (Lin and Cranton, 2005) and creativity (Lovitts, 2005), were essential elements of graduate development. Lin and Cranton (2005) add that students need to be supported in their growth to establish an individual scholarly identity. Lovitts (2005) found that graduate students were

often ill-prepared to deal with the challenges graduate studies pose to them.

Lovitts (2005) include elements in the macro and microenvironments, as well as individual resources as influences in graduate completion and creative performance. Spear (2000) concludes that one of the most common complaints from research students concerns infrequent or erratic contact with supervisors, who might be too busy with administrative or teaching responsibilities, have too many students or be away from the university too often.

Research into chair-candidate interactions suggested that gender, ethnicity, education, and other differences impact any research interaction. Particularly, research revealed that the chair-candidate interaction is a veiled and controlled interaction similar to the "master-slave interaction" (Wisker & Robinson, 2014) and possible cultural imperialism. Wisker and Robinson alleged that a number of foreign students were even suppressed or sought remedial education from host universities and that this practice has gone so far as to lead to mistreatment of candidates.

Teaching in higher education is currently being carried out either by face to face mode or distance teaching mode. Face to face teaching mode is the one in which the lecturer delivers the lecture, demonstration or explanations in front of students in a lecture hall or theatre. In distance teaching the lecturer is separated from students in terms of place, space and time and uses electronic broadcast, electronic mail, audio-visual methods and so forth (Macharia, 2009).

It is becoming more common for instructors to explore various mediums, methods, and settings in which to conduct class. Alternative structures to the traditional classroom configurations were being considered for example the increased use of hybrid or online class settings, also known as high-tech classrooms, (Varda, et al 2012). The rise of online courses and access to social media such as Facebook and YouTube present a new menu of options for lecturers; but with it, speculation that students will not get the required and/or expected social interaction to succeed (Steinfeld, Ellison, & Lampe, 2008; Valenzuela, 2009).

It will come as no surprise that students in a classroom tend to form interactions that might affect their experiences, including their learning and understanding of classroom material. However, less is understood about factors affecting these interactions. Some research points to the importance of teaching methodology in connection

to outcomes. For example, using technology in a classroom could create new literacy environments (Moayeri, 2010), and teaching methodology could affect the levels of student participation in the coursework and, in turn, their learning outcomes (Nunn, 1996).

While it is often assumed that a face-to-face environment is the best way to create synergy and in turn intellectual creativity and increased knowledge exchange, there were many methodologies for teaching face-to-face, and some were better than others. Alternative choices such as group activity and online discussion groups have opened the door to new kinds of social interaction. Teaching techniques and class structure chosen by instructors could influence student learning (Rotenberg, 2005). An important factor in teaching effectiveness relates to the experience of the instructor with the course material. Experience of an instructor could affect how well a course is organized and activities were facilitated. Such factors could account for up to 40% of variation in student achievement (Strong, 2007). The importance of using group discussion and cooperative learning methods in classes (as opposed to lecture only) is well known (Orlich, Harder, Callahan, & Brown, 2010; Rotenberg, 2005) and the benefits of online instruction were evident, but ways to maximize them were still being discovered (De Laat, Lally, Lipponen, & Simmons, 2007; Kelly, Ponto, & Rovai, 2007).

Online learning enables the development of competencies in collaboration, critical thinking, personal knowledge, and identity development (Ala-Mutkam, 2009). However, the potential implications these techniques have on graduate student interactions is less well known. This is an important factor, because social networks of students in academic settings have been shown to influence such outcomes as academic performance, development, and persistence (Rizzuto, LeDoux, & Hatala, 2009; Sparrowe, Liden, Wayne, & Kraimer, 2001), as well as health outcomes (Valente et al., 2007, 2009).

Varda, Retrum and Kuenzi (2011) carried out a study on the influence of teaching methodology on student social interaction. The study explored the effects of various teaching methodologies on the social interactions reported by university students in the School of Public Affairs at the University of Colorado Denver. The study found that online classes tend to have fewer, but more frequent interactions among students, more diversity among interactions, and greater likelihood that students perceive other students as influential to their

learning. In primarily lecture classes, students reported fewer connections, but similar to online students' interactions, the interactions were frequent and influential. The study concluded that teaching in an online environment has its own strengths in terms of student interactions; that working in groups offers fewer positive relational outcomes than expected; that the experience of the lecturer has a surprising influence on interactions among students; and that student types affect interactions in fairly predictable ways.

Majeed, and Navaz (2013) carried out a study on perception of lecturer-student interaction in English medium science lectures, in Sri Lanka where English is a second language. The study argued that dialogic lecturer-student interaction, which enables students to take a more active role in discussions compared to the use of recitation scripts (questions-answers-evaluations) developed in non-dialogic interactions, is likely to be beneficial for students' content (lecture comprehension) and language development. The study revealed the complexity of the perception-practice dynamic, and the multifaceted sub-set of factors which influenced students' and lecturers' behaviour in class, and their perception of that behaviour. Students' lecture comprehension and classroom interaction were influenced by their language proficiency, though the students considered the lecturers' lecture delivery style to be more important than their own language proficiency. This study also revealed that a culturally-embedded behaviour perpetuated by senior students, known as ragging (a kind of bullying), restricted the classroom interaction of the students.

Wenglinsky (2001) carried out a study on teacher classroom practices and student performance: how schools could make a difference. According to the study, quantitative studies of school effects have generally supported the notion that the problems of United States of America (U.S.A). Education lies outside the school. Yet such studies neglect the primary venue through which students learn, the classroom. Another study explored the link between classroom practices and student academic performance by applying multilevel modeling to the 1996 National Assessment of Educational Progress in mathematics. The study found that the effects of classroom practices, when added to those of other teacher characteristics, were comparable in size to those of student background, suggesting that supervisors could contribute as much to student learning as the graduates themselves.

Research Philosophy

This study adopted pragmatism as the research philosophical paradigm. Creswell (2009) describe philosophical paradigm as the overall approach to design. Pragmatism relates to matters of fact or practical affairs often to the exclusion of intellectual or artistic matters: practical as opposed to idealistic (Saunders, Lewis & Thornhill, 2012). Pragmatism is a philosophical tradition centered on the linking of practice and theory. It describes a process where theory is extracted from practice, and applied back to practice to form intelligent practice. There is general consensus among pragmatists that philosophy should take the methods and insights of modern science into account (Collis & Hussey, 2014).

Tashakkori & Teddlie (1998) asserts that the function of inquiry should be to relieve and benefit the condition of man. This is to make them happier by enabling them to cope more successfully with the physical environment and with each other. It was applied in this study because supervision of thesis in postgraduate students should be beneficial and relieve to the postgraduate students.

Pragmatists belief that both knowledge (epistemology) and social reality (ontology) were based on beliefs and habits which were socially constructed by the process of institutionalization and socialization. The epistemological orientation adopted by this research was positivism. Epistemology questions the assumptions of what is acceptable as knowledge and that which constitutes an acceptable knowledge in a field of study (Saunders et al, 2009). In mixed method research, epistemology questions the interaction of the researcher to that being researched. The researcher should remain distant and independent from that which has been researched, therefore, attempting to control for bias, selecting a systematic sample, and hence, being objective in assessing a situation is positivism. O'Leary (2010) defines epistemology as "how we come to have legitimate knowledge of the world" while ontology refers to "the study of what exists and how the things that exist were understood".

Cresswell (2009) further argues that knowledge and social reality were historical because institutions were not created instantaneously but always have a history of which they were the products. It is impossible therefore to understand an institution adequately without understanding historical normative processes in which it was produced. Pragmatists see "truth" as a normative concept just like 'good' and maintain that 'truth is what works',

hence knowledge claims couldnot be totally abstracted from contingent beliefs, interests and projections (Tashakkori & Teddlie, 1998).

This philosophy is relevant to this research because student-supervisor interaction in graduate studies is assumed to affect the completion rate of graduate studies in public universities in Kenya. The pragmatism philosophy is relevant to this study because it tries to give empirical and normative meaning to how the student-supervisor interaction affects graduate studies. Therefore, student-supervisor interaction in graduate studies in Kenya is a process that need to be legitimized, accepted and be internalized to exist as a process of socialization in graduate levels of education in Kenya and the rest of the world

Research Design

The study used a descriptive survey research design. A research design is the set of methods and procedures used in collecting and analyzing measures of the variables specified in the research problem (Muaz, 2013). The design of a study defines the study type (descriptive, correlational, semi-experimental and experimental) and sub-type (descriptive, longitudinal or case study), research problem, independent and dependent variables, experimental design, and data collection methods and a statistical analysis plan (Adèr, Mellenbergh & Hand, 2008). Research design is the framework created to find answers to research questions. The design in this study was linked to pragmatism philosophy because both tries to give empirical and normative meaning on how the student-supervisor interaction affects graduate studies.

This design was adopted to examine student-supervisor interaction in graduate studies in public universities in Kenya. It is used to investigate large populations by selecting samples to analyze and discover occurrences. Graduate students in public universities in Kenya formed the target population. The design involved observing and describing the general behavior of subjects without influencing them in any way (Shuttleworth, 2008). The purpose of using the descriptive survey design for this study was to provide numeric descriptions of some part of the population which was quantitative in nature. When it was observed that groups differ on some variable, the researcher attempted to identify the major factors that might have led to any difference. The researcher then described and explained events as they were. The phenomenon that was considered

in this study was interactions in student-supervisor socialization in Kenyan public universities. The approach was appropriate because it enabled the researcher to portray situations, perceptions, opinions, attitudes and the general demographic information that were currently influencing student-supervisor interactions in public universities in Kenya.

The Researcher sought to find out how the supervisors manage their tasks and roles in Moi University (MU), University of Eldoret (UoE) and Kisii University (KU). This design allowed for the shared dialogue between the researcher and the participants through interviews. After each step the researcher used the procedures of data collection, note-taking, coding and memoing which occurred simultaneously from the beginning. Sorting was done when all categories were saturated and finally writing. Situational analysis of the study sites was done by visiting all the sampled public universities in Kenya. The aim of the visits was to find out what was happening on the ground concerning student-supervisor interaction in graduate studies in public universities in Kenya. This helped in creating rapport which is a powerful technique in research and the root of effective communication, success and performance. I sought to find out the background of the institutions with regard to student-supervisor interaction in graduate studies in public universities in Kenya

The Study Locale

The study was done in public universities in Kenya. The study locale comprised of the public universities in the North Rift Region, Uasin-Gishu County, which were: Moi Universty (MU), University of Eldoret (UoE), Jomo Kenyatta University of Agriculture and Technology (JKUAT), University of Nairobi (UoN) and Kisii University (KU) in Kenya. This study targeted the main campuses within the region and therefore, MU and UoE formed the study locale apart from KU Eldoret campus which was used for the pilot study.

Justification for the study locale

The study used only two public universities in the North Rift Region of Kenya because they had the main campuses found in the study area. They were purposively selected due to their uniqueness in the area of student diversity among other universities in Kenya. First, they had opened doors to post-graduate students. Secondly, each had unique

historical and sociological characteristics of its own which prompted the researcher to have a desire to find out how student-supervisor interaction was designed and conducted to post-graduate students in those universities and how they were socialized and mentored by their supervisors. Uasin-Gishu County was purposively sampled as the locale for the study because it hosts a third of the public universities Kenya.

The study was carried out within public universities in Kenya and particularly those found in Uasin Gishu County. The County is one of the 47 counties of Kenya, located in the former Rift Valley Province. The city of Eldoret (capital and largest town in the county) is the county's educational, administrative and commercial centre. The county is located on a plateau and has a cool

and temperate climate. It borders Trans-Nzoia, Elgeiyo-Marakwet, Nandi, Kericho and Baringo Counties in Kenya. These institutions were located within the city of Eldoret and its environs.

The area is selected because it hosts more than a third of the Kenya's satellite campuses and universities and there is no record of a similar study having been conducted in the institutions of higher learning in the area and will therefore, shed more light on the student-supervisor interaction in graduate studies in Kenya. The study area was also chosen because of the completion rate of postgraduate students on their studies. From the university records it was found out that on average, completion rate for the MU and UoE is five to six years. The summary is presented in table 3.1.

Table 3.1: Completion Rate

Completion rate						
MU&UoE	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017	Average
Masters	[2-9 YRS] 4.3	[2-11YRS] 5.1	[2-11YRS] 5.7	[2-16YRS] 5.7	[3-14 YRS] 6.8	5.52
PhD	[3-7YRS] 4.4	[3-10YRS] 6.1	[3-12YRS] 5.1	[3-18YRS] 7.0	[3-14YRS] 5.8	5.68
Average	4.4	5.6	5.4	6.4	6.3	5.62

Source: Office of post graduate studies MU and UOE (2018)

Moi University

Moi University is a public university located in Kesses, Uasin-Gishu County, in Rift Valley, Kenya. It was established in 1984 by the Moi University Act of Parliament of Kenya, after recommendations from the Mackay Commission. MU as a choice of study was influenced by the fact that the university admits post-graduate students as regular, school based/part-time and evening students in the campuses. On the other hand MU which was the first University to be managed by Africans came to existence as a result of the Mackay Report that also brought forth the 8-4-4 system of education in Kenya. In the report, Mackay insisted that Kenya ought to have a University that is situated far from the main road as well as the urban center.

Mackay's report was inspired by the several hapless cases of misdemeanour of campus students in Nairobi City who kept disrupting peace in the highly congested and busy government centre. Therefore, this university started a post-graduate unit in order to mentor and ensure students-supervisor interaction process was good so as to ensure completion rates was good and be able to cope up with the life far from the urban centers to show a difference. At the same time the retired

President Daniel Toroitich Arap Moi, at the time, decided to have this 'ideal' University built in Eldoret under his name.

That is how MU ended up 15 Kilometers from the Nakuru-Eldoret Highway and 35 kilometres from Eldoret Town. MU admits post-graduate students in all its Campuses at the time of study which include; Main, Odera Akang'o Campus in Yala, Town Campus, including: College of Health Sciences Medical Complex, School of Aerospace Sciences (Rivatext) and School of Law (Annex). While the Satellite campuses include; Alupe Campus, Kitale Campus, Nairobi Campus and Coast Campus. The university has a post-graduate population of 5,357 by 2016- 2017 of which 427 were post-graduate students from the school of education who were the major concern for this study.

University of Eldoret

The University of Eldoret is one of the 31 public universities in Kenya and situated 9 km along Eldoret-Ziwa road in Eldoret town, Uasin-Gishu County. It was founded in 1946 by the white settlers as a large scale farmers training centre. In 1984, it was converted to a teachers training

college and renamed Moi Teachers Training College to offer diploma in sciences. Due to double intake crisis, the college was taken over by Moi University as a campus in 1990, renaming it Chepkoilel Campus. It was a campus of Natural, Basic and Applied Sciences. In August 2010, the President through Legal Notice No 125 of 13 August 2010 upgraded the campus into a University College with the name Chepkoilel University College, a constituent college of Moi University. Upon the award of Charter by the President on March 2013, the University College was renamed University of Eldoret. The university has a post-graduate population of 800 by 2016-2017 of which 290 were post-graduate students from the school of education who were the major concern of this study.

Target Population

Kothari (2009) defines a target population as that population which a researcher wants to generalize the results of the study. A population is the entire group of individuals, events and or objects having similar observable characteristics. A target population is defined as all members that were described by the characteristics selected by the researcher. This entailed all the lecturers, and postgraduate students who had graduated between 2013 and 2017 in the school of education for masters’ and Ph Ds degree at the time of the study.

Table 3.2: Target Population: Supervisors

University	Lecturers	Supervisors	Sample Size	Sampling
Moi University	164	55	40	Purposive
University of Eldoret	80	25	20	Purposive
Total	244	80	60	

Source: Records of MU and UoE Registrars Office (2018)

The target population for this study entailed all the postgraduate participants, supervisors, deans and heads of department in the school of education who were also lectures in all public universities in Kenya. A target population is defined as all members that were described by the characteristics selected by the researcher. The target population comprised 164 lecturers from MU and 80 lecturers from UoE giving a total of 244 lecturers.

This was because all the postgraduate students shared characteristics as conceptualized in Chapter One of this study. The target population for the study included all the lecturers teaching and supervising postgraduate students and postgraduate participants who had graduated by 2017 from 2013 a period of five years in the school of education in all public universities in Kenya. The postgraduate participants and supervisors in the public universities constituted the universe sample.

Target population is the accessible population within the area of study and which the researcher intends to study. The study targeted postgraduate participants and lecturers from the faculty of education in public universities in Kenya. The participants targeted were 60 lecturers who were supervisors and 250 postgraduate participants drawn from the Masters’ and Ph Ds programme in the faculty of Education in the public universities in Kenya. These participants were targeted because they were able to provide clear and suitable information for the study since they understood the sociology of education; they had first-hand experience of interactions with their supervisors while they were being socialized through the postgraduate programme in the respective universities. The target population was therefore 310 participants as illustrated in the table 3.2.

The supervisors comprising 55 from MU and 25 from UoE totalling to 80 was my specific target population of lecturers because they hold Ph Ds and therefore qualified to be supervisors of the post-graduate participants. The 427 post-graduate students from MU having done their postgraduate studies and 100 post-graduate students also done their postgraduate studies in UOE giving a total of 527 postgraduate students from the two public Universities was targeted as illustrated in the table 3.3.

Table 3.3: Target Population: Postgraduate Participants

University	Postgraduate Graduated 2013-2017	Sample Size	Sampling
Moi University	912	427	200 Random
University of Eldoret	580	100	50 Random
Total	1492	527	250

Source: Records of MU and UoE Registrars Office (2018)

Sample Size and Sampling Procedure

Selection of the public universities: sampling procedure

The study should have ideally involved all the public Universities in Kenya. However, the Universities were, widespread throughout the country and application of research instruments was likely to pose administrative and financial problems. Therefore, Moi University and University of Eldoret were purposively sampled for the study because they had postgraduate schools and postgraduate students under supervision and those who had graduated. Among the two sampled universities, all have established directorates of post-graduate studies which were good for the study. Therefore, the researcher wanted to find out how these universities were dealing with the graduate students in their studies and especially student supervision interaction process so as to enhance their completion rates and quality education at graduate levels.

Sample size determination

Kothari (2009), defines a sample as part of the target population that has been procedurally selected to represent the population under study. Sampling is the process of systematically selecting representative elements of a population. The sample size of the study was calculated using Krejcie and Morgan (1970) formula for finite population which is calculated as under.

X = Z value (e.g. 1.96 for 95% confidence level)

N = Population Size

P = Population proportion (expressed as decimal) (assumed to be 0.5 (50%))

d = Degree of accuracy (5%), expressed as a proportion (.05); It is margin of error

Therefore:

$$S = \frac{1.96^2 \times 80 \times 0.5 (1-0.5)}{0.05^2(80-1) + 1.96^2 \times 0.5 (1-0.5)}$$

$$S = \frac{76.832}{1.1579}$$

$S = 60$

Sample Size therefore equal to 60

Sample size for postgraduate participants

$$S = \frac{X^2NP (1-P)}{d^2 (N-1) + X^2P (1-P)}$$

Where:

S = Required Sample size

X = Z value (e.g. 1.96 for 95% confidence level)

N = Population Size

P = Population proportion (expressed as decimal) (assumed to be 0.5 (50%))

d = Degree of accuracy (5%), expressed as a proportion (.05); It is margin of error

Therefore:

$$S = \frac{1.96^2 \times 714 \times 0.5 (1-0.5)}{0.05^2(714-1) + 1.96^2 \times 0.5 (1-0.5)}$$

$$S = \frac{685.7256}{2.7429}$$

$S = 250$

Sample Size therefore equal to 250

Sample size for supervisors

$$S = \frac{X^2NP (1-P)}{d^2 (N-1) + X^2P (1-P)}$$

Where:

S = Required Sample size

Table 3.4: Sample Frame of the Participants

University	Supervisors	Postgraduate Students	Sample
Moi University	55/80 * 60 =41	225/375*250=150 250=150	* 191
University of Eldoret	25/80 * 60 =19	150/375*250=100	119
Total	60	250	310

Source: (Author, 2018)

The sample frame gave a total of 60 supervisors including deans and heads of departments and 250 postgraduate participants giving a total of 310 participants for the study. The participants for the study were selected using stratified sampling to represent each institution and department while simple random sampling was used to select the participants for the study from each of the institutions while purposive sampling was used to sample deans. The justification for using stratified sampling technique was appropriate because the population from which the sample was drawn did not constitute a homogenous group. In stratified sampling, the population is divided along some characteristics before the simple sampling is done (Khan, Khan and Ashan, 2008).

In this study, the year of study of the post-graduate students was the most important characteristics to be considered. Simple Random Sample is a subset of a statistical population in which each member of the subject has an equal probability of being chosen. The sampling is a random sampling without replacement, and this is the form of random sampling most used in education practice. In simple random sampling, researchers provide all possible subsets of a population of their research interests with an equal probability of being chosen as a part of their sample. In this technique, each member of the population has an equal chance of being selected as subject. The entire process of sampling is done in a single step with each subject selected independently of the other members of the population.

Research Instruments for Data Collection

The researcher used questionnaires and interview schedules as the main tools for data collection. Each of the tools is described below.

Questionnaires

The study employed the use of questionnaires to collect the data for the study. The questionnaires were administered to both the supervisors and graduate students. Kothari (2009) points out that a questionnaire is made up of a number of questions printed or typed in a formal order on a form or forms. In this study questionnaires were administered to all the sampled postgraduate participants and supervisors in MU and UoE. They included both open ended and closed ended questionnaires. Close-ended questions were especially used to elicit most important and precise

responses on particular aspects on graduate studies interaction needs.

A 5-point Likert scale was used to construct the closed ended questionnaire where; 1=Strongly Disagreed, 2=Disagreed, 3=Undecided, 4=Agreed, and 5= Strongly Agreed. Likert scale is a measuring system whereby a value is assigned to a statement to transform it from qualitative to quantitative as it is desired in this current studies (Upagade & Shende, 2012). The questionnaire contained two sections: part I consisted of the participants background information also known as demographic data (Gender, associated university, programme at university, period of supervision). Part II addressed the objectives of the study; section B covered supervisory styles, section C covered postgraduate students opinion on characteristics of supervisor, section D covered experiences of student-supervisor interactions section E covered practices that would improve student-supervisor interaction. This was done in order to determine graduate studies in public universities in Kenya in relation to student-supervisor interaction and socialization process.

The open ended questions were used to collect qualitative data while the closed ended questions were used to collect quantitative data. They were preferred because they could be used to gather data quickly from geographically dispersed sample population. They were also deemed appropriate as many participants could be reached (Mugenda, 2003). The semi structured questionnaires were administered through an on the spot filling method. With a questionnaire, large amounts of data could be collected from a large number of people in a short period of time and in a relatively cost effective way, data could easily be quantified, it could be used to compare and contrast other research and might be used to measure change. A questionnaire is a useful instrument for gathering extensive amounts of information for large groups of individuals in a short time span. Questionnaires usually collect data that shows how widespread certain opinions were within a large group. It is a research instrument that gathers data over a large sample.

Interview Schedule

There was need to interview the deans and heads of departments who were also supervisors of post-graduate students in postgraduate school in public universities in Kenya and therefore in this study, interview schedules were administered to the deans

and heads of departments. This was the oral administration of questions which involves a face to face interaction with the participants. Kothari (2009) observes that interview schedules were particularly suitable for intensive investigations. The advantage of using interview schedule is that the researcher obtained more information in greater depth. The schedules provided the researcher with greater opportunity to explain the purpose of the study and the items in the interview schedule (Cooper, & Schindler 2004). The two deans and heads of departments from the two public universities were purposely selected. The interview schedule enabled the researchers to seek an in-depth information on student-supervisor interaction and socialization processes involved in the study.

Pilot Study

According to Anastasi & Urbina, (2007) the pilot study is often defined as a smaller version of proposed study and it is conducted with the aim of refining the methodology. They were frequently carried out before large-scale quantitative research in an attempt to avoid time and money being wasted on an inadequately designed project. A pilot study was conducted in the month of January 2018 in Kisii University Eldoret campus in the postgraduate faculty of education which had similarities with the universities studied in main study. The participants who took part in the pilot study were not included in the main study. According to Connelly (2008), extant literature suggests that a pilot study sample should be 10% of the sample projected for the larger parent study. Pilot study used 6 supervisors and 25 postgraduate student at Kisii university postgraduate faculty.

Reliability of research instruments

Reliability refers to the extent to which an instrument yields similar results each time it is administered by independent persons under comparable conditions (De Vos et al., 2010). Odek (2002) notes that reliability of research instruments is concerned about the degree to which a particular measuring procedure gives similar results in repeated trials. The study used the reliability of questionnaire, which set the rating scale by using

Therefore, targeting Kisii university postgraduate faculty of education for the pilot study was a sufficient representative for the study. A pilot study allowed the researcher to test the prospective study and was done on a smaller number of participants having similar characteristics as of those of the target participants. The results of the piloted research instruments enabled the researcher to determine the consistency of responses made by respondents and adjust the items accordingly by revising the document (Levoset *al*, 2014).

Validity of Research Instruments

Validity of an instrument is the success of a scale in measuring what it sets out to measure so that differences in individual scores could be taken as representing true differences on the characteristics under study (Koul, 2002). Predictive validity of scores was employed to test the validity of the research instruments. This was examined to determine the extent to which a particular measure is a good predictor of another variable. Content validity was ensured by doing a thorough literature review study on which the content of the questionnaire were based. Face validity was ensured by pre-testing of the data collection tool and scrutiny of the instruments by the research supervisor. External validity of a study is said to exist when the results obtained in a study could be generalized to other people and other settings. Generalization was made considering the degree of confidence with which the sample findings could be conferred on the population and whether similar findings would be obtained at other times and places.

Cronbach’s Alpha-Coefficient: This tests the level in which the questions in the questionnaire are consistent in giving almost similar findings whenever the instruments are used on the same target population. The study used a Cronbach’s Alpha coefficient of at least 0.7 as the threshold of reliability (Mugenda & Mugenda, 2003).

$$\alpha = \frac{n}{n-1} \left[1 - \frac{\sum V_i}{V_{test}} \right]$$

Where :

α = Reliability

n = Number of questions in questionnaire

V_i = Variability of each of question score

V_{test} = Variability of each of overall questions' score

As a general rule whereby, a value of $\alpha > 0.7$ was considered reliable enough for the study. Reliability results were presented in table 3.5

Table 3.5: Reliability Results

Before	After	Objective	Comment
0.631	0.873	Supervisory styles	Reliable
0.521	0.793	Characteristics of Supervisors	Reliable
0.523	0.800	Experience of student supervisor interaction	Reliable
0.721	0.932	Practices to improve student-supervisor interaction	Reliable

Source: (Author, 2018)

Data Collection Procedures

In order to carry out the study, the researcher sought to adhere to all the ethical issues that pertain to data collection. Permits were sought from The National Council for Science, Technology and innovation (NACOSTI) and the management of Moi university and University of Eldoret to carry-out the study. Once the permits were granted appointments were booked with the faculties of the various universities to determine the most suitable day and time to carry out the study. Research assistants were recruited who helped in administering the questionnaires after briefing them on ethical issues and how to conduct the research. While filling the questionnaires; participants were not required to write their names. This was expected to enable them give sincere and reliable responses. The information was gathered through on-the-spot questionnaire filling for the respondents who consent to take part in the study. This ensured high return rate of the questionnaires and rule out the problems likely to be encountered by collecting them later.

Data Analysis

Data for this research were both qualitative and quantitative. Qualitative data analysis involved description and interpretation of information obtained from interview schedules. This was done through discussion and interpretation of study findings. Quantitative analysis was done for the numerical data obtained from the field through questionnaires. Scientific Package for Social Scientists (SPSS) version 20.0 was used to analyze the quantitative data. This was done through

descriptive statistics. Descriptive statistics were statistics that quantitatively describe or summarize features of a collection of information (Mann, 1995). Some measures that were commonly used to describe a data set were measures of central tendency and measures of variability or dispersion. Measures of central tendency include the mean, median and mode, while measures of variability include the standard deviation (or variance), the minimum and maximum values of the variables, kurtosis and skewness (Dodge, 2003). The data was described in terms of frequencies percentages and means and presented using tables.

Ethical Considerations

Ethical considerations in research were critical. Ethics were the norms or standards for conduct that distinguish between right and wrong. They help determine the difference between acceptable and unacceptable behaviours (Burgess, 1989). Ethical is the philosophy of relating to the study of ethics and or morally approvable when referring to an action that affects others. This was done by informing the administration of the public universities about the research work through application of request letters to collect data in their institutions. To ensure that the study complies with the ethical standards of research, permission to conduct the research was sought from the respective authorities. A full disclosure of all the activities concerning the study was provided to the authorities. A high level of confidentiality and privacy was observed and the findings of the study would not be disclosed to unauthorized individuals. A letter of introduction was also obtained from the University

Data Presentations, Interpretation, Analysis and Discussions

Response rate

Response rate is the number of people who properly completed the research tools divided by the total number of people in the entire sample (Fowler, 2004). A total of 60 supervisors were sampled to participate in the study, but only 55 participated in the study, two deans and six heads of departments included. This was a response rate of 91.67% which was considered sufficient for the study. A total of 250 postgraduate participants were

sampled to participate in the study, but only 240 participated in the study. This was a response rate of 96% which was considered suitable for the study. Babbie (1990) suggested that a response rate of 50% is adequate 60% is good and 70% and above very good for analysis. Chen (1996) argued that the larger the response rate, the smaller the non-response error. This implies that 93.8% response rate was very appropriate for data analysis. The results of response rate were presented in table 4.1.

Table 4.1: Response Rate

Response Rate	Frequency	Percentage
Completed	295	95.2%
Not completed	15	4.8%
Total	310	100%

Demographic information

The study sought to determine the gender of participants. The study results were presented in table 4.2.

Table 4.2: Demographic Information of Supervisors

	Frequency	Percent
Male	43	78.3%
Female	12	21.7%
Total	55	100%

Source: (Author, 2018)

The study findings from table 4.2 indicated that 43(78.30%) of the supervisors were male while 12(21.70%) of the supervisors were female. This gives a clear indication that most of the respondents were male compared to that of females. Despite male being most respondents both genders were represented. The study results concur with those of Mann and Mikesell (2006) who found out that majority of institutions and colleges have more male than female.

Demographic information of the postgraduate students

The study findings sought to determine demographic information of the postgraduate students. The study findings were presented in table 4.3.

Table 4.3: Demographic Information of the Postgraduate Students

	Frequency	Percent
Male	125	52.08%
Female	115	47.91%
Total	240	100%

Source: (Author, 2018)

The study findings indicated that 125(52.08%) of the postgraduate students who participated in the study were male as compared to female students who were 115(47.91%). This implies the study got

information concerning student-supervisor interaction in graduate studies in public universities in Kenya from both gender. The study also gives an implication that both gender completed graduate

studies hence had information's concerning student-supervisor interaction.

Experiences of Student-Supervisor Interaction in Public Universities in Kenya

The study sought to explore the experiences encountered during student-supervisor interaction in public Universities in Kenya. The study findings were presented in table 4.10.

Table 4.4: University Ability to Deal with the Student-Supervisor Interaction Experience and Challenges in Case of Complain

	Supervisors		Postgraduate students	
	Frequency	Valid Percent	Frequency	Valid Percent
Yes	42	76.4%	144	60.0%
No	13	23.6%	96	40.0%
Total	55	100.0%	240	100.0%

Source: (Author, 2018)

The study findings indicated that 42(76.4%) of the supervisors and 144(60.0%) of the postgraduate students agreed that university was able to deal with the student-supervisor interaction experience in case a student had complained. While 13(23.6%) of the supervisors and 96 (40.0%) of the postgraduate students were not in agreement with university's ability to deal with student-supervisor interaction experience in case a student had complained.

The study results showed that universities were at better capacity to manage student-supervisor interaction experience and challenges in case of a complain. The university had guiding rules and regulations used in the management of the student - supervisor interaction. Students had a right to be supervised well as they pursued their academic studies. It was the mandate of the supervisor to provide appropriate academic guidelines to the student throughout his/her study program. The university also had the senate and the council to monitor student-supervisor character while under the academic umbrella. Either student or the supervisor had the right to report disciplinary cases to the respective university statutory body.

It was also assumed that supervisors have had over a long time good experience to interact with many students and was easy for them to learn and understand the challenges that students were going through in the academic life. Students as well had good knowledge to understand the expectations of the supervisor through the interaction period. The minimal number of postgraduate students who do not have good ability to interact with supervisors

University ability to deal with the student-supervisor interaction experiences in case of complain

The study findings sought to determine university ability to deal with student-supervisor interaction experiences in case of complain. The study findings were presented in table 4.4.

well were naturally not aggressive to learn and understand from their supervisors. Also the supervisors who did not have ability to interact with students well were either arrogant, had self interest or knew little about academic needs of the students.

Clark (2017) concurred that each college had a specific committee with responsibility for postgraduate research matters. The committee's name varied by college, but it had overall responsibility for postgraduate research supervision, annual progression review decisions (based on recommendations from schools) and authorising periods of leave or change to study periods. In practice, Colleges delegated some of these decision-making responsibilities to schools (for example the Postgraduate Director). The College Committee also acted as the Board of examiners for post graduate research degree awards. Throughout this document the term "College Committee" was used to refer to all these roles.

Further the study by Robertson, Williams, Jones, Isbel and Loads (2017) showed that respect, trust, confidence and fairness were essential elements of the student-supervisor relationship. Most interpersonal problems between students and supervisors could be avoided if students and supervisors contributed responsibly and professionally to their working relationship by being respectful, courteous, punctual and conscientious. The University's dignity and respect policy promotes a positive working and studying

culture which every student and member of staff contributes to and within which they could fulfil

their potential.

Table 4.5: Supervisors’ Opinions on University Ability to Deal with the Student-Supervisor Interaction Experience and Challenges in Case of Complain

Supervisors’ Opinions	Frequency and Percent
Provide training, workshops and seminars	10(18.2%)
Monitor progress and meet regularly	17(30.9%)
Follow rules, regulations and guidelines	20(36.4%)
There are guidelines provided	3(5.5%)
Supervisors were overloaded	5(9.1%)

Source: Supervisors 2018

According to the supervisors who agreed that the university dealt effectively with matters pertaining to postgraduate students-supervisor interaction 10(18.2%) of the supervisors argued that the university provided trainings, workshops and seminars to the supervisors which in turn improved their performance in dealing with postgraduate students during their thesis writing, they further argued that the university provide seminars, workshops, meeting at the departmental level and deans level so as to encourage to train and encourage the supervisors to supervise to completion while 17(30.9%) of the supervisors agreed that effective and frequent monitoring of postgraduate students progress enhances student-supervisor interaction, they further argued that the university monitor student progress to ensure that they complete on time and also. However, 20(36.4%) of the supervisors argued that if only the postgraduate students could follow rules, regulations and guidelines as contained in the postgraduate universities policy then it could be easy and friendly to deal with the student-supervisor interaction experiences and challenges in case of complain.

On the other hand, 3(5.5%) of the supervisors believed that there were guidelines provided governing the postgraduate studies. They further argued that there were guidelines to guide interaction but they were not clear and were not known to both students and supervisors while 5(9.1%) of the supervisors were overloaded as shown by the study findings in table 4.11.

The study results revealed that supervisors were contented when postgraduate students stick to the guidelines provision by the university school policy. Postgraduate students were expected to show great co-operation and team up with the supervisor to sought out all the issues. Postgraduate students who avail themselves up to

meet the supervisor at the convineint time get assistance at once. Most postgraduate students who show low interaction with their supervisors took longer time before graduating. The reason was that skipping classes and missing out important schedules delayed completion of the course.

According to Proctor (2018), the absence in the context of the unavailability of the supervisors to the students in terms of consultations and provision of timely feedback. The absence of the supervisors causes anxieties to students and was one reason for delayed completion of the postgraduate students. Some of the reasons for the unavailability were commitment in activities outside the University for personal gains or other personal commitments, involvement with management and administrative roles in the university, being on part-time engagement in the faculty, or too many students for supervision Berger and Bushholz, 2013).

Whatever the reasons for the absence, the solution would be to explore the university’s support for none face to face modes of supervision through email, teleconference, phone or skype (Rudd, 2015). While some of these facilities were not readily available in some public universities in developing countries like Kenya, their use could have high financial commitments for the students and supervisors. The other aspect to improve on the availability and commitment of the supervisors was the provision of incentives to staff for engaging in research uptake activity; perhaps on the basis of the number of students one was able to help complete the theses (Acker, Hill & Black 2014). An indirect incentive that might work was the consideration of the number of student successfully supervised as a promotion criterion to the next level for the supervisors. Some universities had sought to improve supervisor’s commitments by attaching monetary gains for successful supervision, giving Ph Ds more money, compared to Masters’ theses

and projects, respectively. Absence by the students also affects the quality of supervision process

Holdaway, Deblois and Winchester, 2015).

Table 4.6: Postgraduate Students' Opinions on University Ability to Deal with the Student-Supervisor Interaction Experience and Challenges in Case of Complain

Postgraduate Students' Opinions	Frequency and Percent
Monitor and enhance Student-Supervisor interaction	81(33.8%)
Set together timelines and ensure good environment	49(20.4%)
There is partial neglect by university	30(12.5%)
Postgraduate Students were under mercy of supervisors	20(8.3%)
University Postgraduate policy, rules and regulations	60(25.0%)

Source: Postgraduate Students 2018

The study findings on postgraduate student opinion on the university ability to deal with student-supervisor experience and challenges indicated that the postgraduate students who agreed that the university was able to deal with the student-supervisor interaction experiences in case a student had complained believed that 81(33.8%) of the postgraduate students argued if only the universities could monitor and enhance student-supervisor interaction then postgraduate students could comfortably complete their postgraduate studies on time. The study findings also showed that 49(20.4%) of the postgraduate students agreed that their supervisors set together timelines and ensured good environment for the smooth completion of their postgraduate studies while 30(12.5%) of the postgraduate students were dissatisfied with the way the postgraduate school handled them by saying that there was partial neglect by the university in dealing with their issues when arose during the study.

The study findings also indicated that the postgraduate students who were against the opinion that the university was able to deal with the student-supervisor interaction experience in case of student had complained they argued that the process of complaining and conflict resolution was laborious and time consuming and further argued that nothing much was done on issues because there were no follow-up by the university to ensure good relationship between postgraduate students and supervisors and that issues could not be handled at individual level. Postgraduate students were under mercy of supervisors was supported by only 20(8.3%) of the postgraduate students in all the sampled universities in Kenya they further argued that there is no strategy for resolving issues by university department and argued that postgraduate students sought issues on their own and that supervisors were given large number of

postgraduate students to supervise in an academic year.

However, the study also sought to establish whether the policy governing postgraduate was adhered to and 60(25.0%) of the postgraduate students dissatisfied that the University Postgraduate policy, rules and regulations were not strictly followed so as to ensure students complete their studies on time.

The university as a learning institution was responsible for the good interaction between the supervisor and the postgraduate students because it was responsible for providing guidelines, policy and regulations so that students and supervisors might carry out their research and present their results to the best advantage possible as they observe timelines. The university also encouraged professional development for both postgraduate students and through seminars and workshops and also ensuring that the supervisors undertook training as part of their continuing professional development and documentary monitoring and checking progresses using signing agreements for both parties. The university was responsible for motivation of the supervisors through encouraging rewards and payment on time which increases the level of commitment also the university should provide rooms for interaction with the postgraduate students within the school and also encourage studies on part time basis. Universities also to provide funding for research which could provide conducive environment for studies in postgraduate studies.

According to Carroll (2016), the absence has been caused by laxity after completion of the coursework. Some students even disappear soon after completion of course work and only appear after a long time delaying the completion time. Some of the reasons for this were that most students at postgraduate level were on paid

employment with some working far away from the universities (Rogers 2017). There were also those that disappear soon after conceptualizing the research topic or before finalizing the proposal. At whatever time they might disappear, the supervision process could not be of quality, due to disruption of the socialization process.

With a compromised supervision due to the disappearance of either the supervisor or the postgraduate student, the problem was usually heightened when either party blame the other for the delayed process (Kezar, 1999). Since graduate school or the unit in charge of postgraduate studies was responsible and accountable to the students and the university for quality assurance in postgraduate programme, the solution was the introduction of a form of a supervision tracking tool, meant to make the postgraduate students and supervisors accountable to each other (Lessing and Schulze, 2012). The tool could be a simple one meant to take stalk of when the student hands in the work to the supervisor, the date when the feedback was provided, mode of feedback delivery (telephone, SMS, email, skype, among others), nature of the feedback given, remarks and signature of both the supervisor and student.

According to Elliot, et al (2016), for the sake of accountability and quality control, the duly completed tool could be photocopied and submitted to Graduate School to serve as a form of progress record, on a regular basis, for example once in three months. However, the tool could serve the purpose only if it has clear guidelines and time lines as how often meetings should be held between the postgraduate student and the supervisor, the expected roles and responsibilities for both the supervisors and the students. At the same time, there should be clarities on the procedure for consultations, the timing of feedback from the supervisor and measures to monitor the completion timeframe for the postgraduate students once admitted in graduate school (Moses, 2012)

Discussion of Findings, Conclusion and Recommendations

Experiences of Student-Supervisor Interactions in Public Universities in Kenya

The study findings on the characteristics of the student-supervisor interaction in public Universities in Kenya indicated that the majority of the supervisors held that the university could deal with

challenges facing student-supervisor interaction at a great extent compared to graduate students. They argued that there were guidelines, policy and regulations in the university on student-supervisor interaction and supervision. Also, they argued that the universities should provide seminars, workshops, meeting at the departmental level and deans level so as to encourage to train and encourage the supervisors to supervise to completion and also the university monitor student progress to ensure that they complete on time.

They further argued that the departments were independent on deadlines and dealing with issues and also they had authority to ensure the process was smooth. According to heads of departments the university could solve challenges facing postgraduate supervisor interaction at a great extent. They noted that the challenges facing interaction included absence of supervisor for consultation and failure to meet deadlines and timelines. According to deans, the university could solve student-supervisor challenges at a great extent. They noted that the main challenges include failure to give guidelines and timelines by the supervisor.

Conclusions

The university was able to deal with the challenges facing the postgraduate student supervisor interaction. This was because the university was responsible for providing guidelines, policy and regulations so that postgraduate students and supervisors could carry out their research and present their results to the best advantage on time. The university was able to provide professional training to both graduate students and supervisors through seminars and workshops to educate both postgraduate students and supervisors on their duties and responsibilities. Commitment and motivation of supervisors depended entirely on the university efforts to reward the supervisors through timely and rewarding payment also the availability of research equipment depended largely on the institutional resources.

Recommendations

The university should provide seminars, workshops and training to both supervisors and the postgraduate students to educate them on their roles and responsibilities and fund research equipment and other resources to create a conducive environment for the graduate students to conduct research effectively.

The university should allocate compulsory dates and timelines for interaction by postgraduate students and their supervisors and restrict the number of students enrolling in postgraduate programmes depending on the number of supervisors available in any given university in Kenya

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