Supervision of doctoral candidates at Kyambogo University: Supervisor–doctoral student perspectives on roles, approaches and type of relationship

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ABSTRACT

African universities are increasing enrolment in higher degrees especially at doctorate level. Kyambogo is one of the universities, in Africa found in Uganda that is offering doctoral studies though it is still fairly young. This study explored the perspectives of supervisors and doctoral students regarding their roles, approaches and type of relationship in the context of Kyambogo University. Considering the fact that supervisor-doctoral student relationship is important, the study set out to explore their perceptions regarding the roles, approaches and types of relationship. The results indicate that those who had gained full admissions for doctoral study were very few. No single doctoral student had graduated since it was introduced. Low institutional capacity and lack of funding were key factors in this. The features of the supervision approaches are differently emphasized in each approach. The approaches form a continuum with different stages of development of the doctoral candidate. Each stage determines the type of supervision approach. Eight types of relationship occur in the supervision process but at different frequencies. The finding also indicates that out of all the eight types of relationship, the captive and con relationship had not occurred at all.

Keywords: Doctoral supervision, roles, approaches, relationship, Kyambogo University.

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INTRODUCTION

African universities are increasing enrolment in higher degrees especially at doctorate level. Kyambogo is one of the universities in Africa found in Uganda, that is offering doctoral studies though it is still fairly young. The doctoral programme started in 2014/ 2015 academic year. There are three groups (cohorts) of doctoral students enrolled so far but no single student had graduated by the time of this study. The factors responsible for failing to graduate may not be different from three key challenges facing African universities reported by Cloete et al. (2015) as poor quality supervision, low institutional capacity and shortage of funding. The low institutional capacity and shortage of funding affect quality of supervision since the university cannot afford to train or hire qualified supervisors. It should be noted that, even if there are qualified supervisors, they should understand their roles, the supervision approach and the type of relationship that occurs. These factors can help or hinder the progress of supervision.

The purpose of this study was therefore to explore the roles, approach and type of relationship that exist in the supervision process. How do the supervisors and students perceive their roles, approach and type of relationship in the context of Kyambogo University?

LITERATURE REVIEW

As already noted under the introduction, one of the key factors in the success of a doctoral study is the relationship between the supervisor and student. This

relationship may be influenced by a variety of factors, among which are characteristics of both supervisor and student with regard to their roles, supervisor approaches and type of relationship that occurs. These three aspects are explained under the following sub-headings.

Roles

This study adopted definition of roles from the work of Orellana et al. (2016) in which roles are defined as the functions and tasks involved in the supervisory process. The roles of the supervisor and that of the doctoral candidates are distinct. This study adopted the list of roles provided by Brown and Atkins (1988) and Boughey and McKenna (2019), and they are as discussed below:

Supervisor's roles

The general role of supervisors is to guide and assist students during their period of registered study. The specific roles of supervisors may differ depending on the academic discipline, departmental practice and whether the member of staff is acting as principal or second supervisor. According to Brown and Atkins (1988) and Boughey and McKenna (2019), the roles of the supervisor include: being familiar with current broad state of scholarship in a particular field (knowledgeable role). This should be the primary role of the supervisor since a supervisor who does not possess knowledge in a particular field is less confident. Such a supervisor has to read together with the students he or she is supervising. This is a challenge to many young universities that have not built the capacity of supervisors. In such cases supervision is usually done by those available with higher qualifications regardless of knowledge of the field of study. Being familiar with current field of study enables the supervisor become more effective in carrying such other roles as: selecting students and providing guidance towards a research topic and proposal, providing guidance towards options for research methodology, providing/facilitating the availability of infrastructure in terms of reading materials relevant to the study, providing exposure to peers and other researchers. Being knowledgeable builds confidence hence making the supervisor available for consultation and discussion, available as discussion partner, constructive criticizer, standard setter and (formative) assessor, process manager, provider of psychological/social support within professional limits, co-editor and publisher. However, the challenge of executing the supervisor's role is finding ample time and the number of students per supervisor. Most doctoral supervisors in Uganda tend to take heavy teaching loads and usually with overwhelming number of students to supervise. Besides time and number, the roles that students play are crucial. These roles are discussed in the next section.

Student's roles

Student roles are crucial in the supervision process. Student's roles were summarized based on the studies by Brown and Atkins (1988) and Boughey and McKenna (2019) as follows: choose supervisor and clarify expectations depending on the field of study, establish and maintain interpersonal (student-supervisor) relationships. The type of relationships that can occur is important as explained later in the literature. Establish and maintain peer relationships for the purpose of exchange of knowledge and relevant materials for their studies, arranging for consultation/ contact/ communication opportunities. This may require establishing time tables for the meeting. This is usually challenging since the supervisor's time and space may not fit that of the student. Self-management and pacing of the research process (using time wisely is of crucial importance). Experience shows that students rarely utilize available time especially those who have jobs. They have to share the available time between work and study.

Other similar roles include: continuously engaging in studies (not sporadic) and involved in scholarly growth, explore appropriate options regarding methodology, adhere to ethics, legal and financial requirements, adhere to evaluation, examinations and follow-up requirements, publish from studies.

Whereas the roles are clear most students, being inexperienced, tend to ignore or transfer their roles to their supervisors. Unless these roles are emphasized, supervision continues to remain problematic.

The roles of the supervisor and the doctoral candidate can be enforced by different supervision approaches and relationships. Each approach calls for specific roles from the supervisor and the student. The approaches are discussed in the following section.

Supervision approaches

Lee (2008) proposed five supervisory approaches:

Functional approach; the features emphasized in this approach include managerial skills such as planning, directing, acquiring resources, getting the work done and monitoring. This approach consists of tasks, which require the supervisor to direct and manage the project.

Enculturation approach; where learning is seen as developing within a societal context (Lave and Wenger, 1991; Leonard, 2001; Delamont et al., 2000) and they describe the importance of becoming a member of a discipline. Delamont et al. (2000) argued that academics identify themselves by their discipline first and by their university and department second. Such identity leads to formation of community of practice as a culture and this requires the supervisor's coaching.

Critical thinking approach; The National Council for Excellence in Critical Thinking defines critical thinking as the ability to conceptualize, apply, analyze, synthesize, and/or evaluate information gathered from, or generated by, observation, experience, reflection, reasoning, or communication, as a guide to belief and action. The roots of this approach to supervision are both dialectic and dialogic (Lee, 2008). Dialectical thinking explores various propositions or theories against each other. Dialogical thinking requires a discussion and synthesis of a series of propositions and encourages the student to look for a hidden logic. The ability to synthesize literature and make a coherent argument has been identified as key activity that the student must undertake (Holbrook et al., 2014).

Emancipation approach; relates to the student's professional growth. It is a supervisory process which implies both support and empowerment. It is also a process which allows and supports personal transformation. Acquiring a PhD can be a transformative process; the prerequisites for transformative learning require critical reflection and a disorienting dilemma (Mezirow, 1991). Here the student is considered knowledgeable and is accorded some degree of independence.

Development of quality relationship **is** the last supervision approach. There is some evidence that poor relationships are blamed for poor completion rates (Taylor and Beasley, 2005). Poor relationships can arise because of unarticulated and unmet expectations on both sides. This requires understanding the intelligence and emotion of the student. Mayer and Salovey (1997) refer to this situation as emotional intelligence. In practical terms, this means being aware that emotions can drive the behaviour and impact people positively or negatively. Quality relationship can only be developed if supervisors and doctoral candidates learn how to manage their emotions, especially under pressure. This approach therefore requires the supervisor to support the development of emotional intelligence in the student.

The five approaches, as proposed by Lee (2008), are not independent. They form a continuum along which one approach leads to the other. Lee (2010) developed a framework of approaches to research supervision as shown in Table 1.

Table 1 describes the original framework as it has been applied to doctoral supervision, looking at the supervisor's activities, knowledge and skills and hypothesizing potential student reactions (Lee, 2010). The roles change depending on the approach of the supervisor at any given time, with supervisors moving between two opposite dimensions: one is professional which is tasks focused in which they play the role of expert and director, and the other is personal which is process-focused, nondirective dimension, in which they play the role of enabler. Each approach is influenced by the level of development of the doctoral candidate. I have described this as staged-managed supervision which in this study is linked with developmental model of supervision as discussed in the following section.

Table 1. A framework of approaches to research supervision.

PROFESSIONAL					PERSONAL
	Functional	Enculturation	Critical thinking	Emancipation	Relationship development
Supervisor's activity	Rational progression through tasks	Gatekeeping	Evaluation challenge	Mentoring, supporting, constructivism	Supervising by experience, developing relationship/ team
Supervisor's knowledge and skills	Directing, project management, negotiation	Diagnosis of deficiencies, coaching	Argument, analysis, synthesis	Facilitation, reflection	Integrity, managing conflict, emotional intelligence
Possible student reaction	Obedience, organized, negotiation	Role modeling, apprenticeship	Constant inquiry, fight or flight	Personal growth, reframing	A good team member, emotional intelligence

Source: Adopted from Lee (2010).

Developmental model

Developmental supervision model was considered important because doctoral research supervision usually progresses in stages. Haynes et al. (2003) define progressive stages of doctoral candidate development as

moving from novice/ beginner to knowledgeable/ expert, each level consisting of specific characteristics and approach.

Developmental or stage model of supervision have been used in clinical and school supervision. According to Everett et al. (2011), the model presumes that: (1) student professional development follows a series of sequential, hierarchical stages, from less to more competent; (2) as they progress through these stages students struggle with developmental issues or concerns such as competence, use-of-self, and identity; and (3) appropriate supervision interventions differ at each stage of development. Developmental models of supervision are appealing largely because they are useful to supervisors and supervisees of diverse theoretical persuasions, have implications for direct practice and training, and offer a framework for monitoring student progress over time (Everett et al., 2011).

For supervisors employing a development approach to supervision, the key is to accurately identify the doctoral candidate's current stage and provide feedback and support appropriate to that developmental stage, while at the same time facilitating the doctoral candidate's progression to the next stage. To this end, a supervisor uses an interactive process, often referred to as "scaffolding" (Zimmerman and Schunk, 2003), which encourages the doctoral candidate to use prior knowledge and skills to produce new learning. For example, doctoral candidate at the beginning or novice stage would be expected to have limited skills and lack confidence as researchers, while middle stage doctoral candidates might have more skill and confidence. A doctoral candidate at the end of the developmental continuum is likely to utilize good problem-solving skills and be reflective about the research and supervisory process (Haynes et al., 2003).

As noted earlier, the development model stresses the need for the supervisor to utilize skills and approaches that correspond to the level of the doctoral candidate. In order to progress smoothly from one level to the next, relationship between the doctoral candidate and the supervisor is crucial. The type of relationship that occurs is important because it can affect the roles and approaches in the supervision process. The types of relationship that may occur are presented in the next sub-section.

Types of relationship

The roles and approaches in the supervision process can be affected by the type of relationship that occurs in the process. Chamberlain (2016) noticed ten types of common supervisor-student relationship that occur. This study adapted nine of the ten types of relationship that occur and considered relevant in this study. The type of relationship that was not considered was collateral

damage because it appears to be more of a role than relationship. The 9 types of relationship are explained as follows:

The clone: This is a type of relationship brought about by the closeness between the research interest of the doctoral candidate and that of the supervisor. The candidate is expected to replicate the field, approach and worldview of the supervisor, producing a part of research that supports the supervisor's line of thinking. This brings mutual understanding although restricts creativity and originality.

Cheap labour: This occurs where the doctoral candidate becomes a research assistant to the supervisor's research projects. The master-apprenticeship role dominates, with the student constant involvement. The student may find themselves taking on teaching, marking and administrative functions for the supervisor at the cost of their own learning and research.

The "ghost supervisor": Such relationship exists where the supervisor is not readily available and at times does not clearly understand the student's research, rarely communicates and responds to emails only occasionally. In this case the student is lonely and this is where 'liminality' is experienced by the student.

The chum: The relationship is intimate, and they work as associate though the supervisor does not support the student. Situations occur where the doctoral candidates are derailed from academic work. Such relationship makes a student become a close family member to the extent of getting too involved in domestic work for the family. The supervisor and the student forget their academic roles.

Combatant: This type of relationship occurs where the supervisor and doctoral candidates are like competitors. The practice of supervision becomes a method of intellectual nuisance, rubbishing everything presented by the student. Each piece of research is given negative feedback. The doctoral candidate is given to believe that he/ she is worthless and stupid. Both parties become enemy of one another.

Creepy crawlers: Creepy crawlers occur where some supervisors prefer to trail their students and sometimes students also trail their supervisors, each with hidden motives. This may result into suspicion and hatred between the supervisor and the student.

Captivate and con: In some occasion, supervisor and student enter into a sexual relationship. This can be for some reasons, ranging from a desire to please to a need for power over the student. These affairs can sometimes lead to permanent relationships. However, what remains

from the supervisor-student relationship is the unequal power balances. In most cases the student becomes victims especially when the student refuses to engage in such relationship.

Counselor: Almost all supervision relationships contain some aspect of the counselor or mentor, but there is often little training or desire to develop the role and it is often dismissed as pastoral care. Although the life experiences of students become obvious, few supervisors are skilled in dealing with the emotional intelligence.

Colleague in training: When a PhD candidate is treated as a colleague in training, the type of relationship that occurs is always on a professional basis, where the individual and their work are held in respect. The supervisor recognizes that his/ her role is to guide through regulation and requirements, offer suggestions and do some teaching around issues such as methodology, research practice and process, and be sensitive to the life-cycle of the PhD process. The experience for both the supervisor and student is acknowledgement of each other, recognizing the power differential but emphasizing the support at this time. Chamberlain (2016) observes that this is the best type of relationship.

Mouton and Frick (2019) add five general rules for a healthy and successful relationship: (1) dignity, respect and courtesy, (2) no harassment, (3) accessibility, (4) privacy and (5) honesty. Indeed, the lack of one or more could lead to the failure of the relationship or may become nails in each other's coffins.

MATERIALS AND METHODS

The study investigated the perceptions of supervisors and doctoral students regarding their roles, approaches and type of relationships that occur, in the supervision process. The study design was an exploratory survey using qualitative and quantitative methods of data collection. It addressed the following questions: What are the roles of the supervisor and the doctoral candidates? What approaches characterize the supervision? What types of relationship occur in the supervision process?

Supervisors and students were asked to rank from 5 to 1, what they perceived as their most important and least important roles. As for the approaches, 6-point frequency Likert scale of 1 to 6 was used to measure the frequency of each approach where 1 is never/ certainly not 2 is once in a while, 3 sometimes 4 most of the time 5 almost all the time 6 always without fail. A similar scale was used for the type of relationship that occurs.

Target population

The target population consisted of the supervisors and doctoral candidates totaling to 111 in 9 departments offering PhD programmes. The target population consisted of 83 PhD students and 28 supervisors respectively. The distribution is shown in Table 2.

Table 2. Distribution of the population.

Department	No. of doctoral candidates	No. of supervisors	Total
Religious studies	12	3	15
Food processing	10	2	12
Physics	2	2	4
Chemistry	3	2	5
Biological sciences	6	3	9
Sports science	5	3	8
Curriculum, teaching and media studies	8	4	12
Educational planning and management	25	7	32
Early childhood development	12	2	14
Grand total	83	28	111

Source: Departmental Records (2019).

Sample

Since this study was exploratory, 5 departments and 16 respondents were sampled and these were from: Food processing (02), Sports Science (02), Educational Planning and Management (06) Physics (02), Chemistry (01) and Early Childhood Education (03).

Data collection procedure

Online questionnaires and structured interview were used as methods of data collection. The on-line questionnaire was preferred since time for the empirical study was short and most of the supervisors and students were in the field and therefore hard to meet face to face. Where it

was hard to meet face to face, interviews were conducted through phone. Data was collected in two phases. Phase 1 was face to face interview with the Heads of respective Department and Phase 2 on-line survey which was e-mailed to 28 respondents. Heads of Department were purposely selected because they are the programme managers and had better understanding of their PhD programmes. Since the registered students were only 28 at the time of the study, all were included in the study.

Data processing

Survey Monkey was used to analyze the quantitative data. Qualitative data was basically from the interview and the results were presented verbatim. Responses were generated and presented in the following section.

RESULTS

The study focused on the supervisor and student perspective with regard to doctoral supervision. Three areas were of interest: the roles of the supervisors and that of the students, the approaches and the types of relationship that occur in the process of supervision. Phase 1 of data collection was to establish whether the PhD programme was being offered in the departments identified. It was confirmed that 9 departments, as shown in Table 1, had started PhD programmes. Each head of department was asked to provide some information regarding their PhD programme.

Although 9 departments had PhD programme, they did not start at the same time. The first one started in the academic year 2014/ 2015 in the Department of Food Processing. The remaining 8 started in 2016/2017. One common practice was admission in cohorts by the Graduate Board where group of individual students admitted in the same year would be expected to complete taught courses before next admission. In the academic year, 2018/2019, six departments that were included in the study had the following record as shown in Table 3.

Table 3 contains three cohorts of the PhD admissions since 2014/2015 academic year. Provisional admission in this study refers to the students who qualified for doctoral studies as per the university minimum requirement. Full admission refers to those who had completed their proposals and approved by their respective departmental and faculty boards.

In this study, provisional admission was considered levels 1 and 2 where students were still in their respective department and faculty, developing concept and proposal. Full admission was at level 3 which is at the graduate school where registration takes place. At the graduate school level, the doctoral candidates continue with their proposal until they are cleared to go to the field for data collection. The table shows a general decline in admission. The attrition rate is high at level 1.

Different heads from the selected departments were interviewed regarding the status of PhD programmes in their Department and their responses were reported verbatim. The abbreviation at the end of each quotation indicates the Department where the information was obtained from. In an interview with the head of department of Educational Planning and Management (EPM) regarding the status of PhD in his department, he had this to say:

> We have students in the 2nd and 3rd cohorts, 6 are active in the 2nd cohort, 1 is likely to graduate in the second cohort according to the supervision progress report… there is one 'absent' PhD student who has disappeared. Cohort 3 had just finished coursework and they are developing synopsis/concept paper. They are still far at the departmental level and we are yet to identify supervisors (EPM).

Table 3. Status of PhD enrolment by May 2019.

Department	Cohort 1 (2014/2015)		Cohort 2 (2016/2017)		Cohort 3 (2018/2019)	
	Provisional admission	Full admission	Provisional admission	Full admission	Provisional admission	Full admission
Food Processing (FP)	10	10	8	3	-	-
Physics (Phy)			2	0	-	-
Chemistry (Chem)			2	0	-	-
Sports Science (SS)			1	1	1	5
Educational Planning and Management (EPM)			7	6	11	7
Early Childhood Development (ECD)			4	4	4	3
Total	10	10	24	14	16	15

Source: Departmental Records (2019).

When the Head of Department (EPM) was further asked to clarify on the 'absent' student, he said,

> This absent student just disappeared and we have no information of his where about. We are waiting to see whether he will reappear this academic year (2018/2019).

Regarding the status of the PhD programmes in the Department of Food Processing (FP), the Head of Department said:

> Department of Food Science had 10 students in the first cohort. The first cohort started in 2014/ 2015 academic year. All the 10 in the first cohort attained full admission. In the second cohort 5 dropped out because of funding. Out of this 1 has defended his thesis, another 1 is due for defense. The remaining 8 are still writing… This means 2 will graduate in the next graduation. We did not admit in cohort 3 because of problem of supervisors (FP).

Early Childhood Development (ECD) had maintained a constant number of 4 students in all the 2 cohorts except 1 student pulled out in cohort 3 because of accident. The Head of Department confirmed this by saying:

> We started with 4 students who have attained formal admission. They have completed their proposals and they are now for ethical review… this academic year, 2019/ 2020, we have suspended admission because of supervision problem (ECD).

According to Head of Department, Sports Science (SS),

> The Department started with 1 PhD student who pulled out. In cohort 2 there is 1 candidate. Cohort 3 had 5 students and 1 has gained full admission because she is on scholarship.
> …this year the number rose to 5 because they were competing for funding. One of our staff was successful but she is not supposed to study in the same university where she is working. She was transferred to another university. So the number we now have are 4 students on provisional admission though (SS).

Department of Physics (Phy) and Chemistry (Chem) have not progressed in offering the PhD programme. Both departments started with 2 students each but none of them gained full admission. The Head of Department of Physics had this to say:

> When I became the head of department I found 2 students admitted for PhD. The 2 students could not attain full admission because they were not being supervised…there was no clear policy. So I had to think of forming Doctoral Committee before anything else. This committee is now in place but the department still has problem of supervisors. One of the staff with PhD was retired without replacement…PhD is all about research and the department does not have equipment for research. Because of all these there are no applicants this academic year (Phy).

The Head of Department of Chemistry (Chem) reported that:

> …PhD programme is there in the Department of Chemistry but we have not enrolled any student. In 2016, there were 2 applicants but there were no sponsors…there is no research funded project in the department and we cannot take on any PhD student. This year 1 applied and qualifies for admission but may drop out if there is no funding (Chem).

From the qualitative findings presented, funding and problem of supervisors have emerged frequently. Those who failed to gain full admissions lacked funding or sponsorship especially for sciences. Supervision problem in general has hindered admissions across different departments. The issue of supervision was investigated further by generating and analyzing quantitative data.

Survey Monkey was used to collect data from the supervisors and doctoral students with regard to their roles, the approaches and type of relationship. The percentage distributions are shown in the following graphs.

Roles

Perspective regarding the roles of the supervisors and students were sought. The respondents were asked to rank from 5 to 1, where 5 is most important and 1 is least important. The distribution of the responses is shown in Figure 1a and b, respectively.

Figure 1a shows that the most important roles of the supervisors are constructive criticizer (87.5%) and provide guidance (75.0%). The least ranked role is provide/facilitate the availability of infrastructure (71.4%).

Similarly, perspective on the roles of the doctoral students is shown in Figure 1b.

Adhere to ethics was ranked as most important role (88.3%) followed by adhere to evaluation and follow-up together with self-management and pacing and make use of consultation (66.7%).

Approaches

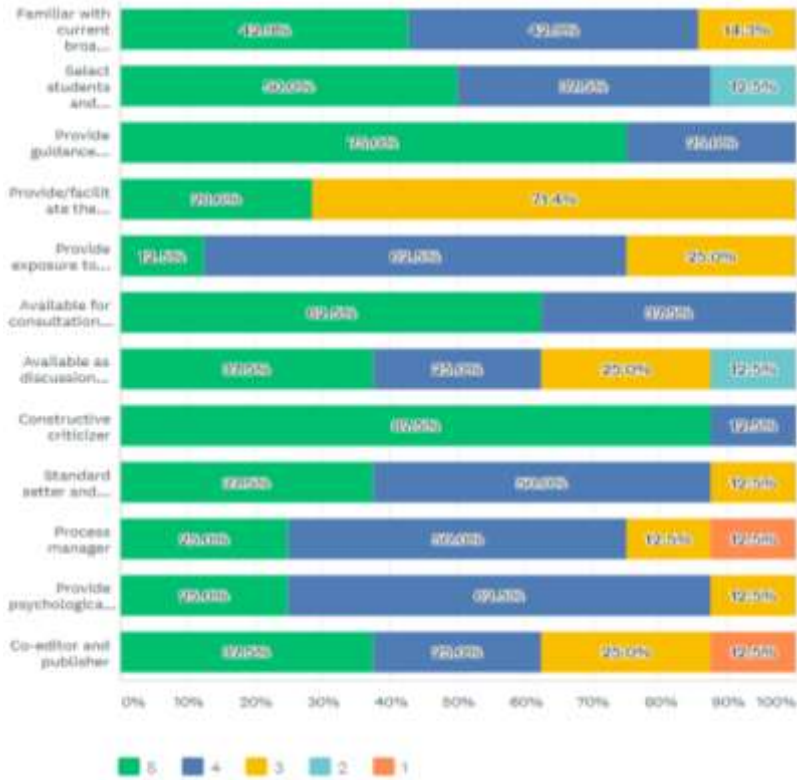The respondents were asked to use the scale of 1 to 6 to

Figure 1a. Supervisors roles.

Figure 1b. Doctoral candidate roles.

determine the frequency to which each of the features is emphasized in each approach; where 1 is never/ certainly not 2 is once in a while, 3 sometimes 4 most of the time 5 almost all the time 6 always without fail. The distribution of responses is shown in Figure 2a.

Figure 2a indicates that time management (50.0%) is frequently emphasized feature of the functional approach. While for Enculturation, Figure 2b is sharing information and mutual engagement (25.0%) are equally emphasized.

Similarly, perspective regarding the frequency of emphasis on critical thinking features is shown in Figure 2c.

Figure 2c indicates that the emphasis on identifying gaps (71.4%) is emphasized almost all the time while

25.0% show that each of the features is emphasized always without fail. However, there is no single feature which is never emphasized.

As for emancipation approach, seeing the world differently (62.5%) is most of the time emphasized while becoming more knowledgeable (57.1%) is emphasized almost all the time. The distribution is shown in Figure 2d.

The last approach considered was the relationship development and the distribution is as shown in Figure 2e.

Figure 2e shows that enthusing (62.5%) is emphasized almost all the time in relationship building approach. The distribution also reveals that there is no single feature of relationship building that is never emphasized.
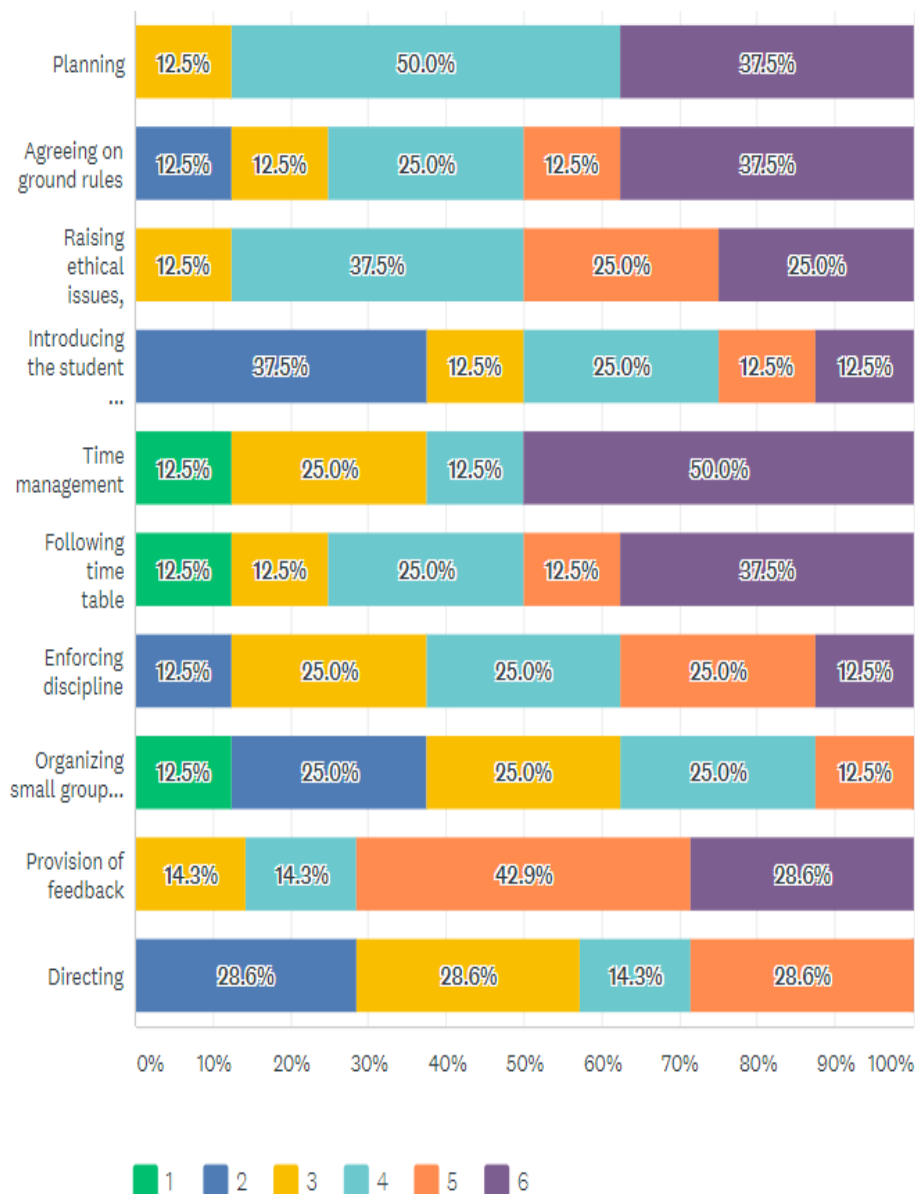

Figure 2a. Features of functional approach.

Figure 2b. Features of enculturation approach.

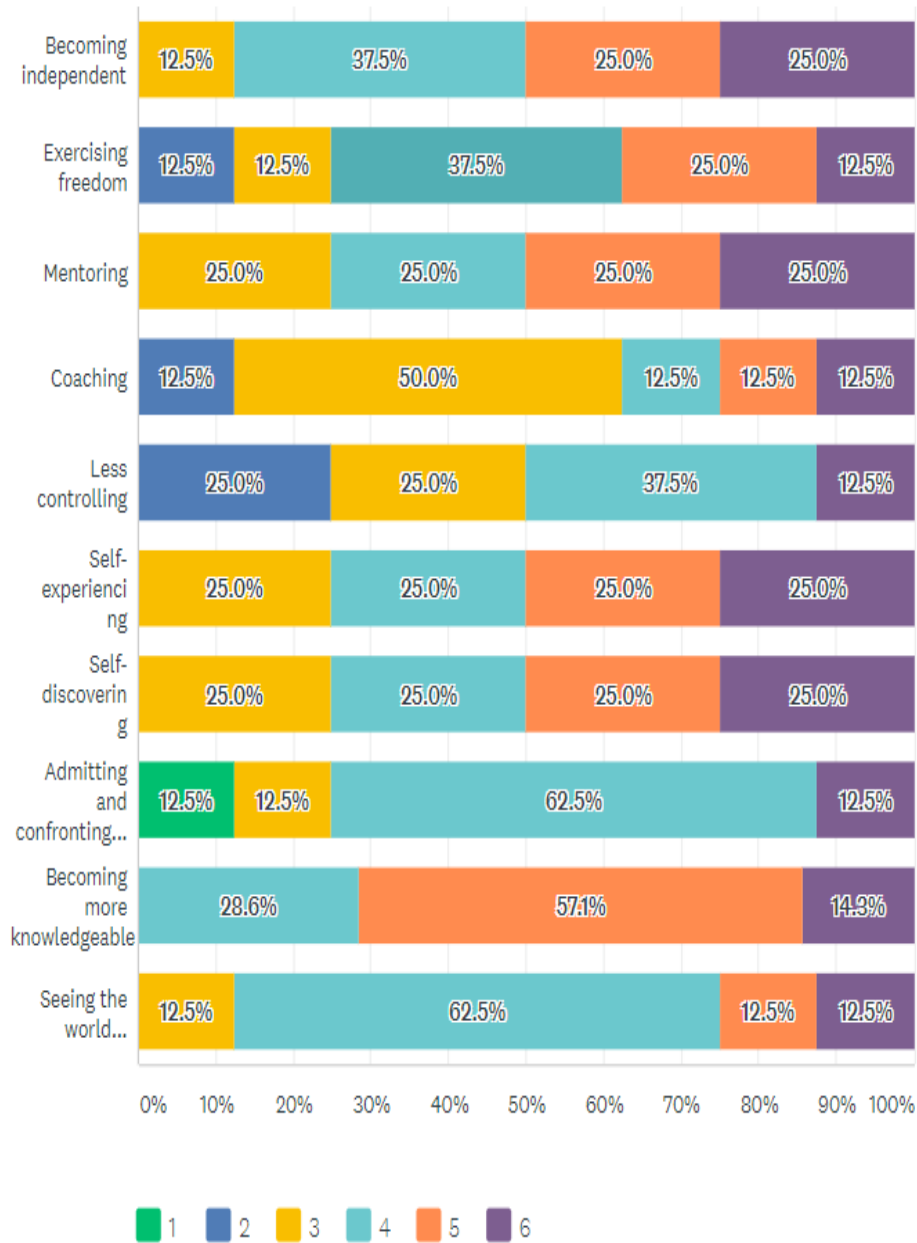**Figure 2c.** Features of critical thinking approach.

Figure 2d. Features of emancipation approach.

DEVELOPMENTAL LEVEL

In the context of Kyambogo university, three levels of development of doctoral candidates can be identified 1. Departmental level, 2. Faculty level and 3. Graduate school level.

Level 1: (in this study referred to as Departmental level)

As described by the development model of supervision, this is generally entry-level in which doctoral students are high in motivation, yet high in anxiety and fearful of evaluation. In line with developmental model, the focus here is to develop the relationship, assess competencies, educate, and monitor early experience. The students are taught research methods alongside coursework at this level. After completing the course on research methods, the students start the research process.

The process begins with writing and presenting concept papers. Once the concept paper is accepted by the departmental committee, the doctoral candidate proceeds to proposal development. At this level the supervisors assume primary responsibility and encourage the doctoral candidate, limit autonomy until competence in
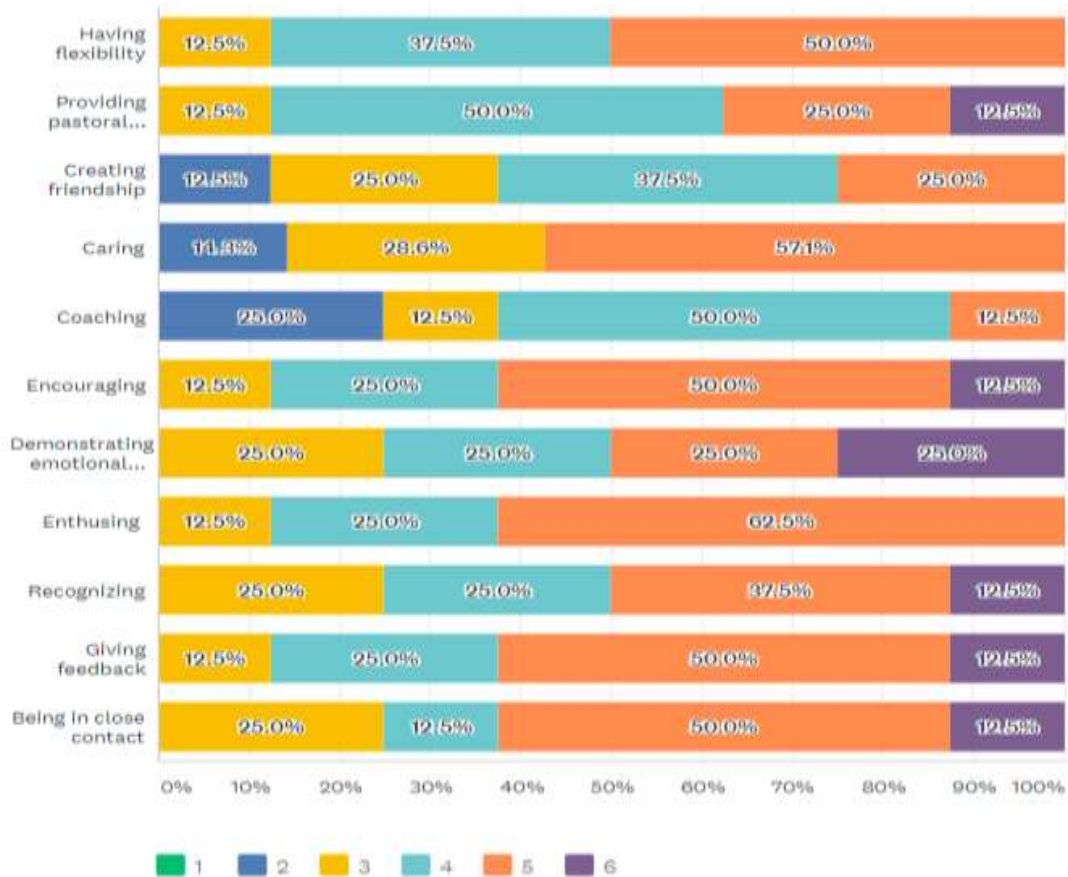
Figure 2e. Features of relationship building approach.

performance is evidenced. The doctoral candidate seeks and accepts direction, recognizes that anxiety is normal and discusses concern with supervisor, provides information to supervisor regarding wants and expectations.

Level 2: (In this study referred to as Faculty level)

This is where students progress after approval of the proposal at the departmental level. Doctoral candidates are at mid-level and experience fluctuating confidence and motivation, often linking their own mood to success with supervisor. This level focuses on the transition from department to faculty. At this level the doctoral student starts to experience semi-autonomy. The supervisor creates opportunities for doctoral candidate to struggle with decisions and consequences, asks questions and expects doctoral candidate to look for the answer, assists in further development of the proposal.

The doctoral candidate practices presenting cases in academic manner and explores theories with the supervisor, drafts proposal and presents to the supervisor, provides feedback to the supervisor by way of corrections. Once the proposal is approved by the faculty

board at this level, the student is recommended to graduate school.

Level 3: (In this study referred to as Graduate School)

This is the last level where students get full admissions and registration. The same supervisor when supervising a level-3 doctoral candidate would emphasize doctoral candidate's autonomy and engage in mutual challenges and use self-discovery in intervention. The focus is to foster independence and prepare doctoral candidate for work as independent researcher. The supervisor reviews progress, provides feedback, monitors through self-report and documentation with occasional face to face meeting.

The doctoral candidate articulates theoretical orientation, thinks out loud while problem solving and conceptualizing research problem, reflects on the supervisory process and provide supervisor with evaluative feedback. The doctoral candidate is expected to complete the proposal and proceed to the field for data collection. Doctoral candidates are supported to attend and participate in conferences. This is the level where doctoral candidates take long before graduation.

Linked to relationship building approach is the issue of

the type of relationship that occurs while carrying out the roles and using the approaches. The respondents were asked to use the scale of 1 to 6 to determine the frequency to which each of the type of relationship mentioned occurs; where 1 is never/ certainly not 2 is once in a while, 3 sometimes 4 most of the time 5 almost all the time 6 always without fail. The distribution of responses is shown in Figure 3.

Figure 3 shows two extremes in the type of relationships that occurs – the colleague in training (42.9%) occurs always without fail while captive and con (100%) never occurs. This leaves 8 types of relationship perceived to occur in the process of supervision and they include: colleague in training, counselor, creepy crawler, combatant, the chum, ghost supervisor, cheap labour and the clone.
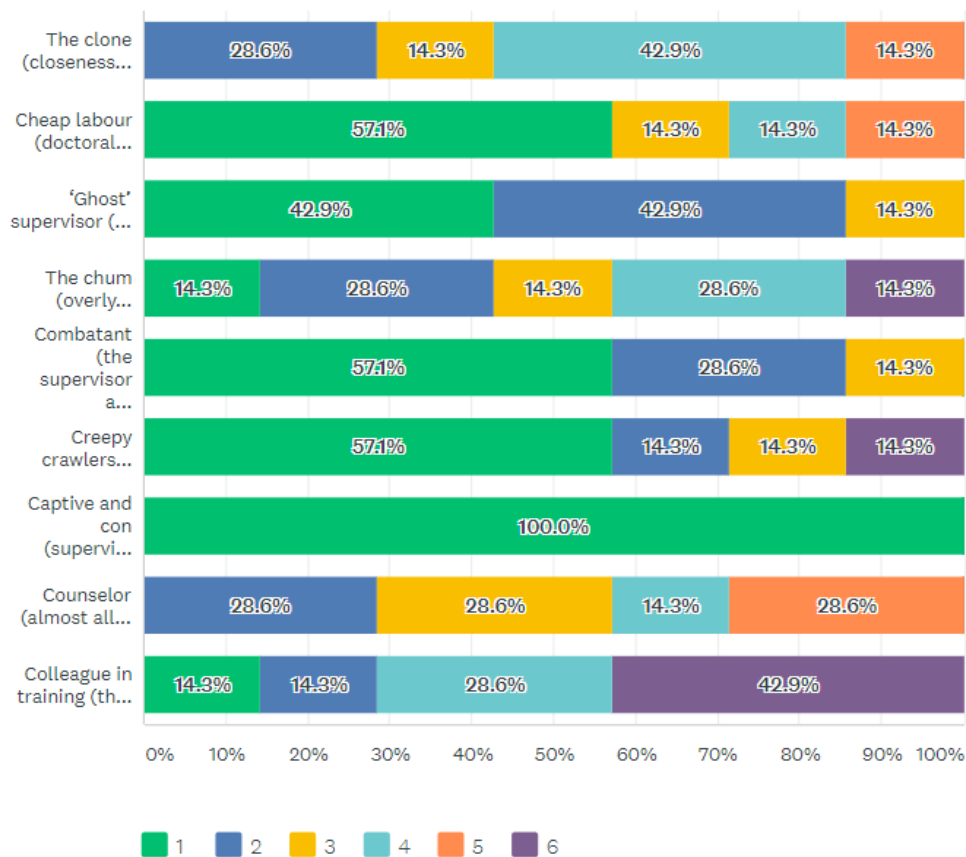

Figure 3. Types of relationship.

DISCUSSION

This study explored the perspectives of supervisors and doctoral students regarding their roles, approaches and type of relationship. Considering the fact that supervisor-doctoral student relationship is important, the study set out to explore their perceptions regarding the roles, approaches and types of relationship.

The results indicate that those who have gained full admissions for doctoral study is still low. No single doctoral student had graduated by the time of this exploratory study. Low institutional capacity and lack of funding were key factors in this. The study confirms that the supervisors and doctoral students have set of roles they play in the supervision process. However, this study did not explore whether these roles were documented and brought to the attention of each supervisor and the student. The roles are closely linked and affected by the supervision approaches adopted.

The features of the supervision approaches are differently emphasized in each approach. The approaches form a continuum with different stages of development of the doctoral candidate. Each stage determines the type of supervision approach and the roles. The roles and approaches are clear as may be listed in the Graduate Research Supervision Guide although they may not be followed closely.

The roles and approaches can be affected by the type of relationship that exists between the supervisor and the doctoral candidate. The result in this study shows 8 types

of relationship that occur in the supervision process - colleague in training, counselor, creepy crawler, combatant, the chum, ghost supervisor, cheap labour and the clone. The frequency of occurrence of each type of relationship differs from each other. The result indicates that the colleague in training occurs more frequently than the others. The captive and con relationship was reported not to have occurred. The reason for this was not explored. May be the respondent associated captive and con relationship with sexual relationship that involves sexual harassment and many think about sex as such. Sexual harassment in academe is usually under reported even if it occurs. Aguilar and Baek (2020) confirms that 'despite the pervasiveness of sexual harassment in academic settings, evidence indicates that reporting rates in academe are generally low, potentially due to fear of retaliation'. The researcher feels that it is the narrow understanding of this type of relationship that makes students shy from reporting. Sexual relationship, according to Chamberlain (2016), is not about sexual harassment or sex. It is about power and dominance. Understanding sexual relationship in the context of this study will make the students open up and willing to report whenever such relationship occurs.

Contribution

The findings on the supervisor-doctoral candidate perspectives contribute to the identification of both the characteristics of doctoral research supervision and the elements of intervention. This exploratory study has the potential to improve both research process and completion rate at the university. The study also brings important issues regarding roles, approaches and relationship that universities in Africa can add to their supervision policies.

In terms of the goal of the Centre for Research on Evaluation, Science and Technology (CREST) at Stellenbosch University and Dialogue on Innovative Higher Education Strategies Programme (DIES), the training course for doctoral supervisors in Africa, it adds on the available literature. For example, developmental model of supervision and types of relationship that occur can enrich the existing literature for training purpose Quality Assurance.

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