RESEARCHERS' CLARITY OF RESEARCH PARADIGMATIC PHILOSOPHICAL CONCEPTIONS INFLUENCING DISSERTATIONS QUALITY PERFORMANCE IN TANZANIA UNIVERSITIES: GROUNDED THEORY PERSPECTIVE

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A THESIS SUBMITTED IN FULFILLMENT OF THE REQUIREMENTS FOR THE DEGREE OF DOCTOR OF PHILOSOPHY IN EDUCATION OF THE OPEN UNIVERSITY OF TANZANIA

2018

CERTIFICATION

The undersigned certify that they have read and hereby recommend for examination by the Open University of Tanzania a thesis titled: "**Researchers' Clarity of Research Paradigm Philosophical Conceptions Influencing Dissertations Quality Performance in Tanzania Universities: Grounded Theory Perspective"** in fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy in Education (PhD) of the Open University of Tanzania.

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DECLARATION

I, **Romwald Joseph Kairembo,** do hereby declare that this thesis is my own original work and that it has not been submitted and will not be presented in any other University for a similar or any other degree award.

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Signature

……..

Date

DEDICATION

This thesis is dedicated to my late mother Maura Kabobo Mukatahyoba (R.I.P), who tirelessly encouraged me to pursue education and my late father Joseph Karungula Kiiguta, (R.I.P) who nurtured my endurance discipline in pursuing education.

Likewise, it is dedicated to our grandipa Casmir Kiiguta's (R.I.P) and later grandchildren lineage, who will value education.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

In the first place, I would like to convey my sincere gratitude to the Almighty God, who kept me alive and healthy, both mentally and physically throughout the period of writing this thesis. Secondly, thanks are to various contributors towards accomplishment of this thesis. Special and sincere thanks are extended to my *gurus*: Supervisors Professors Babyegeya, E. B. N. as well as Dr. Ng'umbi, M., who critically assisted and guided me throughout the research and thesis writing processes. Furthermore, special gratitude is extended to Professor Rwegoshora, H., Dr. Bushesha, M., Dr. Mihale, M., Dr. Gwahula, R. Dr. Rwejuna, Z, as well as Dr. Mnyanyi, C. for their frequent encouragement. Much more appreciation go to my fellow staff mates at large but in particular in the department of Educational Foundations and Faculty of Education for tolerating my frequent half-done duties left for them to complete on my behalf. Without forgetting the OUT administration and technical staff who dedicated most of their scarce time to support me from preparing a proposal to thesis writing, may the Almighty God bless them abundantly. It will be unfair if I fail to acknowledge the contributions of my respondents from OUT and UDSM in particular Mr. Shaban, K likewise the procurement department staff for their valuable assistance in the course of my study. Last but not least, I extend my lovely smile to my beloved wife, Flora Jacob Masegani together with my siblings: Jacob Mukyanuzi, Alice-Maura Kahumbya, Irene Itunga Nyamwiza, my twins Aristotle Kabanza and Aquinas Kato for their moral support and tolerance of my frequent absence from home, when they needed me dearly. I remain responsible for any shortcomings that may be noted in this thesis, and stand to be constructively criticised.

ABSTRACT

This study addressed the grand question inquiring, how has researchers' clarity of paradigmatic philosophical conceptions been influencing dissertations in Tanzania universities? The qualitative approach and constructivists' Grounded Theory (GT) multivariate design were opted. The sample size involved 88 research participants. Data were collected through triangulated qualitative methods of: documentary review, interviews, live observation. Triangulated methods of: inductive content categorising, coding, constant comparison, and filtering. Exploratory Factors Analysis (EFA) methods, aided by SPSS version 21 analysed questionnaire emerged data. Findings, participants had varied views on definition, scope of philosophical conceptions constituting holistic paradigm; and uncertain whether one's clarity of paradigm is a factor that may influence dissertations scores. There was a substantial positive correlation between higher candidates' paradigm clarity subtheme and entire dissertations scores. Findings further unveiled that studied universities vary in including paradigm clarity subtheme in the Master's Degree research courses, surprisingly some university' rubrics guide the External Examiners to examine it. Studied researchers agreed strongly that held paradigm perspectives affect the quality of dissertations processes. Generated hypotheses and substantive theory revealed convergence in paradigm perspectives, raises dissertations scores. The study recommends establishing philosophy of research degree programme as intervention for clarifying wide scope of holistic emerged model. Further GT studies related to dissertations/ theses quality performance be done in other Tanzania universities.

Key words: Paradigms, Philosophical underpinnings and Grounded Theory (GT).

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LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS AND ACRONYMS

ADMA	Administration
AOU	Arab Open University
B.C	Before Christ
C/W	Course Work
DESRECO	Definition, Scope, Relationship, and Coherence
EEAFs	External Examiners' Assessment Forms
EEs	External Examiners
FAFI	Facts and Figures
FED	Faculty of Education
GPA	General Average
GPA	General Point Average
GT	Grounded Theory
ICE	Institute of Continuing Education
IT	Information Technology
M. (ODeL)	Master in Open, Distance and e-Learning
M.A	Master of Arts
MBA	Master of Business Administration

MED (APPS)	Master in Education, Administration, Planning and Policy Studies
MHRM	Master in Human Resource Management
MPM	Masters of Planning Management
ODL	Open and Distance Learning
OEAR	Ontological, Epistemological, Axiological, Ontological, and Rhetorical issues
OED	Open University Education
OME	Ontology, Epistemology, Methodology
OME	Ontology, Methodology, and Epistemology
OUN	Open University of Nigeria
PAC	Principal Component Analysis
OUT	Open University of Tanzania
OUTFAFI	Open University of Tanzania Facts and Figures
OUTQACD	Open University of Tanzania Quality Assurance and Control Directorate
PGDCDD	Post Graduate Curriculum Design and Development
PGDE	Postgraduate Graduate Diploma in Education
PhD	Doctor of Philosophy
POEMALOR	Philosophical, Ontological, Epistemological, Methodological, Axiological, Logical and Rhetorical
PVM	Philosophical, Values, and Technical (Methods) Levels
RPPC	Research Proposals and Publications Committee

RPPC	Research for Post Graduate and Publication Committee
SADC	Southern African Development Community
SDGS	Millennium Sustainable Goals
SUPADM	Supervisor and Administrator
SUP	Supervisor
TCU	Tanzania Commission for Universities
UDSM	University of Dar es Salaam.
UNESCO	United Nations Education Scientific Organisation
UN	United Nations
URT	The United Republic of Tanzania
WAQUAQUPAPI	Researchers' Own views of paradigm as Ways, Qualitative/ Quantitative approaches, Patterns, Principles and Interpretations).

CHAPTER ONE

1.0 INTRODUCTION AND BACKGROUND TO THE PROBLEM

1.1 Introduction

This thesis addresses the emerged grand research question, *how is researchers' clarity of educational research paradigm philosophical conceptions has been a contributory factor among factors for altering dissertations quality completion, final passes, and graduation rates among Masters (M.A) degree candidates in Tanzania studied universities?* In order to achieve the objectives of this study on one hand, the study explored the understanding of three groups of researchers namely: M.A degree candidates, supervisors, likewise External Examiners' (EEs) on paradigm conceptions in the processes of writing, supervising, and assessing quality of dissertations.

The researcher of this study expected that by exploring researchers' perspectives on the studied researchers' clarity for research paradigm conceptions would generate underlying Grounded Theory (GT) and fresh hypotheses as final products, in line with constructivists' synthesised GT version of Charmaz (2006) as opposed to classical versions of Glaser and Strauss (1967) likewise Strauss and Corbin (1990). Any researcher following the GT is obliged first, to indicate which version s/he follows. Currently there are only three major versions of the GT namely: thesis of Classical GT version of Glaser and Strauss (1967); antithesis GT version of Strauss and Corbin (1990); and a synthesis GT version of Charmaz (2006).

The researcher opted the constructivists' synthesised GT after realising the gap of not using these versions in Tanzania universities during the field (Appendix X). Consequently, the study in this thesis followed the abductive logic, where the study

began inductively and ended deductively. The researcher's experience of the revised theses and books at the Open University of Tanzania (OUT) and the University of Dar es Salaam (UDSM) libraries using checklist Appendix (X), revealed prior that the majority of studies at those universities are conducted using the traditional deductive logic. This logic aims either to falsify or to confirm existing hypotheses rather than generating fresh theories and hypotheses for others to improve and falsify (Walsh, 1985).

The other rationale for opting the GT of Charmaz' (2006) version was because, it synthesises strengths of the classical version and weaknesses of the two previous GT versions. The decision to opt this version was failure of the traditional methods to assist the researcher to unveil the research problem, until when the researcher decided to abandon the traditional ways of doing research, since then the researcher succeeded to progress by using the opted GT version smoothly. Precisely, chapter one covers the background to the problem, statement of the problem, objectives, significance of the study, and conceptual framework. Limitation, delimitation of the study, operationalised terms, and the summary in terms of organization of the study.

1.2 Background to the Problem

Arguably, the researchers' clarity of the explicit research paradigm and its implicit philosophical conceptions phenomenon, is supposed to inform researchers' decision on several choices for elements along the inquiry process. However, in practice the phenomenon has escaped researchers' due attention in doing empirical scientific studies globally, the reason that prompted this study as reported in the study (Efinger,

Maldonado and Adler, 2004). In their exploratory study, the researchers sought to understand the value of philosophy from the Ph.D. students, who got exposed to a course of Philosophy of Science and Qualitative Methods prior commencing their field study.

Those researchers compared results of students, who got introduced to the course of philosophy of science prior conducting the field research versus the results of students, who did not do the same course prior the field. Their findings revealed that the students founded in philosophy of science realised the value of the philosophy course and admitted the ease in conducting entire process of their research compared to those who did not do it (Efinger, Maldonado and Adler, 2004). The same researchers too, found that the recognition of strengths and limitations of varying research paradigms, led to different and new ways of approaching research processes.

The primacy and the need for the clarity for the explicit research paradigm along four clarity conceptions of: definition, scope, semantic relationship, and coherence is well documented (Suddaby, 2010; Guba and Lincoln, 2005; Mackenzie and Knipe, 2006; Suddaby, 2010). These authors contend that it is a choice of paradigm that ignites one's intention, incentive, and expectation for a study. Cementing the primacy and the need of being informed of the research explicit paradigm in advance, the same authors add that without proposing a paradigm as an initial step, there is no foundation for researcher's later choices of literature and methodology elements such as approaches, design, sample issues, and methods in any proposed research endeavour.

For Omari (2011), the paradigm of choice is an entry point to consider before one attempts any research project. Despite such identified advantages for researchers to be informed of the explicit research paradigm prior to conducting research, it receives little attention not only in empirical studies, but also in the research writings. Mackenzie and Knipe (2006) observe further that, indeed very few research textbooks if any, consider elaborating the inquiry paradigm along components of clarity such as: definition, scope, semantic relation, and coherence (Suddaby, 2010; Rwegoshora, 2014).

Further, Mackenzie and Knipe argue that the construct of the explicit paradigm receives varying levels of emphasis across research writings. Whereas some writers dare to emphasise paradigms early, in the middle, or in later pages of research books, some do not dare to write for readers about it at all. Nevertheless, even those who write about it they do so in a narrow perspective, while causing confusion to inexperienced researchers by equating it with research quantitative and qualitative approaches, and designs. The confusion amplifies more among inexperienced learners of research, when writers define it using interchangeable words for the same construct.

Whereas Bogdan and Biklen (1998) view the explicit paradigm as loose compilation of coherent correlating assumptions, Mackenzie and Knipe (2006) see it as the researcher's theoretical framework. Much more, Patton (1990); Creswell (1994) view it as the worldview. In the current study, the researcher regards it as worldview. With such varying definitions, the research paradigm has remained as a mystery to the inexperienced researchers, without knowing its roles and, where it exactly fits in the

entire scientific research process (Mackenzie and Knipe, 2006). Therefore, the selection and identification of what is the appropriate paradigm in particular for the postgraduate studies, has been very complicated, while the research process proves to be inseparable from philosophical perspectives.

Since majority of students have never been grounded in philosophy, they do not understand, and therefore apply unconsciously philosophical conceptions wrongly (Kafanabo, 2018). The research paradigm receives little attention despite of having caused popular research "paradigm war and incompatibility thesis" controversies among researchers. The controversy has been on the decision to choose between maintaining purity, in choice of either quantitative, qualitative, or mixture of both paradigm approaches (Tashakkori and Teddlie, 1998; Guba and Lincoln, 2005). Although the research paradigm receives little attention, it has a long history dating back to the time of classical languages of Latin and Greek.

Whereas "*para*" a root in Latin language meant "by side line," "*deikunai and deikununi*" are Greek terms, implying to "show" as one may follow at (www.oxford, 2016). When one combines both roots gets "*para-dekunai"* or "*para-dekununi,"* implying show line by side. However, it was Thomas Kuhn (1962), who later used the construct of paradigm in the field of scientific research especially in the philosophy of social science research (Pajares, 2014). Kuhn (1962) implied the "constellation of technical concepts" belonging to scientists' communities without himself specifying those conceptions (Pajares, 2014). Kuhn and Shavelson (2002) are in consensus that a

scientific enterprise is a product of a robust community of investigators, which is guided by a set of fundamental principles, and the paradigm is one of those principles.

While Kuhn sees the paradigm as a foundational principle of all scientific inquiry, several writers listed later on are in consensus with Kuhn. Again, Kuhn (1962) propounds that paradigm precedes human's perception. Other authors cement Kuhn's declaration adding that no science is possible without reference to paradigm (Shavelson, 2002). It is Kuhn again who introduced the other facet of paradigm popularly as a 'paradigm shift.' He described it basing on the ground that the field of science has been dynamic since its inception, with full of scientific revolutions. These revolutions occur, when some scientists innovate and invent some discoveries accompanied with new technical terms.

The new terms begin to over shadow the old-fashioned terms and slowly people tend to adapt new-fashioned terms. By so doing, the people abandon the use of old-fashioned terms, doings, wearing, even nutrition and adapt to new one. The paradigm shift in the fields of pure and social sciences too, began to take shape when the old ways of providing answers to fresh problems failed to provide adequate explanation in terms of critical questions raised about what, how, and why (Pajares, 2014). Consequently, there exist several versions of how paradigm shifts occur in human's socio-economic life depending on a particular field of specialization.

For instance, in the field of History, Karl Marx narrates worldwide paradigm shifts in humans' socio-economic life as "*epoch"*" the major cause being classes and class struggle contradictions by the capitalist's exploitation of the poor ones. Karl Marx was

trying to show whence humans' inequality worldwide originated. It was for this view that Karl Marx saw the social human's life to have passed through five revolutionary paradigm modes of production namely: communalism the oldest socioeconomic classless paradigm mode of all modes. The collapse of communalism epoch in some continents, gave the way to class and exploitative three paradigm modes of production namely: as slavery, feudalism, and capitalism.

The collapse of capitalism epoch paved the way to brands of the classless paradigm mode of socialism such as scientific African, Cuba socialism (Rodney, 1972; Nyirenda, 1996; Itandala, 2002). In the field of natural sciences, Walonick (1993) narrates paradigm shifts in terms of their causes showing that humans understand the world by asking questions and searching for answers. For this author, the paradigm will last in as much as the process of formulating questions suiting the exiting paradigm provides adequate answers to those questions. The same author narrates further showing that in European states, the natural science revolution cannot be well understood besides Egyptian Ptolemy' proposals.

Later on, Copernicus advanced Ptolemy's proposals, and declared about the heliocentric proofs contrary to the popular Ptolemy' claims on the same phenomenon. Ptolemy's mythological assumptions of assuming the sun orbits the earth accelerated the paradigm shift from mythological paradigm to more advanced Copernican paradigm revolution in early 15^{th} century of Europe (Rodney, 1972; Walonick, 1993). According to Copernicus, the earth orbits the sun. Galileo Galilei cemented such

claims scientifically later on by his telescopic proofs confirming, that not only the earth orbits the sun but also, all heavenly planets orbit it (Walonick, 1993).

Walonick (1993) shows further that in 16th century as per European calendar, the scientific inventions, and innovations were obvious, leading to the scientific paradigm shifts almost in all human's fields. In the field of human inquiry, the new concepts and fashions replaced the old-fashioned ones, more advanced scientific and technological ways ever occurred. Walonick (1993) elaborates further that until the 16th century, human inquiry was based on the introspection paradigm, in which the style of understanding the world was to turn inwards by applying Aristotelian deductive logic. In the introspection paradigm, the investigator used to be part of searching the truth (Walonick, 1993).

The introspection paradigm is said to have lasted for ten centuries but later on, it was revolutionalised by the new approach of searching the truth mathematically and empirically initiated by the Vienna positivist philosophers' movement. The subjective paradigm shifted from Ptolemy's mythological and religious paradigms to philosophical approaches to the objective positivism paradigm by scientists' movements of Vienna cycle including: Copernicus, Kepler, Galileo, Descartes, Newton, Leibniz, Comte, and Bacon. The positivists' paradigm according to these authors, paved the way to new ontological objectivism perspective of explaining the observable phenomenon leading to scientific revolution in the Western world.

It was this time when Francis Bacon, invented inductive logic whose approach is to argue from specific to generalise deductively. The inductive logic is said to have

replaced the Aristotelian deductive method though not totally (Walsh, 1985). Suffice to say that by ‘paradigm shifts’ is what Kuhn implied as the “scientific revolutions” (Walonick, 1993; Pajares, 2014). However, beginning from the 20th century Einstein through his theory of relativity, argued contrary to the dominant positivistic approach by then, revealing that an investigator was part of the observed, and affects the observed phenomenon.

Such a claim confirmed the shift from natural sciences positivism paradigm to ant positivism leading to contemporary post positivism paradigm in social sciences (Walsh, 1985; Statpack, 2010). Since then, the critical anti-positivism paradigm shift occurred leading to further revolutionary movements of the post positivists’ paradigm. Till to date, in scientific and technological inquiry fields, two popular major paradigm approaches exist as positivism, and post positivism. These two paradigms approach once, led to the “paradigm war and incompatibility thesis” among researchers. The paradigm war was about choosing between pure qualitative and quantitative approaches.

The incompatibility was about the possibility of mixing the two paradigm approaches in their purity. Some scientists think mixing them at the level of pure paradigms or at pure quantitative and qualitative approaches, is incompatible hence impossible. Such controversy began early in 1970s and got resolved early in 1990s, when the paradigm shifted from purist positivism to flexible post positivism mixed or triangulated methods paradigm (Tashakkori and Teddlie, 1998; Guba and Lincoln, 2005). The

paradigm war ended early 1990s in consensus that paradigms complement each other and may be mixed, though not at all levels of research processes.

While the mixture is impossible at level of two paradigm approaches, it is possible to mix them at level of design, sample, and methods (Sandelowsky, 2000). One notes the emerging post positivism paradigm in which marks the anti-positivism paradigm sub groups like: constructivism, constructionism, interpretivism, feminism, hermeneutic, and the like as detailed latter on. Since then, research experts have given their own connotations using other concepts to describe what they mean by paradigm. Whereas, Patton (1990) uses 'worldviews to mean research paradigm,
Mackenzie and Knipe (2005), Vine (2009) and Shrestha (2009) use 'framework' to mean the same paradigm construct.

Still other authors like Emig (1982) uses 'explanatory matrix' for systematic investigation. Weaver and Oslo (2006) see paradigm as lenses set of beliefs belonging to groups of scientists. Commenting on the variations of labels given to the definition of research explicit paradigm construct, Mackenzie and Knipe (2006) disagree with experts, who define paradigm using interchangeable words. Mackenzie and Knipe (2006) blame experts for confusing the "inexperienced" researchers, and exposing them into dilemma to the extent that they fail to know, where the paradigm conception fits in the research entire scientific research process.

Besides those observations, the issue of what specific conceptions constitute the holistic paradigm has also occupied the research expert philosophers of scientific

research, but without arriving at consensus. If one reads what various experts have suggested, one gets the impression that the research paradigm construct constitutes more than a single conception. It was hinted in previous paragraphs that the research paradigm seems to consist of more than a single conception, repeated often by experts. Repeatedly, experts mention researcher's philosophical perspective (P), researcher's ontological (O), when referring to one's position of viewing phenomena either objectively, relatively, or subjectively as in (Carr, 1995; Dobson, 2002).

The other repeated conception is researchers' epistemological (E) conception, implying the nature of knowledge conditions, sources, and theories of knowledge. Methodological conception (M) also repeats among experts as constituent of research paradigm entailing: issues of designs, approaches, and methods. Axiological (A) conception too is associated to constitute the explicit research paradigm by experts of research implying (values ethics and beauty). Then, logic (L) conception is also associated as a constitute making up the explicit holistic research paradigm implying researcher's opted logic either as (deductive, inductive, abductive or retroductive) in the process of doing scientific research.

The last but not least repeated conception is rhetorical language (R), implying the use of appropriate technical language as per paradigm of choice, when coding, evaluating, analysing, or describing the data. Suffice to say that different research experts and authors mention these conceptions repeatedly when describing what they think the holistic explicit research paradigm consists of (IACPA, 2000; Patton, 1990;

Creswell, 1994; Carr, 1995; Dobson, 2002; Guba and Lincoln, 2005; Chilisa and Preece, 2005; Mackenzie and Knipe, 2006). The keen observation reveals that the identified conceptions by nature are philosophical, the sign that science is inseparable from the philosophical foundations.

Describing the nature of the research paradigm, Creswell (1994; 2012) thinks it consists of four conceptions namely: researcher's philosophical beliefs on the observed phenomenon (P); ontological (O) position of viewing phenomenon; epistemological (E) conceptions on three issues belief, rational, and evidence; finally, epistemological theories of knowledge. Other research experts too have thought that the explicit paradigm also consists of four conceptions of philosophy, ontology, epistemology, and methodology (POEM) as described in Carr (1995); Creswell (1994; 2012), Dobson (2002), Williams (1998) and Mason (2007).

Likewise, Guba and Lincoln (2005) and Shrestha (2009) view the research paradigm to consist of three conceptions namely: ontology, epistemological and methodology (OEM). Similarly, Mason (2007) and Shrestha (2009) think research paradigm consists of researcher's opted methodology on design and approaches, as such they view paradigm as consisting of (OEM). Yet, Collis and Hussey (2013) view research paradigm to consist of five conceptions namely: ontology, epistemology, methodology, axiological values, and rhetorical language (OEMAR).

Additionally, Chilisa and Preece (2005) view research paradigm to consist of five conceptions namely: philosophy, ontology, epistemology, methodology, axiology and

logic (POEMALO) in line with Carr (1995); IACPA (2000); Mason (2007); as well as Chilisa and Preece (2005). Whether the studied universities researchers, are aware of such conceptions forming the holistic research paradigm, and how its clarity may influence the dissertations performance, became a puzzle that prompted the current study to be undertaken. In the social sciences the reflection of the Kuhn's invention of the "paradigm shift," which he equated with the scientific revolution in 1960s, does not only extend to the field of natural science foundations, but also goes beyond reaching other humans' socio-economic fields including education globally.

In Africa, before the advent of colonialism, the Africans had their own informal system of education to suit the existing paradigm mode of communalism in its features of classless and egalitarian. However, no sooner had colonialists introduced their formal system of education, than it caused paradigm shift to Africans from the informal (the indigenous system) to dominant colonial formal education. In contrast, while European formal system introduced features like varying class levels of education beginning from preparatory education, primary, secondary and tertiary levels, Africans' system had its unclassified initiation periods of young ones.

While informal education involved learning by practising in the field of work, the formal system replaced with theories learning for longer time before a graduate should start practicing in the field of work. In Tanganyika, Germans introduced colonial education between 1886 and 1918, and British perpetuated it from 1919 to 1960 (Itandala, 2000). After independence, and in particular from 1967, Tanzania saw paradigm shift from irrelevant colonial education to more relevant self-reliance formal

education. Since then, the paradigm shifts in modes of delivering education have not ceased in particular at the higher education level institutions. Tanzania has become the symbol of "paradigm shift" in East Africa and SADC regions.

This was exhibited from 1992, when Tanzania ceased to depend on only providing education by relying on conversational learning instead, she shifted to deliver education through non-formal mode of teaching and learning. This non formal mode is popularly known as the Open and Distance Learning (ODL) in particular at the university level, this was possible by the parliament Act, No. 25 of 1992 (URT, 1990). The sole conversional mode of formal teaching and learning proved incapable of addressing the massive enrolment accompanied challenges such as accommodation problem compared to the ODeL learning modes, which solves such challenges (OUT, 2008; Babyegeya, 2012; Ng'umbi, 2012).

By 1994, the paradigm shift from sole conversional to the ODL became a reality and OUT was in full swing. It began with the undergraduate degree programmes. The envisaged vision of OUT reads:

> *…to be a world leading open and distance higher learning institution in providing quality education and services for all. By then the OUT-mission statement read: committed to achieve bridging the gap by providing quality and affordable education to all…* (OUT, 2014).

By so doing, OUT bridges the gap by introducing the Open, Distance, and electronic Learning (ODeL). At the University of Dar es Salaam (UDSM) the global research paradigm choice controversy seemed to reach the intellectuals community of UDSM

through article in Papers in Education and Development (PED) in early 1990s (Omari and Sumra, 1997). These researchers reported their observations about the emerging social science research paradigms in line with what Guba and Lincoln (2005); Mackenzie and Knipe (2006) found in their writings about confluences and contractions of paradigm in research.

On the bases of the scholars' view, the uses of the research paradigm construct appeared in Tanzania universities early 1990s, when global researchers were ending the so called "paradigm war" and "incompatibility thesis." Since then, the construct of paradigm entered in the processes of teaching and learning educational research for dissertations at the UDSM in the then Faculty of Education but now is School of Education. Omari and Sumra's' concern was their observation of confusion among the students of Masters in Education by then. The confusion as it seemed was posed by the hardships of choosing between pure popular paradigm approaches of qualitative and quantitative, to suit their supervisors, who were also not in consensus to opt the emerging mixed research approaches paradigm.

The authors wrote their research paper cautioning the student researchers and their supervisors to choose the paradigms, in which they had adequate clarity. The researchers recommended any choice to consider the comparative advantages of the chosen paradigm (Omari and Sumra, 1997). Since then no researcher has paid due attention to investigate the manner how the clarity of choice of the research paradigm in research for dissertations among the Masters students in Tanzania universities influences dissertations performance. Nor has there been adequate research knowledge

informing the studied university intellectuals of the university community on how the clarity in the choice of research paradigm may affect the completion and performance rates of students' dissertation contrary to their expectations.

In this study two Tanzania universities were to be comparatively studied so as to investigate how the foundations of educational research conceptions like paradigm are understood. The OUT and UDSM were selected because they have much similarities on issues of education. Reuben (2007) compares between the OUT and UDSM universities, in pursuing visions and fulfilling their missions. The author observes that the vision and mission of both UDSM and OUT bear striking similarities, implying a convergence of distance and conventional learning. Both universities have a similar course of educational research at the Master's degree programmes level by course works and research.

Consequently, this study was prompted by the researcher's encounter of the sub theme with the research paradigm construct, as one of the External Examiners' Assessment tool Forms (EEAFs, 2004-2014) contents found at OUT. The same contents were compared to the similar University of Dar es Salaam assessment tool about how the two universities researchers in education understand the manner how the clarity of foundations conceptions in educational research like explicit paradigm influence quality assurance processes of dissertations completion and performance rates.

Prior analysis of the encountered tool of EEAFs at OUT, provided 26 assessed subthemes by the External Examiners (EEs), in which one of the assessed subthemes

is item 6.3(i). The sub theme obliges a candidate among other things to clarify by explaining the paradigm of choice along the research design, and requires the EEs to assess it rigorously (Figure 4.1; Appendices XI; XII). Whether the Masters degree students by course work and research, with their supervisors pay due attention on the clarity of the explicit paradigm sub theme 6.3 (i) in similar way as the EEs assessing dissertations do, was not clear prior to conducting field research. The researcher raised intellectual puzzle of not knowing how one's clarity of sub theme paradigm of might be a probable factor among other factors influencing dissertations quality completion and performance rates in the studied Masters degree programme.

If at all the candidates and their supervisors do, yet more questions arise: Do they explain the research paradigm along encountered clarity criterion conceptions in terms of definition, scope, semantic relationship, and coherence or else? Is there guiding model to guide candidates, supervisors, and EEs to clarify, supervise, and assess the clarification of the explicit paradigm with wider scope in assessed dissertations? Are candidates, their supervisors, and external examiners having similar understanding on the primacy, relevance, and influence of the construct of the explicit the paradigm in relation to research for dissertations?

Furthermore, how can one associate the observed scenarios of increasing low completion and marginal pass rates in candidates' dissertations as Tables 1.1 and 1.2 illustrate? Table 1.1 presents the dissertations pass scores trend in one of the studied university faculties at OUT.

Table 1.1: External Examiners' Quality Awards Dissertations Pass Rate Trend

Dissertation Grades	**A**	**B+**	**B**	**C**	**D-E**	**Tot.**	**%**
Dissertations Tot.	05	26	45	9	1	86	
%	**5.81**	**30.23**	**52.32**	**10.46**	**1.16**		**100**

Source: Field Data (2018)

Looking at Table 1.1, one gets a general picture on the trend of qualities of dissertations and passes rates. It is revealed that only 5 (5.81%) out of 86 studied external examiners' report forms (Appendices. XI; XII) were capable of getting excellent grades. The report forms reveal that external examiners rated "A" grade as an excellent grade (based on the EEs tools) to very few candidates. Such verdict renders the candidate's dissertation to either pass outright or pass subject to minor corrections. Much more, in the same Table 1.1, one also observes that the external examiners judged few 26 (30.23%) out of 86 studied candidates' dissertations being with a very good quality grade (B+) (Table 1.1).

The verdict with grade B+ renders the candidate's dissertation to pass subject to few typographical errors corrections. In the same Table it became evident that the very EEs judged 45 (52.32%) out of 86 studied candidates' dissertations being with low scores of B flat grade. In the current study, the researcher labelled the B (flat) grade award for dissertations as the "marginal" (underperforming) grade similar to candidates who attained marginal C, D, and E grades. The rationale for regarding the B (flat) marginal grade was because once a candidate achieves the B, it affects the entire course work negatively, no matter how high it was, as well as the General Point Average (GPA) to

low performance, in a similar impact as students who achieve grades C, D and E (Table 1.1).

When the marginal grades are compared to the students achieving grades A and B+, the latter affect the entire course work positively, by raising the GPA tremendously to higher performance, no matter how low the course work performance was. Moreover, in Table 1.1, one still reads that 9 (10.46%) were awarded with marginal low-quality grade of "C" by the EEs. The verdict of this grade renders a candidate to the major corrections that lead the dissertations to be resubmitted. In other words, it passes subject to major corrections, and resubmission. So far 1(1.16%) candidates out of 86 studied candidates were awarded by EEs a D (marginal lower) and E
(marginal lowest) grades (Table 1.1).

Based on the observation from Table 1.1 it is suffices to say that the marginal scores for dissertations robs the green pasture academic employment opportunities from the studied university faculty graduates, who could be employed as potential academic experts in particular for ODeL not only at OUT, but also elsewhere in East Africa universities. With marginal results, such graduates cannot compete in the higher learning labour market. This claim is exhibited in OUT (2015) harmonized scheme report, revealing that out of 374 employed academic staff only 76 graduates hold either bachelors or Masters from OUT, otherwise the rest Masters holders at OUT were employed from conversional universities (OUT, 2015).

Cementing on that researcher's experience, Babyegeya (2012) challenges OUT to invest in improving the performance of the ODeL systems, for the sake of its prospective quality experts trained in the ODeL modes of teaching and learning rather than the current trend of recruiting more graduates from the conventional universities with less background in ODeL. The marginal score grades of B and C grades, might be relevant to undergraduate degrees but these are unattractive at the level of Master's degree, because they lower the candidates' GPAs. The underperformance scenarios in dissertations motivated the researcher to explore unveiled factors related to researchers' clarity of paradigm conceptions and its influence to dissertations quality performance.

The catchy word of performance across this thesis implies the established values for judging fairly a certain academic work, be it oral, written tests, examinations, or practical (Pons, 1992). Table 1.1 illustrates the established values for judging a dissertation quality in terms of score percentages along the letter grades of A, B+, B, C, D and E at OUT. Any assessment in education field has the established performance criteria for judging the quality of an academic work done. These criteria differ according to the paradigm perspectives held by specific assessors as detailed in chapter two of this thesis.

Dietel *et al.* (1991) show that the criteria for valid assessment performance include: consequences, fairness, transfer, cognitive complexity, content quality, coverage, meaningfulness, cost and efficiency. These criteria of performance have been detailed further by authors like Dietel *et al.* (1991) detailed in chapter two. A reader of this

thesis, should judge it in line with the constructivists' GT criteria detailed in chapter two. Therefore, there has been studies gap of rare studies interested in influence of philosophical foundation conceptions influencing research for dissertations completion and pass rates.

Some of the reviewed related studies like, Jick and Leonard (1979); Anderson (1993); Efinger, Maldonado and Adler (2004); Daniel and Lovittis (2005), have been investigating other factors for dissertations writing supervising at the postgraduate for Masters and Ph.Ds degrees. Nevertheless, the researchers have paid little attention to investigate how the researchers' clarity of the research paradigm underpinned philosophical conceptions, might be among popular factors influencing dissertations quality completion and pass rates. The scarcity of studies on this topic also prompted this study.

The second scenario that motivated the researcher to conduct this study was the low rate of completion of the dissertations as well as the graduation in one of the OUT faculties, as illustrated in Table 1.2. The researcher found its assessment tool consisting sub theme 6.3 (i), obliging candidates to ...*clarify the research paradigm and design*... (EEAFs 2004-2015). According to the official field document in Facts Figures of OUT, FAFI (2013-2014), it is revealed that the trend of enrolment versus the graduation rates since the inception of M.A degree programmes in 2001 at OUT faculty of education had admitted 2,911 by early 2014.

Table 1.2: Dissertations Completion and Graduation Rate by 2014 Years

Years	M.Dist.	M.Ed.Thesis	MEDAPPS	MED_ODL	G.Tot
2001	0	0	0	0	0
2002	0	0	0	0	0
2003	0	0	0	0	0
2004	0	0	0	0	0
2005	0	2	0	0	2
2006	0	0	0	0	0
2007	0	2	0	0	2
2008	0	2	0	0	2
2009	3	0	0	0	3
2010	8	0	4	0	12
2011	5	0	9	0	14
2012	0	2	20	0	22
2013	3	0	48	1	52
G.Tot	**19**	**8**	**81**	**1**	**109**

Source: OUTFAFI (2014)

Looking on Table 1.2 one observes that, only 109 candidates succeeded to complete their dissertations and graduated in the required scheduled period of time. This trend implies that within 14 years, only 109 (3.74%) out of 2,911 had graduated and 2,802 (96.26%), had not graduated despite the studied faculty unit documents to indicate that they had completed their course works as well allocated supervisors in time (RPPC, 2004-2014). This scenario is not only at OUT but also, it is reported in some other universities globally. Commenting on this experience, Denicolo (2003) confirms that there has been variation in what supervisors and students expect versus what EEs do in assessing quality of dissertations in universities.

The researchers in Tanzania have little interest to investigate the explicit paradigm clarity construct with its implicit conceptions and its influence on dissertations quality

performance despite the construct to be included in the processes of teaching and summative evaluation. (EEAFs, 2004-2016). From the observations in Tables 1.1 and Table 1.2, the emerging grand research question was: *how has the researchers' clarity for research paradigm philosophical conceptions been a*

contributory factor among factors for increase of alteration of quality dissertations writing, supervising, and assessing final grades among educational Master degree in universities? Having identified the research question the researcher preceded to the formulation of the statement of the problem.

1.3 Statement of the Problem

Despite close supervision for candidates of Masters (M.A) degree programmes in universities still, the dissertations completion rates remain below the expected level. On the other hand, despite the existence of the educational research courses coded OED 626 at OUT and FE 600a at UDSM, which are responsible for equipping candidates with knowledge and skills of conducting quality research still , the dissertations final pass grades have increasingly remained marginal than it was expected (OUT, 2001-2014). As observed by Denicolo (2003) there has been variations in what supervisors and supervisees expect versus what EEs execute in assessing quality of dissertations.

While there are plenty of studies and articles in assessment of quality for Masters degree dissertations and Ph.Ds theses, they are in deductive logical tune. Thus, there are inadequate studies conducted using the grounded theory abductive logic, reporting on the manner the researchers' clarity of research paradigm conceptions affect

dissertations quality in universities. There are several studies that have investigated the quality of dissertations and thesis globally. Such studies as detailed later on in chapter two, to mention a few include: Burnnet (1999), Mullins and Killey (2007), Lumadi (2008), Valero (2016), Heath (2010), as well as Tinkler and Carolyne (2010).

Yet other studies reported that supervisors' complaint on poorly prepared students for dissertation completion is a factor that leads to failure of students (Lumadi, 2008, Golding *et al.*, 2014; Bourke and Holbrook, 2011; Nicol, 2013). Consequently, incompetent student slows down the speed of supervision because supervisors spend a lot of time to edit common mistakes in students' work (Lumadi, 2008). In Tanzania some studies enlightening the raised problem across conventional and ODeL modes of teaching and learning include Kikula and Qorro (2007), Bhalalusesa (1998), Kisassi (2011), Rwegelera (2011), Babyegeya (2012), Ng'umbi and Rwegelera (2012) as well as Rwejuna (2014).

It is obvious that in all presented studies locally and globally, the paradigm clarity inquiry receive less emphasis despite having led researchers into labelled "paradigm war controversy, and incompatibility thesis" about purity of either pure qualitative, quantitative, or mixed (Tashakkori and Teddlie, 1998; Guba andLincoln, 2006). In the final analysis, the emerged grand research question from ongoing statement of the problem was *how researchers' is: candidates', supervisors', external examiners' clarity of research paradigm philosophical conceptions, has been a contributory factor among factors influencing quality completion, graduation, and final grade pass rates alteration for Master's degree dissertations in Tanzanian Universities?*

To this end, the current study was designed to fill the identified study gap of inadequate knowledge about "*Researchers' Clarity of Research Paradigm Philosophical Conceptions Influencing Dissertations Quality Performance in Tanzania Universities: Grounded Theory Perspective."* Next are the objectives of the study.

1.4 Objectives of the Study

The main objective of this study was to: explore studied respondents' perspectives generating fresh hypotheses as well as grounded theory about how one's clarity for research paradigm conceptions, might be among contributory factors influencing increase of candidates' low dissertations quality completion, pass rates; and come up with a way forward.

1.5 Specific Objectives

In order to achieve the identified purpose four specific objectives with seven sub research questions guided this study.

i)To examine if the studied universities context teach explicit research paradigm as "worldview" conceptions to Master's degree candidates in the course of doing their educational research.

Research questions

(ia)What specific (ia) ongoing core pressing issue, (ib) core categories of conceptions, (ic) main participants and (id) core processes emerged relating to the

paradigm as “worldviews” conceptions, when teaching educational research course to Master’s degree candidates’ in studied universities context?

(ii)To what extent were: university policy provisional statements of: vision, mission statements, teaching course outlines, study resources, and assessment tools contents processes, found covering wider scope of research paradigm “worldview” conceptions, in studied universities context?

(iii)In what ways were studied candidates, their supervisors, as well as external examiners practically observed emphasising, clarifying, and making their own sense of research “worldviews” in terms of definition, scope, semantic relationship, as well as coherence in studied universities context?

(iv)What extra probable factors emerged as accelerators of altering dissertations to marginal final score grades apart from emerged research paradigm “worldviews” factor in the studied universities context?

2. To examine the degree, to which candidates, and their supervisors’ prior knowledge of used assessment criteria to examine worldviews subtheme, has been a contributory factor for altering dissertations quality completion as well as quality pass rates.

Research question

(v) To what extent are external examiners’ assessment criteria, used to assess studied dissertations worthiness communicated prior to candidates and their supervisors to alter quality performance?

3. To assess the degree to which studied candidates, supervisors, and external examiners, were observed referring to their implicit held conceptions of research paradigm construct when writing, supervising, and assuring quality dissertations.

Research question

(vi) To what degree were candidates', supervisors', and external examiners' varying perceptions of research "worldview" construct conceptions observed to influence processes of writing, supervising, and assuring quality dissertations?

4. To assess the relationship between candidates' articulation of research "world view" conceptions from authoritative source of knowledge and variation of dissertations quality final grades.

Research question

(vii) What category of correlation strength and direction exists between candidates' articulation of authoritative source of knowledge conceptions and dissertations final grades alteration?

1.6 Significance of the Study

This study is timely, since its basic purpose was to contribute to the creation of knowledge through educational research to the existing stock of empirical studies in the higher learning institutes. The study is significant since it unveils the unpopular phenomenon in the universities, on how the identification of the research paradigm has

been very complicated in postgraduate studies because of its inseparability from the philosophy of field of science. It is in this inadequately emphasised field, where most students are uninformed of philosophical foundations of research. Consequently, the studied students unconsciously choose and use the paradigm of choice wrongly in the process of conducting the studies.

The role of the research paradigm cannot be over emphasised here, suffice to say that its role is to provide prior guidance to researchers on how to make and arrive at the appropriate decisions, in their studies. As such, the choice of the explicit paradigm has to be determined according to the nature of the discipline, within which the researcher identifies the problem. It is for this reason, that this study area is important as it attempts to explore the clarity surrounding the explicit research paradigm, its underpinned implicit philosophical conceptions among social researchers, and how it relates to alter dissertations quality completion, as well as performance rates.

Much more, this study is significant as an eye opener to the studied universities since it unveils the research knowledge gap and fills it not only by generating fresh hypotheses for latter falsification, but also it generates the underlying Grounded Theory.

1.7 Limitation of the Study

In the process of conducting this study, the researcher encountered some obstacles that intervened the possibility of coming up with the perfect quality of this study as expected. The first obstacle was the nature of the problem of the study that took two

years to realise that instead of studying it as exploratory, could much better be studied on the basis of the relationship between one's clarity of explicit research paradigm and dissertation performance, thus looking at latent variable constructs inductively, instead of variables deductively. This obstacle was resolved by discovering the difference between the uses of constructs instead of variables.

The researcher finally decided to opt for the constructivists' GT strategies as well as the pragmatism philosophy that proposes to take what works better in attempting to resolve a problem. The second obstacle was about the researcher's deductive hypothesizing or falsifying theories during the orientation of the research for Master's degree dissertations in education, which does not encourage varying logics such as inductive, abductive, retroductive logics. As such, it was hard for the researcher to quickly go for the abductive logic, which encourages the flexibility of triangulating what works. The GT fitted the opted pragmatic philosophy fond of flexibility in research.

That second obstacle was resolved by abandoning conservatism of depending only on the deductive logic therefore triangulated inductive and deductive to work interchangeably and supplemented by abductive. The researcher found less assistance on understanding the three versions of the GT. The risk taking of opting the constructivists' GT nomenclature, solved the said limitation. The third obstacle was selection of universities to be studied. While initially the researcher expected to conduct the study in one university (OUT) the subsequent processes compelled the study to be conducted in two universities (OUT and UDSM), where the research

paradigm conceptions can be anchored in the wide context. Such flexibility resolved the third obstacle.

The fourth obstacle was the nature of the respondents in the selected universities with prospective graduates and graduates. Respondents were scattered all over up country across Tanzania using unique distance open, distance and e-learning (ODeL) modes. The obstacle added the hardship on the possibility of easy communication in obtaining the respondents, who are available countrywide. This limitation was resolved by getting a list of respondents' cell phones numbers and e-mails from the offices of postgraduate directorates of the respective universities. As such, communication and contact with the respondents was simplified.

The fifth obstacle was slowness of the internet systems, which delayed the responses from students for quite long time; it took more than a year. This problem was solved by opening more than one URLs addresses apart from the out.ac. tz, yahoo, and Gmail. This decision resolved the problem of the respondents, who had delayed the data, though yahoo and other categories of blogs were slower than the Gmail blogs. The attempt resolved the problem by increasing the turn up of speed on responses. The sixth limitation, which the researcher encountered, was the computer in competencies to some of respondents.

The respondents too were incompetent to down load, up load, and attach the feedback on line information. The incompetency made a few respondents, to respond instantly, so the researcher had to make calls now and then to remind them several times, more

than six times for every respondent. The seventh obstacle was the difficulty in obtaining respondents' dissertations that would tally with the available assessment forms. This was done amicably by urging the responsible parties on the importance of this study, and it worked thoroughly.

1.8 Delimitation of the Study Scope

This study focused on the clarity of educational research paradigm philosophical underpinnings among postgraduate learners at the Masters of degree level. It was less concerned with non-educational degree programmes at the mentioned level. It specifically focused on the professional teachers, because these had studied the course on foundations such as philosophy of education. The researcher expected that they were supposed to clearly be informed of the meaning and scope of the educational research paradigm. Likewise, the study opted to deal with the constructivists' GT paradigm in design, product based on the current (2006) version, rather than the classical versions of Glaser and Strauss (1967), Strauss, and Corbin (1990), not even the traditional methods of the quantitative and qualitative approaches.

1.9 Operational Definition of Concepts used in this Study

This subsection provides the operational definition of the key concepts used in this study. In this study

Clarity- referred to a construct with four sub constructs: definition for the used terms, scope, semantic relationship and coherence.

Constructivism-referred to one of typologies of post positivism paradigm perspectives.

Research paradigm- referred to studied researchers' own varying implicit opinions of viewing paradigm as: Ways, QUAlitative and QUantitative approaches, PAttern of concepts, Principles or Interpretations

(WAQUAQUPAPI). The six studied respondents' perceptions tally with explored expert writers' seven explicit properties of paradigm as: Philosophy, Ontology, Epistemology, Methodology, Axiology, Logic and Rhetorical language (POEMALOR) preceding field.

Philosophical underpinnings- referred to constructs or concepts surrounding a certain paradigm in terms of its philosophy, epistemology, methodology, axiology, logic, and rhetoric language.

1.10 Chapter Summary

Chapter one introduces the background of the problem and sets the statement of the problem, objectives of the study, research tasks and its questions. It also included the conceptual framework, significance of the study, limitations, delimitation, operationalised terms, chapter summary, and an organisation of the entire thesis.

1.11 Organization of Thesis

This study report is organised into seven chapters. It begins with chapter one about the background to the study, chapter two, on the reviewed, theoretical articles and papers and journal with empirical studies. Chapter three presents the research methodology whereas chapter four, five and six present and analyze data, discuss and interpret the findings into phase one, phase two and phase three respectively. Finally, chapter seven ends this thesis by summarizing major findings conclusions, recommendations for a

way forward, as well as the proposed further studies. In the next page, find chapter two about the reviewed related literature.

CHAPTER TWO

2.0 LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1 Introduction

In chapter two, find the reviewed sources related to this study. It is organised into three major sub sections. The first major sub section is about detailed related concepts from professional papers, articles, and secondary documents like books. The second major sub section is about critically global empirical studies with reference to four objectives of this study. The third major sub section is the derived knowledge gap, which ends by summarizing chapter two.

2.2 Reviewed Conceptual Literature about Paradigm construct

Whether one should review the literature before, during, or after collecting data from the field has been a controversy among the theorists of GT since 1960s. While the classical thesis version of the GT by Glaser and Strauss (1967) refutes the review of literature prior to the collection of data from the field, the anti-thesis version of Strauss and Corbin (1990) is in consensus with the classical thesis version on the same claim. The classical theorists are worried of predetermined concepts that might blindfold a researcher not to see what is actually happening in the studied phenomenon.

Unlike the previous classical version's claims, Charmaz (2006) reconciles the preceding two classical thesis and antithesis versions and came up with a new constructivists' synthesis version about better way of conducting studies under the GT. In the new version, Charmaz casts away the worries caused by previous two old versions, which unconsciously were perpetuating the dominant positivists' realism and

anti-realism perspectives between 19th and early 20th centuries regarding scientific inquiry. In order to break the positivists' dominance, the constructivists' GT new version in Charmaz (2006) encourages the researchers to review literature where necessary across all phases of conducting GT study, but review sparingly in the initial stage (Glaser and Strauss, 1967; Strauss and Corbin, 1990; Charmaz, 2006). The historical background of conceptualizing the construct of clarity and paradigm globally comes first as follows.

2.2.1 Clarity of concepts and constructs paradigm as a construct

What is known about the paradigm conception is its relationship with the construct of clarity. In this thesis, the clarity refers to an absence of ambiguity in understanding concepts and constructs. While a concept is a single word, a construct though single, it is an umbrella word made of more than one concept. The construct clarity is constituted by four categories namely: definition, scope, semantic relationship, and coherence (Suddaby, 2010). Since the clarity construct emerged from field, primary documents of this study the researcher had to clarify the conception of explicit research paradigm in the light of those four clarity categories.

Thus, the clarity of the explicit research paradigm requires one to consider its definition, its scope, semantic relationship, as well as coherence in students' dissertations. Writing on relevance of clarity in the process of writing, Day (1998) contends that one of the features of scientific writing is clarity. For Day science has been possible because of clear minds, which have been stating inquiry problems with clarity, and presenting inquiry results and conclusions clearly (Day, 1998).

Commenting on clarity of research paradigm among inexperienced researchers, Omari and Sumra (1997) point out that the inexperienced researchers in universities opt to conduct their research projects in the paradigm of choice, in which they are not conversant, and do so without considering their comparative advantages.

Mackenzie and Knipe (2006) add by blaming the expert writers on clarity of explicit research paradigm to inexperienced researchers. The blame is on using words interchangeably, like a framework of ideas, world views, and set of believes, so much that the inexperienced researchers are put in dilemma of not knowing exactly, a place where the paradigm suits in the process of conducting research (Bogdan and Biklin, 1998; Mackenzie and Knave, 2006). The historical evolution of inquiry paradigm construct as follows.

2.2.1.1 Historical context of paradigm: its denotation and connotations.

What is known about the inquiry paradigm has been the clarity of concepts by their definition, as the first sub construct of clarity. Historically, the origins of the construct of paradigm are traced back to its etymological roots, pointed previously. Though the root of paradigm is from Latin and Greek languages, in which it used to imply, Kuhn (1962) extended its new uses in philosophy of science implying 'technical terms known to a community of scientists.' According to Kuhn (1962) the inquiry paradigm precedes human perception, and the scientist as they were pointed out previously, that science is impossible without reference to the explicit paradigm, because science and paradigm are inseparable (Pajares, 2014).

Cementing Kuhn's claims, Mackenzie and Knipe (2006) add that without choosing the inquiry paradigm prior, there is no way the researcher may achieve the scientific inquiry without reference to it. These authors add that it is the paradigm, which provides research intent, the motivation, and expectations of the inquiry. These authors emphasise that without choosing the paradigm as the first step, there will be no basis for latter decisions on choices. The paradigm too may be clarified variously by connotation.

2.2.1.2 Paradigm as a construct conceptualised by denotation

What is known about paradigm is its strict and broad meanings. While definition refers to the meaning or clear description of a word, it sets boundary of a particular word. According to Suddaby (2010), likewise Rwegoshora (2014), the concept of definition has two components namely: denotation in terms of strict meaning of the word, and connotation in terms of wider meaning of the word. Consequently, writers or speakers might describe what they imply by certain concepts, constructs either by denotation or by connotation. In the same manner, the construct of paradigm requires both types of definition for clarity sake in this thesis.

Since then, the construct paradigm has attained varying uses in human fields including education and research. The variation of perspectives on paradigm leads to consideration of scope of paradigm construct in terms of its constitutes.

2.2.2 Varying perspectives on paradigm connotations

Much more, what is known about the construct of paradigm has been its connotations, implying varying descriptions of a single concept from differing experts' views. While some experts see the explicit paradigm to imply scientists' community invented technical constellation of new concepts Kuhn (1962), some experts view it as a frame work of concepts from which the researchers conduct research (Mackenzie and Knipe, 2006). William (1998) sees it to imply three levels of philosophical perspective, technical methods of conducting research and social of sharing results of the study. Besides those, Patton (1994) views it as 'worldviews; while, Denzin and Lincoln (2005), the explicit paradigm is set of concepts known to certain people sharing similar values.

2.2.2.1 Research paradigm scope seen as intellectual movements: positivism.

The scope of research paradigm as second conception of clarity, has also occupied experts' intellect, about what specific concepts constitute it. What is known about its scope of viewing the explicit paradigm from philosophical perspective criterion? Various experts of research agree that philosophy is a part of inquiry paradigm, by philosophy they imply schools of thought in terms of major movements of: positivists, anti-positivists, and post positivists elaborated later on. Any one reading about the pioneers of Vienna scientists' movement like Isaack Newton, Leibniz, and Kant just to mention a few, will realise that they were all philosophers of the field of science.

While Mackenzie and Knipe (2005) and Vine (2009) describe an inquiry paradigm as a framework on how the knowledge is to be determined, investigated, and interpreted

as well as motivated, (2002); Crawler (2013); Creswell (1994; 2012) contend that the paradigm is made of four components namely: researcher's: philosophy, ontology, and epistemology (POEM). For Crawler (2013) each study pursues a certain paradigm as positivism, post positivism, as well as feminism or a critical theory, as well as constructivism. Crawler rationalises that philosophy empowers a researcher to comprehend beliefs system underlying the inquiry process and biases of others as well as personal biases.

Moreover, philosophy empowers one to challenge his or her subject groups (Dobson, 2002, Web Crawler, 2013). Unlike such perspective, still some experts have viewed the paradigm to consist of ontology, epistemology, and methodology (OEM, Carr1995 also Guba and Lincoln, 2005). Presenting the paper on the understanding of paradigms of research used in mixed methods, Weaver and Olson (2006), explicate the paradigm as a set of philosophical beliefs shared by communities of researchers, just as Kuhn (1962) also contended. According to these authors, the paradigm consists not only of previous constitutes of (OEM), but also patterns of axiological values and practices, which control the investigation these are, ontology, epistemology, methodology as well as axiological values (OEMA).

Unlike those previous authors, Welle-strand and Tjelvoll (2010) explore the relationship between creativity, curricula and paradigm. These authors define paradigm as viewpoints of sociological assumptions. These authors conclude that indeed the paradigm assumptions represent amicable manners of undertaking knowledge creation as well as societal dynamism, whereby some people may wear

varying spectacles with different colours and look at same phenomenon (Wellestrand and Tjelvoll, 2010). Of course, the results is variation each reporting the coloured observed phenomenon (Carr, 1995; Guba and Lincoln, 2005; Welle-strand and Tjelvoll, 2010).

Besides the previous perspectives of paradigm, Lowton (1989) elaborates progressivism as educational researchers' movement, who emphasise an attitude of continuity of what is to be taught in the curriculum reflecting pragmatism philosophy of education as advocated by Pierce and Dewey. For Lowton (1989) the educational researchers, who emphasise the reshuffling or overhauling of the curriculum, are placed under the re-constructionist's school of thought. Again, educational researchers who emphasise the humanism school of thought movement, refers it back to the early days in 19th century.

Denzin and Lincoln (2000) content the research as an interpretive framework guided by set of beliefs and feelings about the world on the manner how the created knowledge should be comprehended in the social sciences. Dobson concludes that the confidence provided by comprehending various philosophical positions, enables the researcher to rationalise the decisions, this is a reason why researchers bother with philosophy in research (Dobson, 2002). To this end, Patton (1990; 2009) advocates the appropriate "paradigm of choice." The author advocates researchers to choose appropriate research methodological paradigm as a core criterion for deciding elements of research methodology.

2.2.2.2 Paradigm: ontological subjective and objective views of phenomenon

What is known about constituents making up the holistic explicit research paradigm has been first, the research paradigm conception of ontology. The ontology of research refers to a person's position or an angle of viewing the observed as a phenomenon objectively, either subjectively or relatively (Kairembo and Mwereke, 2012). Three positions of viewing a phenomenon exist. Either someone views a phenomenon with lenses of either objective, subjective, or relatively. Such positions divide research experts further more into movements of: objectivism, subjectivism, and sometimes relativism (Walsh, 1985).

Whereas the objectivists claim to view a phenomenon without biasness, they view a phenomenon to be independent of the knower, it is out there waiting someone to explore and discover it. The objective position belongs to the positivists as elaborated previously (Walsh, 1985; Kairembo and Mwereke, 2012). For Shrestha (2009).

ontology is an initial point of every research project, after which epistemological and methodological claims as well as assumptions about essence of social phenomenon are considered. Emig (1992) clarifies the ontology perspective further, that when we raise questions about the observed universe, how we judge about entities to include or exclude in research, we are dealing with ontology of research.

2.2.2.3 Post positivists' perspective: subjectivists' social constructivists' view

What is known about paradigm is the subjectivism position of viewing the phenomenon, divides the research experts into several other movements placed under

the umbrella of the post positivists namely: as subjective interpretivists, and critical subjective interpretivists (relativists) as in Tashakkori and Teddlie (1998). However, the positivists' perspective of the phenomenon being out there, waiting for discovery objectively and quantitatively is not accepted by all research experts. Some experts view the phenomenon depending on; who views it, with what political agenda, and kind of lenses put on by particular investigators for a given phenomenon.

This perspective leads to consideration of the subjective perspective for the given phenomenon (Walsh, 1985; Agrwaal, 2003; Kairembo and Mwereke, 2012). According to the subjective view, the phenomenon is not discovered outside there, but it is socially constructed as people interact (Charmaz, 2006). This again leads to the subjective and critical relative constructionist's positions of viewing the phenomenon. Therefore, whereas subjectivists oppose the objectivists' perspective of saying that reality is objective, the subjectivists and relative constructivists doubt that, arguing that the phenomenon is a subjective phenomenon. They conclude that, no perfect and objective certitude.

Unlike subjectivists, the critical relative constructivists accept the possibility of objective perspective on the observed phenomenon, but not in capital "T." Such opposition leads to latter perspective that knowledge is socially constructed, hence constructivists' perspective (Tashakkori and Teddlie, 1998; Efinger *et al.*, 2004; Chilisa and Preece, 2005; Guba and Lincoln, 2005). These authors are in consensus that the knowledge of the research paradigm positions precedes investigation and influences the researcher's decision to be made on a planned research project.

2.2.2.4 Inquiry paradigm perceived as epistemological issues perspective scope

The inquiry paradigm is one of the branches of philosophy about the nature and sources of knowledge, as well as theories of knowledge (Kairembo and Mwereke, 2012). The second conception constituting the holistic explicit paradigm is epistemology. Whereas the nature of knowledge refers to kinds of knowledge like, knowledge as a belief, rationalised, or as evidence, the sources of knowledge concerns on the methods, through which a particular type of knowledge may be obtained including: either by intuition, rational, revelation, empirical, or by research. Additionally, the epistemology of research paradigm also, deals with kind of epistemological theories: Occam's razor, correspondence, and even coherence theories are explained later. For Chilisa and Preece (2005) the inquiry paradigm consists of epistemology, about what counts as relevant knowledge to the researcher.

2.2.2.5 Inquiry paradigm as research methodology perspective scope

The other known third perspective views the research paradigm as a research methodology. For Chilisa and Preece (2005) the research paradigm consists of five properties methodology with a philosophical base, ontology, epistemology, methodology, and axiological values abbreviated as (POEMA) as in (Williams, 1998; Chilisa and Preece, 2005). Explicating the difference between methodology and methods, Naugton *et al*. (2001) clarify research methodology as consisting of: quantitative, qualitative, or mixed approaches. For them the paradigm and research questions should judge, which research data should be gathered and analysed. In this sense, the methodology is equated to research paradigm.

Methods refer to issues, strategies or means for collecting data accompanied with research tools. Some methods fit the quantitative approach these include qualitative approach, closed ended questionnaire, experiments, and survey. Still other methods fit the qualitative approach such as observation, interview with open-ended questions, and documentary (Naugton *et al.*, 2001). Moreover, the research paradigm is also regarded as axiological values as shown below.

2.2.2.6 Inquiry paradigm perceived as axiological values perspective scope

Besides those perspectives, research paradigm is also viewed as axiological values, which constitute issues of biasness, ethics, and beauty in works of arts found in the research field. According to Chilisa and Preece (2005), the research paradigm also consists of axiological values about what counts as valuable to the researcher during investigation process. Carr (1995) contends that philosophy and values are perennial in research field, especially in educational inquiry. Denzin and Lincoln (2000), add that research is interpretive dominated by a set of researchers' beliefs as well as feelings about the observed phenomenon.

Denzin and Lincoln (2000) point out further that the interpretive framework is regarded as the researcher's paradigm in the field of social science qualitative research. They conclude that in the debate of research paradigms, what is important is not paradigm war controversy, but it is to seek where and how paradigms exhibit convergence, how the paradigms reveal differences, and how they reveal contradictions. Discussing on research values, Williams (1998) and Guba and Lincoln (2005) are in consensus with

previous authors that the research projects are value laden, in the sense that they are surrounded by subjective researcher's biases.

Issues of ethics and beauty in research belong to the axiological values, even in experimentation values interfere the measurements. ISTES (2013) source is in consensus too that researchers enter the field with specific beliefs of three categories: about what the nature of knowledge is, what is knowable as well as how one can go about in investigating what is not known. The source confirms that researchers enter the field of research with implicit certain paradigm (ISTES, 2013). Much more, Weaver and Oslon (2006) write about understanding of the research paradigms in the nursing field.

Theses authors are of the view that paradigms are patterns of beliefs and practices, which regulate inquiry within a certain discipline. It is argued further that it provides lenses through which investigation is completed (Weaver and Oslon, 2006). As such, one sees how values are inseparable from any typology of research to be either positivists' or post positivists' perspectives. Next, find the logic branch of philosophy and its relationship with the research process.

2.2.2.7 Inquiry paradigm as logical conception scope

Well-documented information about the research paradigm exists on viewing it from the lens of logical perspective. Once the researcher has completed data collection, there remains analysis of data, whereby the researcher may arrange data in various styles as viewed in (Teays, 1995). Being one of the branches of philosophy, logic refers to correct arguments

versus fallacies (Kairembo and Mwereke, 2012). Logic may be categorised into four: deductive, inductive, abductive and retroductive. Whereas deductive logic employs an argument with premises beginning from general, it infers its conclusions specifically.

Meanwhile, the inductive logic employs an argument that begins from specific premise or specific observations to infer conclusion generally. Any researcher is either guided by deductive, inductive, abductive or retroductive reasoning frameworks in the process of inquiry (Teays, 1985; Rwegoshora, 2014). This calls to consider conceptual frame works and theoretical models. It is for this reason that frameworks and models may either be constructed or borrowed. One may borrow a theoretical model but has to adjust it as per the studied context. Whereas deductive logic is rigid, it is not flexible to allow any data outside the original theoretical framework.

The researcher following such logic is advised to consider such data as intravenous variable and neglect it during data collection. The deductive logic is popular in fields of natural, physical, and applied sciences like mathematics, physics, chemistry and engineering unlike social sciences like education field. The later are flexible to use either logic, when compared to the former. Narrating the historical background of the nature of inquiries Walonick (1993) claims, that until sixteen century, the human inquiry was primarily based on the introspection, where by people used to think inwards, to search for answers of raised questions deductively.

The introspection paradigm says Walonick, had endured for a millennium and it was a well-founded conceptual framework for understanding the world. Aristotle was the

founder of this category of reasoning (Walonick, 1993). Writing about deductive and inductive processes in research Casebeer and Verhoef (2002) argue that quantitative and qualitative research are often dominated by deductive and inductive approaches. Also, that the deductively done studies commence with existing theory or hypotheses to test to confirm or falsify. While the inductively done studies begin from observing the phenomenon in the field its purpose is to generate fresh hypotheses and theories.

The abductive is a logical argument, allowing the premises that were not initially in the prior model premises, to conclude generally. Above all is retroductive, the logic that combines all the rest to infer the conclusion (Rwegoshora, 2014). Francis Bacon between 1561and 1626 a founder of inductive logic, challenged the deductive approach of arriving at the certitude deductively, and proposed an alternative way of induction. This is where an investigator investigates the phenomenon by beginning with specific observations of individual to conclude generally. Kairembo and Mwereke (2012) elaborate the inductive reasoning as an opposite of the deductive reasoning.

If the inductive logic is chosen to guide the study, then the researcher is expected to begin with observation, and then get the initial patterns, tentative questions ending with or either hypotheses or a GT. Nevertheless, at times, a single logic like deductive tends to have some weaknesses alone may fail to all kinds of investigated problems. Similarly, the inductive logic is full of weaknesses since it cannot fit all categories of investigated problems, alone it may fail to harbour some results of some investigated problems. It is from these noted limitations that interpretivists suggest the need for flexibility calling

upon the eclectic kind of logic, whereby an investigator may borrow some reasonable features of deductive and inductive to tackle a problem at hand abductively.

The logic that agrees with eclecticism is either abductive or retroductive logics. If one were to adopt the abductive logic, then s/he has to have a conceptual framework that is flexible. One may argue that abductive and the retroductive logics are flexible to allow mixture of some strategies from either logic to complement the rigid inductive or deductive theoretical models. The retroductive logic is the way of conceptualising about the observed phenomenon by identifying the circumstances, without which something could have not happened (Mayer *et al.*, 2013). This author points out that Pierce was a founder of the abduction and retroductive kinds of reasoning.

The author describes the founder to have thought that almost all ideas, which trigger the development in this world, come from retroductive logic. Mayer *et al*. (2013) compare the deductive and retroductive reasoning that both begin with the theoretical frameworks in the process of inquiry. When contrasting the two, the same author clarifies that unlike the deductive and inductive reasoning retroductive reasoning like abductive, goes beyond the discovered empirical data to explain why some conditions of reality occurred the way they do or why a certain conditions has not happened (Mayer *et al.*, 2013; Rwegoshora, 2014).

Writing on the relationship between logic and the research process Shrestha (2009) argues by first defining paradigm as a varying construct in meaning, sometimes seen as a mental model, a filter of one's ideas, or as a frame of reference. Commenting about

deductive and inductive processes in research Casebeer and Verhoef (2002) contend that quantitative and qualitative research are often dominated with deductive and inductive approaches. These authors elaborate that deductive studies commence with existing theory to test it, to confirm or falsify it, while inductive studies start with observations with purpose to generate hypotheses or to contribute to a new theory.

The abductive is argument, which takes the premises that were not initially in the prior premises, to conclude generally. Above all is retroductive the logic that combines all the rest to infer the conclusion (Rwegoshora, 2014). Describing logic as a component of research paradigm, Shrestha (2009) illustrates the deductive logic in research with cyclic curved model, with two converging tails. Whereas at the bottom the author begins with a theory then proceeds with hypothesis, observations, then confirmation or falsification of a theory then back to stated theory. Such illustration implies that the research process is cyclic not linear, theoretical models seem to be a common factor.

Again, another tail begins from bottom starting with observations then, patterns, tentative hypotheses meeting the converging theory on top (Shrestha, 2009). For Shrestha, the deductive logic and inductive are parallel in the research process with common cyclic process (Teays, 1995; Shrestha, 2009).

2.2.2.8 Paradigm rhetoric language conception in the research process

The other existing knowledge about the research paradigm has been that of use of appropriate rhetorical language, which calls for consideration of technical terms proper to a certain community of scientists. The rhetoric language in this study refers to issue

of using a language with a certain purpose of persuading, convincing, or critiquing. Each chosen paradigm has its own technical terms known to a particular community of scientists, about what it means in terms of clarity definition, scope, semantic relationship, and coherent theory. Table 2.1 elaborates varying views of paradigm and appropriate language use to suit the paradigm of choice. Some experts have summed such term suiting them to a specific paradigm of choice in Table 2.1.

Table 2.1: Appropriate Technical Terms as per a Chosen Research Paradigm

Intent of inquiry & views	Category of inquiry questions	Exemplar of inquiry Design
Explanatory	What is the association between & why?	Surveys and experiment.
Explanatory, descriptive,	What happens in case?....	Experiment, participatory
Descriptive, explanatory Exploratory, Explanatory,	What and why…?	Mixed methods inquiry
Descriptive Understanding,	What occurred in previously?	Historical methods inquiry
Interpretivists	How can one comprehend a situation?	Ethnographic, interpretive and Case study inquiry
Critic, Emancipatory	How does one disrupt convention and enable participants?	Critical approach inquiry

Source: Modified from Oncea in Summons and Bakkum (2013).

Words may either be used to describe qualities that qualify a person, a thing, or a state of being (Teays, 1995). From Table 2.1, one sees the technical terms proposed suiting specific paradigm words used to describe aims of research, their claims, kind of research questions, and examples of research designs. The illustration shows varying aims of

research, which may be explanatory or descriptive. If the purpose of the study raises research questions like, what happens if x is y? The expected kind of the research design is experimental, is participatory. Besides that, if the purpose of the study is descriptive, explanatory, and exploratory, the researcher is expected to raise the questions like what or why, and the expected design will be mixed methods research.

Similarly, in case the purpose of the study is both explanatory and descriptive, then the researcher is expected to raise general research questions like, what happened, while the expected research design may be historical research methods (Oncea in Summons and Bakkum, 2013). On the purpose of research, while the post positivists focus on exploration, understanding, and interpreting perspectives to generate theories and fresh hypotheses, the post positivists focus on the falsification and confirmation of existing theories and hypotheses. Patton makes analogical comparison about the purpose and paradigm of research.

For Patton (1990) equates that while the purpose of inquiry is like an engine in research just is to a car, the explicit paradigm is like a role of steering lever in research just as it is in the car. Synthesising the role of language in the research process as illustrated in the tabulations from different authors like Oncea (2013), Sammons and Bakkum (2013), Shrestha (2009), Creswell (2012); Patton (1990) insist that the consistence of the vocabulary is crucial in the scientific research process as illustrated in (Table 2.1). Much more, on the issues of research design and approaches, the language use differs too.

While the qualitative approach is for the post positivists, quantitative approach is for the post positivists. On the research methods, while the post positivists talk of interviews, documentary, and observations, the positivists talk of survey questionnaire tool, experiments, and hypotheses. On the research rigour, while the post positivists use the language terms of credibility, trustworthy, transferability, and dependability rigour, the post positivists use the language terms of validity and reliability (Carr, 1995;'Bogdan and Biklin, 1998; Williams, 1998; Tashakkori and Teddlie, 1998; Guba and Lincoln, 2005). For instance, while the post positivists, use the language of non-probabilistic sampling procedure by consulting categories of a purposive and theoretical sampling procedure, their logic and purpose is not or generalising findings to an entire targeted population. The logic and purpose focus only on small sampled sizes from the target population and categories falling in the studied context.

Consequently, the number of sample size is irrelevant in the post positivists' studies, because even a single case may be adequate to give in depth rich data (Patton, 1994). Comparatively, the positivists' rhetorical language for validity is worthiness, while the post positivists use the credibility post positivists talk of the reliability of research. Elaborating the roles of language in daily life, Teays (1995) says that, the main function of the language is to express peoples' values by using words in any given context. For instance, people may use words synonymously to suggest similar implications.

Addressing the issue of adhering to suitable specific research language of the paradigm of choice, the use of a language has to adhere to the explicit paradigm assumptions. Clarke (2005) challenges researchers to have language criteria, when formulating the

research enterprise through raised questions for instance what kind of language will guide the research project at hand. The author claims that if someone's research falls under the qualitative approach, then the expected language will have features, which are informal, with evolving decisions, and personal voice with 'I, you, me, us, we, with accepted qualitative words.

If again the study is quantitative in nature, the researcher is expected to exhibit positivists' formal language with a set of definitions, impersonal language lacking personal pronouns of: 'I, you, me, he, she, and we' consistent to singular or plural on the verb. Suffice to say that the scope of the research paradigm is holistic involving several conceptions related to a researcher's philosophy, ontology, epistemology, methodology, axiology, logic, as well as the rhetoric language. The primacy of research paradigm in the process of conducting research leads us to consider influence of the very construct of research paradigm relating to examiners' criteria for evaluating research works.

2.2.3 Scientific revolutions equated to paradigm shifts in the field of science.

Much more, the other existing information about the explicit research paradigm construct has been the conception of "paradigm shift." Kuhn (1962) concocted this phrase to inform the community of scientists about the scientific revolutions equating them to the paradigm shifts. The scientist observed that the existing paradigm normally begins to get out dated, once a certain group of scientists introduces new concepts by then, the paradigm was one of those new concepts. The new concepts slowly replace the old ones in use, and the paradigm shift or scientific revolution occurs. In the process

of paradigm shifts, Kuhn saw some people adapting the new concepts quickly, but still others delay to adapt quickly the paradigm shift.

Kuhn regards the late adapters of new concepts as conservatives, and normally the scientific revolutions sweep them out. Kuhn elaborates further that the scientific revolutions has passed through various fields of human knowledge epochs as paradigm shifts. Kuhn thought that the paradigm preceded human perception and that, no science proceeds without reference to explicit paradigm prior knowingly or unknowingly. The same scientist clarifies that the paradigm is where the dynamic forces trigger greater changes in the old-fashioned systems, which he termed …scientific revolutions... (Kuhn, 1960; 1962). The scientific revolution implies the paradigm shift in ways of doing things.

As it was hinted previously, the said notion of paradigm shift that Kuhn equated with the scientific revolution, cannot be understood without revisiting the historical information about epochs occurring in social, political, economic progress as elaborated further a in (Rodney, 1972; Babyegeya, 1996:). The clarity and relevance of the paradigm construct has currently been controversial among researchers, to the extent of leading to the so called “incompatibility thesis and “paradigm war” globally, beginning 1970s. The incompatibility thesis revolves around the impossibility of mixing the approaches of quantitative and qualitative at two major paradigms level (Sandelowsky, 2000).

The paradigm war controversy emerged early 1970s and lasted early1990s. The global research paradigm war among researchers occurred because of some

researchers called purists to insist the thesis that the research approaches belonging to two opposing paradigms should be used purely without mixing. Suffice to say that the construct of paradigm has also led to a controversy labelled as the “paradigm war” and incompatibility thesis controversy in (Guba and Lincoln, 2005). The controversy surrounds the issues of research design and approaches. This is where a researcher is forced to consider, which moment, what manner, and with what rationale to opt choosing either pure qualitative or quantitative paradigm approach.

Alternatively, one may combine the two extreme approaches in the same study, to come up with similar valid and reliable findings. Writing towards consensus of mixing inquiry paradigms about what, when, where, and how to mix approaches, Sandelowsky (2000) elaborates that what is incompatible is the mixture of two approaches as purely as they are at the level of paradigm two major paradigms. It is therefore false to argue that in this study the researcher will mix the quantitative and qualitative approaches, because the two are incompatible. Nevertheless, the two complement each other at the level of sampling procedure, methods of collecting and analysis of data.

For instance, it is correct to argue that in this study, the researcher will choose one pure paradigm like qualitative (post positivists) approach, but will triangulate or mix it with strategies from the quantitative positivists. However, Sandelowsky (2000) suggests the possibility of mixing at levels of sampling and methods. At the sampling procedure, the researcher may borrow for instance the purposive sampling procedure from non-probabilistic to mix it with random sampling procedure from probabilistic. This yields

a triangulated (purposive-random) sampling approach (Sandelowsky, 2000; Patton, 1990; 2003).

Another possible compatibility is to mix a single explicit research paradigm for example the pure qualitative at the level of methods or strategies. The researcher might borrow quantitative statistical descriptive methods like measures of central tendency like (mean), measures of variability like (frequencies, Standard Deviations (SD); and measures of relationships like Chi-square. In this way, the statistical methods belonging to the quantitative approach may address some research questions emerging within the chosen pure paradigm of qualitative approach to complement it.

2.2.3.1 Paradigm shift in education and its controversy in research processes

Paradigm shifts do not occur only in the field of pure science field but also in social sciences like the field of education. Writing on paradigm shift in relation to forms of education, Farmer and Papagiannis (1975) exhibit that in the field of education there has been paradigm shift for instance in evaluation of instructions. These authors point out that in the past the educational evaluation used to concentrate much on an individual performance. However, recently there has been a paradigm shift from strict testing of the individual's performance towards evaluating the overall effects of educational programs.

As such, the concept of the paradigm shift is across human's varying fields of knowledge not only in natural science. Historically, several theories exist showing how human beings' thinking has passed in several paradigm shifts, when addressing the

fundamental questions. The oldest paradigm shift was when humans shifted in paradigm from mythological to metaphysical religious paradigm. According to Augustine Comte, this period was the first paradigm shift that took place in 350 BC (Walsh, 1985). The same author shows that in religious paradigm, humans addressed their fundamental questions or problems by taking refuge to super natural powers like gods and God the period that lasted up to 15th century.

Not only that but also, the positive paradigm shift followed, where by humans solved their fundamental problems through empirical science by employing positivists' mathematical as well as hypothetical methods to arrive at answers for the raised problems. Science and technology replaced the positivists' paradigm that ended in the late 20th century. Currently, the new millennium began in the year 2000 towards 21st century, whereby the same humans are witnessing yet another paradigm shift scientific revolution live, where humans are solving their problems through science and technology (Kuhn, 1962; Walsh, 1985; Pajares, 2014).

No, wonder socio-economic fields in terms of social, political, economic fields experience effects of paradigm shifts too. Theories responding to educational field about what paradigm shift is, its features, why there is ever changing phenomenon in the educational systems globally, its semantic correlation with research world are well-documented (Kuhn, 1962; Walsh, 1985; Walonick, 1993; Pajares, 2014).

2.2.4 Theories about semantic relationship between paradigm and research

The third component of clarity construct is semantic relationship. Theories guide all humans' practices and none is without theories says (Agrwaal, 2003). Educational field is one of those humans' practices; it follows that certain epistemological theories branch of philosophy guide educational field.

2.2.4.1 Epistemological theories beneath clarity of paradigm in education

For Agrwaal (2003) contends that educational practice without philosophy as a theory to guide like an empty endeavour and as well philosophy without a field to practise is useless as well. A theory in this study referred to succinct claims or statements made after long experience by either deductive or inductive observation. These statements either declare what will happen in latter days as prediction of effects or explanation of causes telling reasons why effects befell the observed phenomenon. Bynner and Stribley (1979) see it with two roles. First role is to predict by foreseeing the upcoming new events and second to explain by making intelligible live facts.

Describing the place of a theory in any fields, Shavelson (2002) in his executive summary says, fundamental principles guide scientific enterprise, and a theory is one of those theories. Categorising principles and procedures Bynner and Stribley (1979) describe a scientific inquiry to present two main aspects, descriptive and theoretical science. The conceptions of clarity and research paradigm seem to fall under multi epistemological theories branch of philosophy namely as coherence, holism, reductionism, semantics, and parsimony detailed latter on.

2.2.4.2 Coherence and correspondence theories

Coherence is the last constituent of construct of clarity, implying consistency of ideas corresponding with real state of being or logical flow in presented information. Clarity is a construct that the researcher encountered in the assessment tool for dissertations at OUT (Figure 4.1). To be coherent the argument should fulfill the theory of coherence stating, "a claim is coherent in case it is consistent or tallying logically with the presented evidence" (Kairembo and Mwereke, 2012). Therefore, the researcher may present created knowledge with correct arguments, which are either consistent or inconsistent.

However, while not all coherent arguments correspond to the state of things, to be true the presented arguments should fulfill the theory of correspondence, which stating, "a claim is true if it corresponds to state of affairs" (Suddaby, 2010). If all these criteria are fulfilled it is believed that a presented concept or concepts and constructs in a piece of created knowledge is clear (Suddaby, 2010). Much more, Shavelson (2002) argues that one of the scientific principle is to provide a coherent and explicit chain of inferential reasoning from evidence to theory in terms of explanations, conclusion, or predictions based on what is known and observed (Shavelson, 2002).

In a similar way a researcher, who creates knowledge by means of research his/her presented findings should be coherent to their chosen research paradigm as well. Their conclusions should correspond to the state of events as really happening in the field without exaggerations. These claims tally with Occam's razor theory of parsimonious insisting that science is smart in presenting precise findings as such, entities should not

be over multiplied beyond necessity (Kairembo and Mwereke, 2012). The parsimonious principle requirements lead to consideration of holism theory further.

2.2.4.3 Holism theory

Holism is another theory known to relate to clarity of research paradigm. . As a term, holism originates from Greek language "holos" implying entire, and all. The theory implies that all-natural systems in physical, biological, chemical, economic, mental, linguistic and their properties should be viewed as a whole, and not as collection of parts (Sunny, 1999; Barry, 2008). These authors clarify further that the holism theory implies the situation, when the corresponding portion of evidence confirms the entire theory as well as entire model where it belongs. The opposite of holism is reductionism theory.

2.2.4.4 Reductionism fallacy theory

The theory of reductionism refers to a situation, in which one tries to view the observed phenomenon from a single perspective, method, or even from a single tool (Doniger, 1999). Categorising types of reductionism, Ruse (2005) points out three types: ontological reductionism, methodological reductionism, and theory reductionism. While the ontological reductionism refers to a perception, that a phenomenon is just made of least number of components, the methodological reductionism refers to the scientific risk to give explanation in smaller entities or quantities.

Finally, the reductionism theory implies a situation, whereby one minimizes a theory in a single perspective rather than viewing it as a whole (Ruse, 2005). In a similar way, a research paradigm is perceived with varying perspectives to the extent of reducing it as

either philosophical movements of positivism or post positivism. Likewise, is regarded as ontological positions namely objectivism, subjectivism and relativism. Besides those is regarded as epistemological theories, methodological approaches of quantitative and qualitative approaches of conducting research. Still other have reduced research paradigm as axiological values, as logic categories and as rhetoric language used by various philosophical movements in research. Semantics is still another theory that follows.

2.2.4.5 Semantics relationship theory

Another known component related to the construct of clarity conception of research paradigm in data Figure 4.1, is semantics. Grammatically, semantics refers to the study of meanings in different contexts of: who, when, place where, reason why, and manner how (Lidlle and Scott, 1940; May, 1993). The semantic theory states that a single sign such as a word may be used differently by different people to communicate different things, so does research paradigm. It also refers to used words in a certain field being related to other words from other fields, Suddaby calls this semantic relationship (Suddaby, 2010).

2.2.4.6 Pragmatism philosophical perspective theory

Pragmatism is one of the contemporary epistemological theory of knowledge and a philosophy associated with American philosophers Sanders Pierce and John Dewey. It is a theory, whose maxim is about events and their consequences. It states that the truth of every real phenomenon bases on its consequences. In this sense, pragmatism theory refutes metaphysical assumptions of eternity and absolutism; with rationale that the real

phenomenon is with dynamic events. It is for this purpose that pragmatism encourages the flexibility in conducting research, with the reason that all theories are tentative and may be falsified or confirmed as time goes on. What matters is specific study results (Kairembo and Mwereke, 2012).

Pragmatism propounds its maxim saying; "…*what works to solve the existing problem is what a real solution is...*" (Kairembo and Mwereke, 2012). The pragmatism maxim leads to consideration of relevance of the construct of research paradigms and its underpinned philosophical conceptions in research for dissertations.

2.2.5 Primacy of paradigm construct in research for dissertations process.

Commenting on the relevance of research paradigm Mackenzie and Knipe (2005) are of the view that without nominating either positivists or post positivists inquiry paradigm as the primary step, no way of clarifying the research can be achieved (Mackenzie and Knipe, 2005). For these experts the research paradigm remains a mystical issue, and they blame the writers on research to cause confusion among inexperienced researchers. These experts of research observe that the writers have no common understanding of what a paradigm refers to, and for this matter, the research inexperienced are left in dilemma not knowing, where the paradigm fits in the research process.

These authors complain that the paradigm conceptions in research books are given little attention (Mackenzie and Knipe, 2005). Nevertheless, Carr (1995); Dobson (2010) observe the relevance of knowing philosophical conceptions related to paradigm prior, arguing that the empowerment provided to students of research is the capability of

critically deciding variations of research paradigms. That is a reason why people bother with philosophy in research process. Weaver and Oslon (2005) provide three advantages of clarity of paradigms; one is to enable researchers in various fields to structure inquiry. Likewise, clarity of paradigm assists the researcher to make explicit philosophical assumptions underlying their methods.

Finally, is the relevance of being clear with research paradigm assists the researcher to recommend on proceeding disciplinary inquiry (Weaver and Oslon, 2006). Other expert writers have regarded the research paradigm as a manner, in which investigators interpret things in varying ways. It is the way of mental construction, where rational beings organise their reasoning and clarify their knowledge (Alchin 2003). Still other experts have thought that no another way to knowledge except through the research paradigm (Williams, 1998; Alchin, 2003). This thinking tallies with another rationalisation that the paradigm is an entry point to research before commencing any research project (Omari, 2011).

2.2.6 Paradigm related to approaches for evaluating social research quality

Writing on ways that are employed to evaluate the postgraduate students' dissertations quality, Northcote (2012) observes that normally evaluators base on either criteria of the quantitative, which emphasise objectivity, validity, and reliability or the qualitative criteria. The emphasised criteria in evaluating qualitative studies are several. These criteria are transferability, credibility, dependability, ontological, conformability, vitality, and goodness. The author points out that student are in dilemma on decisions to choose the right rigour of assessing especially in qualitative research. Among the

outlined dilemmas include: whether to align on appraisal standards or not (Northcote, 2012).

Secondly, are those decisions on which particular standard to select if the first decision is made based on assessment. Third, is the manner how to utilise optional approach to assessment standard-based assessment. Northcote (2012) argues that, when such dilemma occurs it is where Kuhn's (1962) concept of "paradigm shift" finds the way in line with candidates' understanding as per their appropriate paradigm of choice not otherwise. Elaborating the Arab Open University (AOU) rights and responsibilities of external examiners, Hashim (2007) argues that AOU regards the external examiners' as a part of quality assurance. The author adds that one of the roles of examiners is to guarantee fairness for every student without biasness; secondly, is to maintain the university fame.

Third, the examiners are supposed to evaluate students' works without any external pressure. Fourth, they are supposed to officialise any set, examination regulations before assessing any paper, and finally, is to guarantee to the university on whether the set objectives were met. Here, the examiner follows the quality issues in the dissertations writing as follows.

2.2.7 Evaluation of universities educational dissertations and theses quality

Writing on how to grade research dissertations and theses, Barbara (2005) contends that a dissertation or a thesis at higher levels of education at either M.A. or Ph.D., is the peak of intellectual product as a sign of the empowerment gained by its writer. It is added that

it reflects first, the technical second, analytical and third, writing skills s/he attained at particular degree program. The author comments further that the successful completion of the research report as the dissertation or thesis for the awards of the said degrees reveal that the degree recipient may do an independent scholarly investigation.

While these claims are agreed among scholars, nevertheless the issue, of who judges the criteria of what a quality of the winning dissertation or a thesis should be, remains relative among the universities (Barbara, 2005). Babyegeya (2000) is of an opinion that the quality of the product should not be judged by the producer, but by the consumer differing from Barbara (2005), who views that faculties have implicit standards for judging the dissertations and theses. The latter author concludes that some university faculties leave the task to the student to make those standards explicit. Upon this observation, the author raises the question on what are the criteria, by which university faculties evaluate dissertations.

It seems that one cannot address this question unless one goes through the roots of varying paradigm POEMALOR assumptions to know how each particular paradigm perceives best criteria for judging a research report. Five paradigms to be elaborated latter, have been drawn for understanding the varying perceptions on what criteria are best to judge the quality of a certain piece of research.

2.2.7.1 Paradigm and criteria for quality assurance of the research reports

Goodness is an abstract term that reflects issues of quality measures. The term quality is said to be difficult term to define because of it is abstract in nature. For Doherty (2008)

quality is fitness for purpose implying the extent at which the intended goods, services satisfy the intended consumers. Abstract may also be described through the actions of assurance and control. Quality assurance is a process of systematically supervising the set procedures to ensure the achievement of specified quality. When adhered, quality brings confidence to consumers of the produced services and products (Hoy *et al*., 2000). The relationship between paradigm perspectives and assessment criteria are explicated as follows.

2.2.7.2 Paradigm properties versus criteria for judging quality of study reports

Chua (2012) describes quality control as a means of detecting whether intents have been attained, to take an action to correct the limitations. For Chua, if done well, then it regulates performance and it prevents unintended changes in the quality of the provided products and services. It belongs to the sixth underpinning of paradigm known as axiology about values. In research, it has been a relative issue from time immemorial since it connotes issues of judgment subjective, which is notoriously value based. For this purpose, every paradigm has its own perspective on what it means by good research.

Characterising believes on goodness of research for five paradigms, some authors characterise the positivism, anti-positivism, and the post positivist on criteria for judging the quality of research variously (Cohen *et al*., 2001; Cohen and Crabtree, 2006). These groups include critical positivists or critical realists, interpretivists, constructivists and emancipationists (feminists and liberalists).

2.2.7.3 Positivists: realists' criteria for judging quality of research reports

The issues of judgment belong to the paradigm underpinning of axiology earlier mentioned about values of correctness and rightness, which are criteria or moral standards of evaluating humans' actions in this case the conducting of the research process that culminates into the writing of study reports. The axiology paradigm underpinning too, is about issues of good and evil means in achieving right or wrong in the proper field of ethical beliefs. The axiology underpinning also, is about the issues of justice and injustice that accompany conducting and evaluating human action.

In this case doing and assessing the scientific studies to provide just verdicts. The judgment depends on the kind of won lens, which may carry the positivists' or post positivists' beliefs in terms of either subjective or objective set standards of performance. In comparison, according to Cohen and Crabtree (2006) positivists' believe that there is an objective reality to be known by investigator provided; one follows the acceptable positivists' means of arriving at true knowledge.

Consequently, a good research for positivists is that, which uses the experimental as well as quantitative measurement approaches that allow the researcher to measure or evaluate an objective phenomenon statically.

To be able to evaluate the effective research four criteria are essential to the positivists including validity, parsimony, reliability, and generalisability. It is concluded that any research report meets these four criteria, should be judged as the winning study report (Cohen *et al.,* 2001; Cohen and Crabtree, 2006). But the positivists' objective standards

are doubted by other groups of social scientists belonging to the post positivists' paradigm as elaborated in the following subsection.

2.2.7.4 Post positivists: critical realists' criteria for judging research quality

All groups falling under the post positivists' paradigm are regarded as anti-positivists because of reacting on monopoly of positivism in issues of validity and reliability of the scientific research. The first group is of critical realists/positivists earlier mentioned. The critics' argument is that all researches seek to achieve credible knowledge or truth. However, they doubt about the claim of the positivists that truth may be achieved in capital "T". For critics, this is impossible because, they are of the view that an attempt to achieve truth is what leads researchers to engage themselves in following some systematic stages and criteria of arriving at and assessing it.

Basically, there must be some set standards of measuring the goodness of a research reports. The critical realists count a quality research by refusing validity and reliability standards of the positivists, rather they replace them with flexible terms of credibility, plausibility, and relevance. Thus, for critics a good research is the one that is credible, plausible, and relevant to the community. Other standards for critics are that a researcher must carefully select research respondents through purposive or theoretical sampling, triangulate, involve external fellows to audit the product, and has reflexivity. For the critical realists the goodness of research should involve community consensus.

In other words, a research project should have social impact, and researchers have the responsibility to justify their work to the researched community. Other groups include

the: interpretivists (constructivists, pragmatists, liberalists or emancipationists such as feminists) as elaborated further (Cohen and Crabtree, 2006). The counter opposers of the positivists' and their groups are the post positivists groups including interpretivists.

2.2.7.5 Post positivists: interpretivists' criteria for judging goodness research

Cohen *et al*. (2001) argue that in the same trend, critical realists like the interpretivists are in consensus that reality is socially constructed hence subjective. Being one of the groups under the post positivists, the interpretivists' standards for a good research neglects the objectivity claims by the positivists since it cannot be achieved. Once that is done, Angen (2000) in Cohen and Crabtree (2006) proposes some criteria, which include well-articulated research questions, a well-written manuscript study report using the persuasive and as interpretive language. Liberal typologies of post positivism criteria for judging quality of research are explained in the subsection below.

2.2.7.6 Post positivists: emancipator paradigm criteria for quality research

As it was earlier pointed out that, the feminists represent liberation groups that see the possibility of research to be used by a few for wrong ends such as exploiting, colonizing, and oppressing the marginalised groups and the majority poor. They call for collaborative action for transformation to construct reality socially. Thus, the criteria for the best piece of study would be the one that at least has the purpose of emancipating women for improving their lives, by raising women's voices. The other current post positivists' paradigm perspective is explicated further.

2.2.7.7 Post positivists: grounded theory criteria for assessing quality studies

The grounded theory studies, fall under the constructivists group of critical post positivists' paradigm. Glaser and Strauss (2003) founded the classical GT version in 1967. However, later the two founders differed, and Strauss and Corbin provided the anti-thesis version opposing the original version on some issues. For Glaser (2003) the validity and reliability of the GT in its traditional sense is not an issue, it has some standards for assessing effectiveness of its research products although not in the sense of positivists' standards. The outlined criteria for judging the grounded theory work as per Glaser includes: fitness, relevance, workability, and modifiability.

Whereas the fitness criterion addresses the issue of how closely the concepts cohere with the claims they represent, the relevance criterion is about whether the study captures respondents' perspectives. Workability criterion addresses the question whether the already made theory is relevant for a study done by means pertaining to GT. For Glaser, GT fits only if it explains the original respondents' perspectives. Finally, it is about the workability criterion meaning that a modifiable theory may be adjusted in case new information tallies with the existing phenomenon. For Glasser, the GT study is neither right nor wrong, rather it is judged only on the criteria of being less correct, viable, and adjustable (Glaser and Strauss, 1967).

The Strauss' and Corbin's (1990) is another classical antithesis version to the original by proposing some criteria for quality GT study in case the study followed the original classical version. Elaborating criteria for evaluating a GT study of Strauss and Corbin, Borgatti (2014) argues that the founders of the antithesis version regarded as; quality of

the study that culminates to a sound GT to be evaluated depending on the process that was followed to produce it. However, that criterion alone is inadequate since the quality of a theory is its ability to explain the new data as the stronger criterion (Borgatti, 2014).

Charmaz' (2006) version while remaining neutral between the said classical authors, propose more criteria for judging a study that follows the GT version. For Charmaz the GT study is of quality in case it fulfils criteria of: credibility, originality, resonance, and usefulness. Clarifying further Charmaz (2006) elaborates that by credibility implies that the study has adequate information supporting claims. By originality, it implies that the study provides fresh lessons, while by resonance it implies that the study results make sense to the respondents' concerns and finally is usefulness in case the study contributes to knowledge.

2.2.7.8 Criteria for judging quality studies of mixed research or eclectic methods

Depending on the chosen mixing, several recipes exist. Some more are on line to happen. However, since the paradigm war and the incompatibility thesis has ended, the consensus reached between scientists of positivism movement and the social scientists of the post positivists' movement about the possibility of the mixed models have emerged. Few are here for clarity. Green *et al.* (1989), Sage (2014) and Bryman (2006), have agreed on the criteria, upon which a person, who has conducted a mixed method design may be judged. That one has to show the level of integration, priority of approaches emphasis, and timing of mixing, where and how the mixture will occur.

Again one has to indicate the strategy, when the mixing will occur, that is whether the mixing will occur during the design, data collection, analysis, and interpretation or at inferential level. Teddlie and Tashakkori (2006) are in consensus with the previous authors on the standards for judging the conducted research based on the mixed methods design. In fact, these authors agree with the former, on integration criteria contending that a study should not be considered mixed in case it lacks integration across stages. However, these authors added their four criteria emphasizing that: one has to ask what design does the criterion answer?

What do possible values exist for mixing strands between qualitative, quantitative, mixed or single design? What design does the criterion answer? One also has to ask, what criterion to use. They add that in studies with mixed methods, where the mixing only occurs at some levels of experiential level of methodology and analysis, then such studies might be assessed based on the criterion of having the quasi mixed methods with a single phase (Teddlie and Tashakkori, 2006).

2.2.7.9 General criteria for assessing reliability and validity of research reports

The assessment criteria in this research report have been well covered, suffice to say that they refer to the established values for judging fairly a certain academic work, be it oral, written tests, examinations, or practical. Addressing the question of what are the criteria for assessing the reliability of the research work, Pons (1992) proposes the principal ideal standards that researchers should meet including: evidence, clarity, free from error, avoiding repetitions, free from bias, consistency, evaluation, and replicable. For evidence criterion, the author implies that the researcher has to support empirical

findings with authoritative support, while by clarity criterion the author implies that evidence alone is inadequate unless the presented work is well defined.

Likewise, the academic work should be controlled in its scope, while its concepts should relate to each other semantically, as well articulated coherently as suggested by Pons, (1992). Other criterion is freedom, which implies the information free from all kind of fallacies. The other is bias criterion, insisting that any research report should be free from exaggerations and stereotypes. Likewise, the criterion of consistency addresses the issue of absence of contradictory ideas. In addition, that it should be articulated coherently. Finally, yet importantly criterion is the ability of the study to be replicated.

Critically speaking, the researcher would argue that some proposed criteria by Pons' would suit all positivists' studies except the last criterion that cannot apply to all kinds of post positivists' studies. Pons criteria may apply but the reliability in the quantitative studies may not always apply to the qualitative studies, instead credibility, transferability as well as dependability are what guide judgement of quality research. Dietel *et al.* (1991) show that the criteria for valid assessment performance bases include consequences, fairness, transfer, cognitive complexity, content quality, coverage, meaningfulness, cost and efficiency.

Those authors elaborate further that while the consequence criterion addresses the assessment aims, results, fairness is about the question whether the assessment empowers the examinees from differing context to illustrate their skills or not. The transfer criterion addresses the question of whether assessment results represent

students' performance across other situations. Whether the assessment measures higher levels of understanding, complex thinking about the criterion of whether transfer of knowledge is either positive or negative. The content quality addresses the question of whether the selected items for assessment are really from content area worthy students' and assessors' time and effort. Whether assessment items are meaningful in motivating students to perform best is about the criterion of meaningfulness. The criteria of the cost consciousness and efficiency address the questions of whether in preparation of assessment tasks, the issue of economy is cared or not (Dietel *et al.*, 1991).

2.3 Some Global Empirical Studies on Paradigm in Research Process

Apart from the conceptual literature, this section reviews global empirical studies related to the research problem. In contrast with the previous section of conceptual reviewed literature, these reviewed studies, were obtained from professional journals and published papers presenting empirical knowledge with a critical eye as follows.

2.3.1 Some related empirical studies representing North America

Presenting a qualitative study about the Ph.D. students' perceptions of the relationship between philosophy and research, Efinger *et al*. (2004) conducted a study in one of the universities of Florida State in North America. Its purpose was to explore the meanings in the experiences among the said students of two courses; philosophy of science and qualitative methods. The constructivism paradigm and the phenomenology philosophy guided that study, while the structured open-ended questions were employed to collect data. The Qualitative Soft Ware (QSRN6) was used to analyse the data. Among the

findings of this study included: the thinking about thinking; the Aha! of me and the never ending journey.

This study revealed that philosophy of science appeared to have value for students in every aspect of their lives contrary to the negative expectation. It also suggested that students were aware of strengths and weaknesses of varying research paradigms that would lead to different as well as new ways of approaching research.

2.3.1.1 Critique

Critically, speaking the study by Efinger *et al*. (2004) has a lot of strengths in relation to this study in the sense that it was about philosophy, which is one of the paradigm underpinnings about varying perspectives of the philosophers like Kuhn (1962), one of the forerunners of the philosophy of science. However, the study falls short by not directly addressing the current raised grand research question, how does researchers' clarity of educational paradigm underpinnings influence dissertation quality performance? As such, there was a need to conduct a study to fill the unfilled gap. Another related study is that of Lovittis (2005) that was conducted in North America.

Its purpose was to facilitate department's disciplines, and universities to develop objective standards for the outcome of doctoral training, dissertations and use such standards at two levels: students and programme level. Such standards did not exist before the results of that study that aimed at addressing their major research question, how do members of universities grade a dissertation for on line scholars. Specifically, it sought to investigate the standards that the faculties employed to evaluate dissertations.

Likewise, it sought to identify the criteria that could inform measures of learning outcomes.

Besides that, it examined indicators of success of research training. Lastly, it compared the existing methods for evaluating the Ph.D. dissertations. The sample of the study involved 276 members from 74 faculty departments across 10 disciplines from 9 universities that participated in the study (Lovittis, 2005). Applying the critical criterion sampling, the researcher targeted faculty assessors, who had produced high number of Ph.Ds in four science disciplines: of pure sciences such as biology, physics, and engineering. Also, members were drawn from, social sciences, and from humanities history, English and philosophy. The researcher used the focused group discussion and interview methods to collect data. One of the findings was that assessors of faculties characterised the dissertations/theses in six components. The first is a statement of the problem, then literature review with epistemological theories, also, research methods, analysis and discussions. It was also found that assessors judged the dissertations quality based on general criteria such as: outstanding, very good, acceptable, and unacceptable. When the members were probed more to elaborate what they meant by outstanding dissertation, the responses indicated that it is the one where a student had an original, well-articulated, synthesized, contributing greatly opening (Lovittis, 2005).

By very good, the respondents meant that a student had a well-organized, less original, with coherent arguments, making a moderate contribution to the knowledge. On the acceptable dissertation, the respondents meant the one, which had illustrated technical skills, showing the ability of the candidate to conduct an independent study, with little

contribution to knowledge. Finally, by unacceptable dissertation the respondents meant, that a student present a poorly written study report, with full of grammatical errors (Lovittis, 2005). The general findings suggested that faculties had no explicit but implicit criteria for assessing dissertations.

Consequently, the faculties instead expected their students to illustrate those standards to emerge transparently in the submitted dissertations. It was suggested to faculties to establish transparent criteria for the noble task of assessing students' dissertations fairly.

2.3.1.2 Critique

The study by Lovittis (2005) has strengths in the sense that first; it is a detailed study on the dissertations in the university, which is said to have paved the way to several universities to begin having objective criteria for assessing the dissertations. When compared to this study it illuminates it greatly. Secondly, that study directly provides the insights to this study on the criteria by the universities about dissertations assessment. However, Lovittis does not address directly the raised problem in this study that is, *how is the researchers' clarity of the explicit research paradigm and its implicit underpinned philosophical conceptions, influencing the dissertation quality performance.*

Substantiating the possibility of triangulation of the qualitative and quantitative methods, within and between methods, the study by Jick and Leonard (1979) was conducted within 14 months at Atlanta in North America among employees. The purpose of the study was to examine the relationship between job security turnover and

its influence on employees. Specifically, the study intended to assess the difference job security had, on employee's quality level, to determine the effects of that job security. In order to practically show the possibility of triangulation, which by then was seen as incompatible, Jick and Leonard illustrated how triangulation between the qualitative methods of interpretivists and surveys from the positivists' paradigms could be conducted without any problem.

These researchers concluded their study saying that quantitative and qualitative strategies have to be seen as complementary, rather than rival camps. The same authors identified two levels at which triangulation is possible within methods" and "between methods." For these researchers triangulation within method refers, to where the researcher conducts the crosschecking of the internal consistency or reliability. This method is seen as weak in social sciences, because of being with a mono phase, when observing the investigated phenomenon. Consequently, the "between method", resolves the said limitation. In this method, the researcher tests the degree of the external validity.

It is again regarded as a conversional way, whereby the researcher may begin a study qualitatively but later on, may quantitise the qualitative results or vice versa where necessary. In this way it is argued that the methods are complementary leading to more valid results being contrary (Jick and Jick, 1979). Illustrating how triangulation model works, same researchers in their study on the effects of a merger on employees investigated the moment, when the workers, were overwhelmed in the state of change of their job security. They began with the analysis of documents, and then next they assessed the sources of signs of fear.

However, basing on the weaknesses found with each method, and on the fact that no single method was sufficient to address all type of questions within the study, the researchers opted for the "combination design." First, in this design the possibility of using direct and indirect (projective) interviews was illustrated to collect self-reports.

Second, the systematised observation too was used to study workers' personal behaviours. The researchers' focus in this study was on feelings and behaviours, direct, indirect, where obtrusive and unobtrusive observations were needed. These varieties were capable of capturing varying viewpoints on the anxiety (Jick and Leonard, 1979).

Third, those researchers too wanted to measure the physiological symptoms from the employees to collect their information about the anxiety. Fourth, surveys were disseminated to a random sample of workers. Fifth, in order to complement the study, the researchers again had a sub sample selected purposively for the semi-structured interviews and probing interviews. Sixth, the archival items such as memos were used too. It was interesting to note that such a combination, which is uncommon among the researchers made the study successful (Jick and Leonard, 1979).

Underscoring the monopoly of the positivists' claims, Jick and Leonard (1979) based on the results of this study by triangulation. It was found that not true that always the quantitative study should be done to complement the qualitative to yield credible findings.

The findings of this study too warranted the possibility of conducting the qualitative information to complement the quantitative data. It was further confirmed from this study that surveys become more meaningful, when they are interpreted in the light of the critical qualitative information. Likewise, Jick and Leonard (1979) proved that the triangulation plays a crucial role for the qualitative evidence in the same weight as quantitative does. Arguing on the controversy whether there is convergence in triangulating between methods, Jick and Leonard (1979) study is an exhibit that triangulation of the study is difficult although it is possible.

Those researchers argued that the triangulation may prove tough in case it lacks adequacy on the combinations. The study resolved the problem of possibility of the convergence when triangulating between the methods from that time. The results of the study confirmed that triangulation produced consistency and convergent results. To prove their point, those researchers raised the question, which every researcher should always ask, which is, do the archival and interviews show relationship in results? Jick's and Leonard's study proved that through the combination of the two high relationships between high turnover rates and job security of workers was strong.

Those proceeded to inquire whether surveys indicated parallel relationship with interviews. The findings of this study too confirmed significant correlation in survey data within a large random sample of employees yielded the results showing employees' narrations. The researchers concluded that their study confirmed several issues. It showed the possibility of triangulating the multiple source of the information. Unlike the dominant habit of obtaining qualitative data to complement the quantitative, that

study showed that a researcher may collect qualitative data first then complement them with quantitative data.

Thus, the study indicated how different measures of the same construct could yield similar results. It was also concluded that the fear of triangulating, which is normally found among purists is due to lack of good guidance about how to do it better. Also, that the fear occurs due to lack of researcher's creativity.

2.3.1.3 Critique

The study by Jick and Leonard (1979) was more or less the same to this study, in the sense that it is about the issue of research among purists' paradigm controversy on the possibility of triangulating positivists' and post positivists' methods smoothly. The study has positive contribution to this study because the researcher of the current study has triangulated between methods from either paradigm depending on the emerging data. However, that study is too old thus needs updating to confirm whether its claims are still valid. Again, the context in which that study was conducted was of employees not related at all with distance learners at OUT as used by this study.

Above all, the study does not address directly the raised question that would show how the researchers' clarity of paradigm influences the dissertation performance. Another related study is that of Anderson (1993) that was done among social and political science students at Alaska University. Its purpose was to investigate on whether there existed the relationship between the self-directed learning and performance. Specifically, that study aimed to determine whether there were possible areas of student individuality, and

uniqueness that might contribute to successful completion of the traditional classroom courses. Its sample was 132 students.

Three survey instruments were used for data collection namely: the learning style inventory, "Gughliel-minos" self-directed learning readiness scale, and a questionnaire. Among the findings of that study were: first, it indicated that there was no statistically significant difference between the number of successful graduates in distance education courses and successful graduates for conversional classroom courses (Anderson, 1993). Secondly, the study suggested that areas of learning style and learning readiness had no effects on the successful completion rates of students enrolled in distance education courses as compared to students enrolled in traditional classrooms courses. Third, the study confirmed the positive results confirming that there exists significant relationship between self-directed learning and academic performance.

2.3.1.4 Critique

The study by Anderson (1993) in comparison to this study has some strength in that it is related with one aspect of this study by dealing with non-formal learners. However, it differs sharply from this study in its purpose, sample size, and employed methods. Much more, that study as well, falls short of not addressing directly the emerged questions in this study; on how does the researchers' clarity of educational paradigm underpinnings influence the dissertation quality performance at all?

2.3.2 Some related empirical studies representing Asia

Daniel and Yosoff (2005) presented the detailed research paper about the study that was conducted in Malaysia on the observed confusion about the wrongly perceived emerging research paradigms. The purpose of that study was to explore the emerging mixed research approaches between the traditional positivists' quantitative and the recipe of interpretivists' qualitative sub paradigms opted by inexperienced researchers. It was conducted among the postgraduate researchers of the M.A and PhD. degree programs at the University of Malaya in Malaysia. Specifically, the study sought to identify the push factors leading to the emerging of the sub new paradigm within existing major paradigms.

The data were collected by means of open-ended questionnaires within six encounters conducted during postgraduate students' research seminars on qualitative research. In order to achieve their aim, the researchers conducted interviews with students, who were presenting their proposals, lecturers of those seminars. The analysis of dissertations was also done, followed by the focused discussion among the said students. Precisely, the study revealed that two great category of paradigms within the traditional are emerging in Malaysia. One is that of employing traditional interpretive paradigm to collect subjective information and then to regard such a study as qualitative.

Secondly, some experienced and inexperienced researchers have commenced to do studies by employing their own innovation of blending the research methods with push factors and regard the results for the blended methods as the qualitative study.

Consequently, there emerged “sub paradigms” along the traditional qualitative paradigm, which according to the researchers of that study have caused confusion in Malaysia universities. Among the results for this study included: the main push factors causing such misconceptions between the positivists and “interpretivists” paradigms rigor, which emerged with higher frequency in all four study encounters.

The other factors, obtained in the fifth and sixth encounters, were associated with the formulation of the research specific objectives in line with questions, and the choice of appropriate study instruments. Other minor factors were those related to students’ needs and anxieties of not performing better during presentations. More elaboration of the findings indicated that the trend of the post positivists’ mixed methods paradigm is fast growing in popularity in Malaysia universities. This was despite different researchers being oriented in different foundations other than the interpretive paradigm rigor from various fields, something, which was thought to be a credible major cause to the extent of causing confusion.

The following is a summary of the detailed researchers’ critical analysis indicating several lessons that illuminate this study. The critical analysis revealed that one of the fast-growing emerging paradigms in Malaysia was, where researchers think the qualitative research equates with the mixture of the quantitative and qualitative measures in their data collection without a proper rationale. Daniel and Yosoff (2005) oppose to regard such blended methods as the qualitative study at all, since they amount to the misconception of what really the qualitative implies unless justified. In order to exhibit

the confusion, these researchers drew six cases of the presented M.A and PhD students' research proposals and reports.

In the first M.A presentation, a student decided to use the mixed methods from pure qualitative paradigm. However, such student lacked the rhetoric language used in the rigor of the qualitative study. It was expected that the student's qualitative approach would have involved any kind of prolonged engagement with the respondents in the natural field settings, and probing them, such features lacked. The second case was, where Daniel and Yosoff (2005) attended the presentation of another M.A. student, who was presenting the research proposal, during the first qualitative research convention, at the same University of Malaya, in August, 2001.

The observers heard the student saying…*I used a random sample in my qualitative study based on traditional ideas of qualitative research, so my study was qualitative…* (Daniel and Yosoff, 2005). Critically, the researchers questioned the randomasation in the claimed qualitative study with a poor rationale of doing so. The researchers argue that by randomising, the researcher would lose the chance to obtain the qualitative data from the real natural setting being investigated based on the respondent's context rather than from imposed perspective. The student in discussion thought randomasation means to seek width rather than depth that the qualitative study is always interested in.

As the result, the committee rejected the student's abstract outright, since it was unsuitable to qualitative study criterion. The researchers' observation from the M.A student of the second encounter revealed the misnomer of another widespread emerging

paradigm among inexperienced researchers. This is when student researchers' misconception is to think that by positivists' randomasation rigor the study is promoted to be the qualitative study. The third encountered case was that study, which signified the misconception was where the researchers witnessed the vetting of the Ph.D. candidate's proposal presentation in December, 2002.

That candidate was heard saying …I shall employ documentary, focused groups, observation, and interview to collect data, so my study will be purely qualitative… (Daniel and Yosoff, 2005). The researchers argue that by such mixing there would be no problem since the rigor is proper. However, the problem is the thinking trend of mixing a certain category of the qualitative methods alone would make the study qualitative or quantitative without knowing that the study may start as qualitative despite the employed method, and turn to be quantitative as the study unfolds. Critically, the researchers say this is also confusion, which is regular among the student researchers in Malaya for equating the use of qualitative research techniques as a warrant for justifying a study as qualitative research.

It is rationalised further that the fact that one employs the qualitative techniques does not necessarily follow that the study remains purely qualitative. It all depends, on how the methods are used to get rich and in-depth data. Unless one has followed the qualitative rigorous procedure such as: probing to get detailed information, the study may fail to remain pure qualitative. Likewise, the longer time taken to engage with respondents in the context of the investigation, promotes the study to be qualitative one. Besides the above identified confusions, the study revealed that students were confused

in distinguishing between the administration of the unstructured open-ended questionnaires and the structured ones.

The critics advise the student researchers not to regard the administered questionnaires despite meeting respondents face to face, as a tool for collecting the qualitative interviews. The other illustrative confusion was the tendency of the researchers to propose the collection of the qualitative information by pre scheduled observation list, with things to be observed. This practice too, is criticised by researchers in the sense that the predetermined tool for observation removes the sense of the natural setting; should be observed without manipulative ways of the positivists. Prior scheduled lists one has to make the researchers to collect the information they only want to see and serious omit the escaped relevant data.

By so doing the researcher loses the naturally emerging qualitative data as they actually happen in the field. The researchers cement further that the effective qualitative study depends among other things on the type of the questions to be asked, while addressing the research problem. The fourth encountered case was that, which confirmed further the misconception push factor is where the researchers observed difficulties among student researchers in the analysis of qualitative data. It was further learnt that there is a growing tendency among student researchers of avoiding the active role of the researcher during the entire process of the qualitative study.

The observed students were found proposing the use of software like the NUDIST unnecessarily instead of the manual analysis of the qualitative data where appropriate.

The presenters thought by so doing they would speed up the analysis of the qualitative data as the SPSS software does for the quantitative data. The researchers critically argue that, this software tool was incapable of replacing the role of the researcher as a main instrument in collecting, analyzing the qualitative data, especially, where the themes could have been identified by the researcher. The researchers opine that the analysis of the qualitative data should normally not wait for software intervention at the last hour to start the analysis.

Instead the analysis should go hand in hand from the first stage of collecting the qualitative data and proceed to the last hour of data collection (Daniel and Yosoff, 2005). The fifth and the sixth encountered cases were on the triangulation possibility controversy. In the 5th encounter Daniel and Yosoff (2005) observed another Ph.D. student researcher presenting his thesis in August, 2003. This encounter provided the other push factor for the emergence of the sub paradigms. They witnessed the student researcher claiming, to have collected data through face-to-face interviews done among 10 sampled respondents followed by observations, to support the quantitative data done among 400 sampled research respondents.

Accordingly, these researchers wondered as well arguing that this is another emerging paradigm, where the majority of students claim to have conducted the qualitative data in Malaya University. It was also learnt that the student researchers are fond of triangulating quantitative with qualitative data at the level of the paradigm rather than the lower level of the methods and other sampling strategies.

The researchers see the possibility of triangulation in uniting different data that have been collected through different strategies or methods for a single paradigm. However, they doubt the possibility of triangulating data in the same study at the level of differing paradigms.

The researchers ended up with the 6th encountered case that provided another push factor for the said emerged confusion. This was where the student researcher triangulated data between differing methods and within methods by the grounded theory method. However, what the student described in the findings was not reflected in the narratives of what happened in the field, when using the grounded theory for the claimed qualitative study. It was found that this student lacked description of the constant comparison and contrast processes on the collected categories of data gathered by purely qualitative techniques from the same context of the observed reality, instead of the claimed GT rigor.

The thesis of the 6th case student lacked clarity on number of issues. His thesis lacked clarity on number of issues. First the study did not reflect what was proclaimed prior in the methodological part of the qualitative rigor in the sense of having thick and rich descriptions. The researchers opine that in order for the triangulated data from methods of the same paradigm to be valid, the presented data should be descriptive showing the holistic picture of what was studied on the observed phenomenon. Conclusively, the researchers joined with anthropologists to refute the impossibility of correlating quantitative and qualitative data in the same study at the level of paradigm.

Summarily, the findings indicated that in Malaysia there are pseudo growing sub paradigms along the traditional ones, which are equated to the qualitative paradigm. The four discovered push factors for the confusion or the emerging pseudo paradigms included: the misconceptions, confusion on sampling techniques between purposive versus randomisation, without rationale, irrational triangulation, and lack of qualitative rigour.

2.3.2.1 Critique

The Malaysian case studies have strengths, when compared and contrasted to this study, in the sense that it has a lot of issues related to clarity of paradigm underpinnings. The multi case studies confirmed the possible misconceptions of several issues that emerge on attempt to opt the mixed designs approach especially on the paradigm rigor, not only among the M.A but also among Ph.D, candidates. The researcher also argues critically that some of the observers' criticisms are justified on the rationale of the push factors for the confusion of the paradigm issue in the academic research field especially among the inexperienced researchers.

However, to the researcher some of the criticisms fall short of aligning much with the purists' qualitative interpretivists' paradigm. This is because Daniel and Yosoff are wondering on the issues that have been resolved on the incompatibility of triangulating methods within and between the data two decades ago. However, this study despite its greater lessons it falls short of its researchers, who are not aware of Jicks and Leonard's (1979), Teddlie and Tashakkori's (2006), Sage's (2014) and Creswell's (2003) findings

and suggestions of these research experts. The experts have warranted the possible range of recipe for the mixed research designs.

Above all, it was conducted abroad among conversional university distance learners' in a context different from that of Tanzania. Overall, the study by Daniel and Yosoff (2005) cannot effectively address the current raised question was, how is researchers' clarity of educational explicit research paradigm and its implicit underpinned philosophical conceptions influences the dissertations quality performance at all among the learners by studied universities. Hence, there was a need to conduct this study.

2.3.3 Related empirical studies representing Europe

Several studies have been done among distance learners in the worldwide open universities. One of these studies is that of the Hellenic Open University (HOU) in Greece (Panagiotakoupoulos and Vergidis, 2004). It was a survey study that was carried among the students, who were enrolled in the undergraduate course of informatics and the postgraduate M.A students in education, identified with the high dropout rates. The purpose of the study was to examine the root causes of students' increase rate in dropout. Specifically, the study sought to establish the extent at which students dropped out, assess the student related and non-related reasons for the dropout.

Last, was to identify the reasons that interrupted students' studies to the extent of dropping out. The sample of the study was drawn from students enrolled in the two courses. A survey was a method for data collection, while the comparative analysis method was used to collect data. It was found by the study that open universities in the

world were established to solve educational and re-educational needs of adult learners and workforce by giving a high level of learning as confirmed in (Keegan 1993; Evance and Lockwood, 1994). It was also found that the open universities are guided by the philosophy of lifelong learning conducted in the distance mode, basically varies from conventional universities, whose major objectives is academic learning.

It was also found by the study that; the two different courses between the undergraduate and postgraduate were found with considerable similarities and differences in terms of percentages on the reasons triggering the increase in dropout rates. Gender was not found as significant role in causing students to interrupt or to discontinue their studies. However, candidates between 30 and 39 years of age were the most vulnerable because they were trying to balance their studies and home chores. The study too found out that most of the learners at Hellenic Open University (HOU) were the employed workers. Yet, no statistically significant was shown on whether being employed was a factor or not.

The study also revealed comparative results that the undergraduate students in the course of Informatics had twice as many dropouts compared to their counterparts in the postgraduate of the same dropout cases from studies in education. This finding suggested the possibility of undergraduate students to drop out more than the postgraduate level. It was recommended that tutors should recognise, which students' groups were prone to drop out problem so that they would encourage and support such victims of the said problem by paying attention to their needs during the first half of the first academic year.

Finally, it was recommended that tutors should provide support and encourage all students regardless of the course they teach while prioritizing to students, who show the sign of being discourage (Panagiotakoupoulos and Vergidis, 2004).

2.3.3.1 Critique.

The comparative study of Panagiotakoupoulos and Vergidis (2004) has strengths, when it is compared with this study by dealing with the issues of education such as dropout among both distance learners in undergraduate and the postgraduate programs. However, that study differs from this one, in terms of their purposes. While this study is explorative in nature as it aimed at coming up with the grounded theory that would explain how the researchers' clarity for educational research paradigm underpinnings influence the dissertation performance, the former study is comparative in nature with quite different purpose compared to this study.

While this study used the constructivists' GT exploratory design the Vergidis' study used the comparative survey design. So far, Vergidis' study does not address grand question in this study on how the researchers' clarity of the educational research paradigm underpinnings influence the dissertation performance. That being the case, this study was done to specifically address such a gap.

2.3.4. Czechoslovakian.

Starr-Glass and Ali (2012) in Czech Republic did another study. It was about double standards in assessing dissertations. The researchers examined the Czech students from

undergraduate accredited American college degrees in the state universities, in which dissertation writing skills is a part of the course. The researchers were in consensus that assessment process is a part of pedagogical beliefs and axiological components regarded as paradigm. The researchers found out that there exist competing and conflicting paradigms, which dominate educational evaluation of dissertations.

2.3.4.1 Critique

This study has strengths in relation to this study, in the sense that it reports about double standards in assessment of dissertations in relation to pedagogical issues and paradigm axiological perspectives on values. However, it focused only at one part of paradigm, focusing on values and educational issues. It was less interested on relating how holistic paradigm properties relate to increase of dissertations low quality passes, completion, and low graduation rates at Master's degree level, hence the need of this study.

2.3.5 Related empirical studies representing United Kingdom

The other study Bloxham *et al.* (2011) investigated the gap between UK policy practices in relation to the use of set criteria for allocating grades. Critically, the researchers used interviews to study twelve lecturers on the role of set criteria in assessing learners' assignments. The researchers found that tutor assessors used holistic approach rather than analytical judgement. Second they found that a good number of those assessors were not using the written criteria during the marking of examinations and assignments.

2.3.5.1 Critique

The study by Bloxham *et al.* (2011) has strengths in relation to this study, in the sense that it was about issues of dissertations revealing how assessors may mark assignments without following given criteria for assessment. However, it falls short of addressing the current raised question was, how is researchers' clarity of the explicit research paradigms with its implicit underpinned philosophical conceptions associated to the dissertations low quality passes, completion, and low graduation rates in the studied universities at all.

2.3.6 Related empirical studies representing Australia

Apart from the above presented studies Nightingale (1984) conducted a study about examiners' comments of 58 theses in Australian universities. The purpose of this study was to investigate on how different assessors assessed and detailed their comments on the dissertation from different universities. Before the study that researcher was dissatisfied with how examiners assessed and gave the comments for her own thesis. The findings for that study suggested that examiners required detailed criteria rather than the short statements to assess on what the PhD, theses ought to illustrate as to adequately and originally to contribute knowledge. The researchers recommended that the standards at which the university theses were assessed needed to be clarified, so that the assessors get light to give detailed comments with specification varying across universities.

2.3.6.1 Critique

The study by Nightingale (1984) has a lot of strengths, when it is compared with this study. The study dealt directly with the University assessment of theses just as the researcher of this study also has done. However, despite this strength it was done 31 years ago hence not a good reference for the current problem since lot of changes has taken place in universities globally. Second, that study has not directly addressed the grand question in this study on how researchers' clarity of the paradigm underpinnings influences the dissertation performance at all. As such, there was a need to conduct another study to fill the identified gap in the Nightingale's study.

2.4 Related Empirical Studies representing Africa

Africa universities have not lagged behind in the studies about the assessment of the research among the distance learners.

2.4.1 Nigeria

Another study is that of Olakulehin and Ojo (2008) about factors for completion of the dissertations by students of the postgraduate diploma (PGDE) by distance learning conducted in South Western at the Open University of Nigeria (OUN). It had a purpose of determining factors as to why a lot of postgraduate distance learners failed to complete their dissertations although they had completed their course works. Specifically, Olakulein and Ojo sought to investigate the contributory reasons for the late completion of the dissertation reports by postgraduate learning students in Nigeria.

The researchers of the said study applied the structured questionnaire designed on a five point of the Likert's scale, to capture opinions of some postgraduate distance learners about the reasons affecting their completion of their research reports. The study used the simple percentages in the analysis of the collected data. The findings of the study were that: many respondents were found with the problem of statistical analysis. Likewise, the study suggested that some were faced with problem of identifying suitable research topics and supervisors. The study suggested the way forward for improving the situation.

2.4.1.1 Critique

This study has strengths in the light of this study. First, it was concerned with postgraduate issues although at a level diploma level. Secondly, it was done in the Open University context similar to this study although in a different country in Africa. Thirdly, it dealt with the similar topic of the underperformance in searching the problem leading to late completion of the dissertation in the desired time. However, that study falls short in contrast with this study, because it was done at lower level compared to the current, which was at M.A. level. So far, the study did not focus on the clarity of paradigm as a potential factor that might trigger the delay to complete the dissertation a reason for delays in graduation among distance learners.

Ojo *et al.* (2007) also conducted another study about the evaluation of assessment methods on how it correlates with the quality assurance and certification standards in the Open and Distance Learning (ODL) institutions. Its purpose was to explore administrators' perceptions, educational stakeholders, prospective employers, admission officers had, on the graduates of the Open universities in sub-Saharan in

particular Nigeria. Specifically, the study examined the various assessment structures applied in place for the ODL universities with intention to come up with the applicable criteria for assessing the quality. The study vied to fill the gap that existed for the studies among the ODL universities in Nigeria by then with the other objectives as follows.

First, was to assess the course content, second the certificates that were awarded by the ODL learning institutions and the third was to assess the heads of varying foundations that employ the graduates of the sampled ODL institutions in Nigeria. The researcher of the said study used the survey method to collect data. The respondents were randomly selected from students of the three selected distance learning institutions and heads of various institutions. Two different structured questionnaires were administered, likewise analysed by using the appropriate statistical software package. The questionnaires were supported by oral interviews among staff members from the studied institutions.

The findings suggested that distance education mode in the Sub Saharan Africa is spreading highly and has already become a culture with recorded success. However, the study found that respondents were in doubts regarding the quality of certificates of graduates from the ODL universities. Consequently, the studied respondents about the ODL mode of learning did not hastate to rank the ODL graduates' products as second in the quality, when compared with those graduates from the conversion universities. When the respondents were probed to elaborate their supposition, the majority showed that there was probable cheating compared to those from conversion universities since in their opinions, they are closely monitored. Finally, the study achieved its objectives

of filling the knowledge gap about the ODL universities in the sub Saharan ODL institutions (Ojo *et al.,* 2007).

2.4.1.2 Critique

The study by Ojo *et al.* (2007) is in line with this study since it was done in the context of ODL. Secondly, the study has raised the issue of doubts on the credibility and acceptability of the graduates from the ODL institutions to the employers and other educational stakeholders. However, the said study is too general without specifying the level of the university graduates as if it studied all undergraduates and postgraduates' acceptability. The researcher argues that by over generalizing, these researchers committed logical fallacy of presumptions with overgeneralization.

2.4.2 Tanzania

In Tanzania, some efforts have been done in conducting studies in universities. One of the studies is that of Vuzo and Msoka (2012) addressing the poor language as an obstacle for delivery of secondary school education through distance learning. Its purpose was to explore hurdles against the effective secondary school education by distance learning. Specifically, the study intended to examine the secondary school distance learners' ability to interpret instructions as well as questions presented in language used as Language of Instructions (LOI). The second objective was to investigate the secondary distance learners' ability o to express their ideas appropriately; third was to identify learners' views on the language used as LOI for secondary distance learning.

The sample for the study was 72, whereby 12 were teachers and 60 were students. The questionnaires were administered to students and interviews to tutors. The results indicated that 46 (76.67%) out of 60 learners in the study faced the problem of interpreting and expressing themselves in English language. The findings were confirmed by 12(100%) out of 12 teachers, who agreed that actually a good number of students faced numerous language problems especially, when interpreting the instructions and the resulting questions for examination.

2.4.2.1 Critique

The study of Msoka and Vuzo (2012) has strengths when compared with this one; it relates with the seventh paradigm underpinning of rhetorical language. Second, it was conducted among distance learners at the level of secondary schools. However, Msoka and Vuzo's study (2012) was conducted at the lower level of secondary schools, which is not the level of concerns for this study. In addition, that study does not address the central question by this study on how does researchers' clarity of educational paradigm influence the dissertation quality performance among the post graduate level at OUT?

The other related study from Tanzania is that of Kikula and Qorro (2007) about the common mistakes in the research proposals committed by applicants of research funded at the Research in Poverty Alleviation (REPOA) institute. It is reported that a total of 783 applicants' proposals were submitted for funding research in poverty alleviation at REPOA, between 1996 and 2004 as Table 2.2 indicates.

Table 2.2: Proposals Acceptance Rate from 1996 to 2004

Category	Number	%
Proposals accepted outright	39	16
Proposal accepted with minor revisions	59	25
Proposals accepted with major revisions	51	21
Proposals rejected	91	38
Total analysed proposals	**240**	**100**

Source: Kikula and Qorro (2007)

The general trend in Table 2.2 reveals that out of the analysed 240 proposals only 39 proposals (16%), were accepted outright for funding, while the majority 91 proposals (38%) were rejected for funding. The same study throws insights about the acceptance rate by academic qualifications of authors. The researchers sampled only 240 for their analysis out of 783 proposals. It was found out that 342 authors wrote the sampled proposals for analysis. The study revealed that of these authors, 121 (35.38%) held Ph.D., the majority 178 (52.7%) held Masters degrees and 43 (12.57%) held basic degrees as revealed in the (Table, 2.2).

In the same study Kikula and Qorro found out the extent, to which the academic author's qualifications had a bearing on the acceptance rate of the said proposals were submitted to REPOA (Table, 2.2). In order to achieve the aim of the study, the proposals in the sample were categorized and tallied based on the author's qualifications. So, out of 240 sampled proposals written by 342 authors, 121 (35.38%) proposals were written by authors, who held Ph.Ds, 178 held Masters degrees (52.78%) and 43 held basic degrees (12.57%). Table 2.2 throws light on the trend of acceptance rates for each category.

Table 2.1 throws light on the trend of acceptance rates for each category, which the M.A degree graduates' proposals applying the fund for research on poverty alleviation, had the highest rate of errors, then those of Bachelors and PhDs degree holders. Based on the analysed data the question raises; if the situation of the quality of application of knowledge in terms of funded research proposals is like this among the graduates, who are taught in conversional universities through a face-to-face mode, then how is the situation among the graduates by distance learners? This requires the study to compare the two. Table 2.3 summarizes the proposals that were accepted and then grouped by qualifications criterion.

Table 2.3: Proposals Acceptance Rate by Qualifications

Category	PhD		Masters		Basic Degrees	
	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%
Accepted outright	20	16	40	22	4	9
Accepted with minor corrections	42	34	56	32	9	21
Accepted with major corrections	28	23	35	20	13	30
	31	25	47	26	17	
	121	**100**	**178**	**100**	**43**	**100**
Rejected	40				Total Analysed	

Source: Kikula and Qorro (2007)

Based on Table 2.3 the researchers indicate that among 121 authors with Ph.D, only 20 (16%) had their proposals accepted outright. Regarding the holders of Master's degree, out of 178 only 40 (22%) had their proposals accepted outright. While for basic degree holders only 4 (9%) had their proposals accepted outright. Although the data indicate that M.A. degrees acceptance of the proposals reads the highest, yet the number of the rejected proposals 138 (47%) of M.A was the highest too (Table, 2.3). This was contrary to the expectation of researchers. Surprisingly, the Ph.D. holders lagged behind the M.A degree holders in their proposals being accepted for funding.

2.4.2.2 Critique

The Kikula and Qorro (2007) study has strengths in the light of this study which include: application of graduates' learnt skills in research in different endeavours of life away from the academics. It is unique in its own in revealing the quality of the graduates from Tanzania universities in the area of research for poverty alleviation. Secondly, it gives insights for the researcher to change the plan of studying the writing of the academic proposals as initially intended by the researcher and switched to study dissertations quality. However, the study did not compare contexts of paradigm clarity in the studied convention, open, and distance learning graduates. Again, it focuses mainly on the research proposals for funding rather than academics where the two have different style of writings and objectives to be assessed.

So far, the study was less concerned with addressing the raised question for this study on how the researchers' clarity for educational paradigm components influences the dissertation performance. The other comprehensive study is that of Rwejuna (2013) which has identified several factors hindering students' completion timely at OUT. The study provided some insights about the general factors for under graduation mainly at the under graduate level. The said study aimed at examining the factors influencing retention and delays in completion rates. The researcher of the said study used the traditional mixed methods design, whereby the qualitative approach strategies were complemented by some data from the quantitative. Among the findings the DRPS delays, the appointment of the supervisors for supervising students at M.A level, the greater number of respondents 43 out of 146 (50%) agreed to be the case (Rwejuna, 2013).

2.4.2.3 Critique

Critically speaking the study by Rwejuna (2013) has strengths, when it is compared and contrasted with this one in the sense that it has a lot of similarities in identifying factors for an increase of underperformance in retention and graduation rates at OUT. However, its shortcomings include first, it addressed factors affecting OUT students in a general manner. It focused much on the graduate but failed to focus on issues of foundation of conceptions of educational research as potential factors that affect the quality of dissertations by undergraduate land graduates. The second shortcoming is the fact that, it did not address the central concern raised by this research regarding the researchers' paradigm conceptions clarity and its influence on dissertation quality performance.

The other study is that conducted by Anangisye (2007) reporting about "Teacher Misdemeanours in Tanzania: in relation to the methodological issues and interpretations for data generation. In view of this researcher, one needs to be informed of philosophy of research before embarking on education research undertakings. The researcher concludes that the methodological issues in the qualitative tradition begin with the conception of a research agenda. This study has strengths but it falls short of not directly addressing the emerged question by this study. Another study is from the Open University of Tanzania Quality Assurance and Control Directorate (OUT QACD, 2014).

The OUT commissioned the vetting team to critically examine its submitted theses and dissertations that are archived in its libraries in 2014, to determine whether the DRPS, candidates, and the supervisors followed the established values for quality dissertations.

Likewise, the aim was to determine whether those research reports after the EEs' critiques are suitable for the academicians' public consumption or not. The vetting team used the documentary and critical analysis approaches to conduct the study. Among the findings by the vetting team are in three groups. The dissertations that were found with shortfalls associated with supervisors, some with shortfalls associated with students' failures to produce quality works and those that had shortfalls associated with failure to produce proper lists of references.

A good number of dissertations that fall under the first group for not following the OUT quality may be said to relate to axiological underpinnings of not adhering to the values or regulations of OUT. For instance, some candidates' dissertation titles exceeded 20 words contrary to what OUT directs. Likewise, some a few students submitted dissertations without supervisors' signature and such dissertations are in the library. The researchers wondered how such dissertations were able to escape the eye of the DRPS quality control fellows. The second group is of the dissertations that were found with the problem associated with rhetoric and epistemological underpinnings errors, such as incorrectness and inconsistencies on citations and references writing without following suggested APA style suggested by OUT procedure for publications (OUT QACD, 2014).

In the third group, students used improper way of punctuating marks such as: full stops, commas, colons, and brackets when writing the list of references and texts within the contents of the dissertations the sign that thorough editing was not done. The problem of punctuations is grammatical hence relating to rhetorical paradigm underpinning. Lack

of thorough editing relates to the axiological paradigm underpinning. The vetting team concluded the study that a good number of theses and dissertations from both programmes of M.A and Ph.D, complied with the relevant university guidelines and regulations to the extent that the team recommended remain in the library for public use. The team also identified dissertations that were so poor in quality and recommended not to appear in the OUT library.

2.4.2.4 Critique

Critically speaking the study of OUT QACD (2014) has strengths and limitations, when compared with this study. First, the study is timely in line with the problem of this thesis. Second, that study is about the quality of the dissertations at both levels of postgraduate that is M.A and Ph.D's, although this study is about the M.A level alone. Third, implicitly some of the study findings directly relate to research paradigm underpinnings some related to epistemological source of knowledge like reference and citations problem. Some findings related to the axiological paradigm underpinning such as not following OUT guidelines.

Nevertheless, that study falls short for not addressing the general question by this study on how does researchers' clarity for educational research paradigm underpinnings influence the dissertation quality among the postgraduate candidates by distance mode?

2.5 Emerged Knowledge Gaps

A comprehensive literature review in chapter two presented the related conceptual and empirical literature thoroughly and critically about what is already known. The historical

roots of tracing the two constructs namely: clarity and paradigm were presented. It emerged that the clarity scope concept consists of four elements: definition, scope semantic relationship, and coherent articulation (Suddaby, 2010). Likewise, different authors have differed on what constitutes paradigm. While some have seen it with three constructs: ontology, epistemology and methodology (OEM), some have seen it with four components: philosophy, ontology, epistemology and methodology (POEM).
The researcher of this study is of the view that these models of OEM and POEM have neglected the axiology, logic, and rhetorical issues that emerged in this review.

It was argued in this review in Chapter two that the researcher's thorough reading indicates that the paradigm is composed of the seven components: philosophy, ontology, epistemology, methodology, axiology, logic and rhetoric language (POEMALOR). In line with the emerged research objectives and questions, the researcher synthesized the two constructs of paradigm to guide the organisation of the entire literature review after the arrival from the field.

However, what is not known is unaddressed general research question, *how is researchers' clarity of the educational research paradigm philosophical conceptions a factor among factors influencing alteration of quality completion for dissertations, final grades, and graduation rates performance?* Whether the context of two studied universities of UDSM and OUT ground the candidate researchers to clarify research paradigm explicitly and holistically as (POEMALOR) considering its definition, denoting, scope, semantic relationship, as well as coherence assumptions, to warrant the writing of the winning dissertations was not known before this study.

The data from the field of one of the studied universities show that little is known on whether candidates are able to clearly explain educational research paradigm underpinnings as required by OUT DRPS in EEAFs (2004-2014) on sub theme 6.3.1. Whether researchers are coherently articulating the paradigm construct holistically as POEMALOR in their dissertations is also inadequately known. All these issues aimed to establish what the conceptual and empirical literatures say about how the paradigm components may influence the dissertation performance among distance learners.

Finally, whether the researchers' clarity of paradigm conceptions influences alteration of dissertations final score grades, completion of dissertations, and graduation rates was as well inadequately reported. The reviewed empirical literature was drawn from continents across the globe: North America, Africa, Asia, Australia, and Europe, since the writing of the dissertation is a nomenclature of universities worldwide, be it of the conventional or open and distance modes. The researcher consulted 13 studies to illuminate the emerged conceptual categories and the research knowledge gap.

Each reviewed study is backed by the critical analysis looking at the strengths and weaknesses. Among the most related studies as well as theoretical sources. The studies included; Jick and Leonard (1979), Nightingale (1984), Moses (1984), Green *et al*. (1989), Anderson (1993, Sigalla (1996), Williams (1998), Hamnaad (2000), Mauch and Park (2003), Efinger *et al*. (2004) and Lovittis (2005). Besides those others are Panagiotakoupoulos and Vergidis (2004), Daniel and Yosoff (2005), Bates (2005), Dash (2005), Bitchner and Basturkmen (2006), Bryman (2006), Cheesman *et al.* (2006);

Olakulehin *et al*. (2007), Drennan and Clarke (2009), Bitchner and Basturkmen (2006) and Fidzani (2006).

Others are Anangisye (2007), Kikula and Qorro (2007); Selwyn (2007), Lumadi,

(2008), Ojo (2008), OUT (2008 and 2009, Rwegoshora (2009), Taras (2009), Schultz (2010); Vine (2009), Biggs and Tang (2011). Others are Bloxham *et al.* (2011), Fersten and Reda (2011), Mudavanhu and Zezekwa (2011), Creswell (2012), Kairembo and Mwereke (2012), as well as Starr-Glass and Ali (2012). Besides those, others were: Vuzo and Msoka (2012), Armstrong (2013), Eslami (2013), Khan (2013), Mayer and Lunnay (2013), Sammons and Bakkum (2013), Muogbo (2013), Charmaz (2014), OUT QACD (2014), Rwegoshora (2014), Sage (2014), Fan and Vos cited in Azila-Ghetttor *et al.* (2015).

The conceptual and empirical literature review indicated that the researchers' clarity of educational research paradigm underpinnings in relation to increase dissertations low quality passes, completion, and low graduation rates has been understudied. The knowledge gap became apparent that there was inadequate grounded theory explanation of how the researchers' clarity of explicit paradigm and its philosophical conceptions, might be a potential contributory factor among factors in influencing the increase of the underperformance scenarios among Masters learners by distance mode at OUT.

Much more, there was paucity of explanatory information that addressed the emerged general research question for this study, *how does the researchers' clarity of the educational explicit research paradigm and its implicit underpinned philosophical*

conceptions influence the dissertations quality performance? Consequently, there emerged such a knowledge gap, which prompted the need to bridge them by conducting this study about; *Researchers' Clarity of Educational Research Paradigm Philosophical Conceptions factor influencing Dissertation*

Quality Performance among Masters Learners in Tanzania studied Universities: Grounded Theory Perspective.

2.6 Conceptual Framework

In the constructivists' Grounded Theory (GT) studies, the researcher is advised to shy away from preconceived plans, schedules, and borrowed theoretical models(Charmaz, 2006). Instead, the researcher having arrived in the field should schedule aconceptual framework fitting the observed phenomenon. Building on this understanding, the researcher constructed the conceptual framework as per emerged core latent variables also known as categories from the field as illustrated in Figure 2.1.

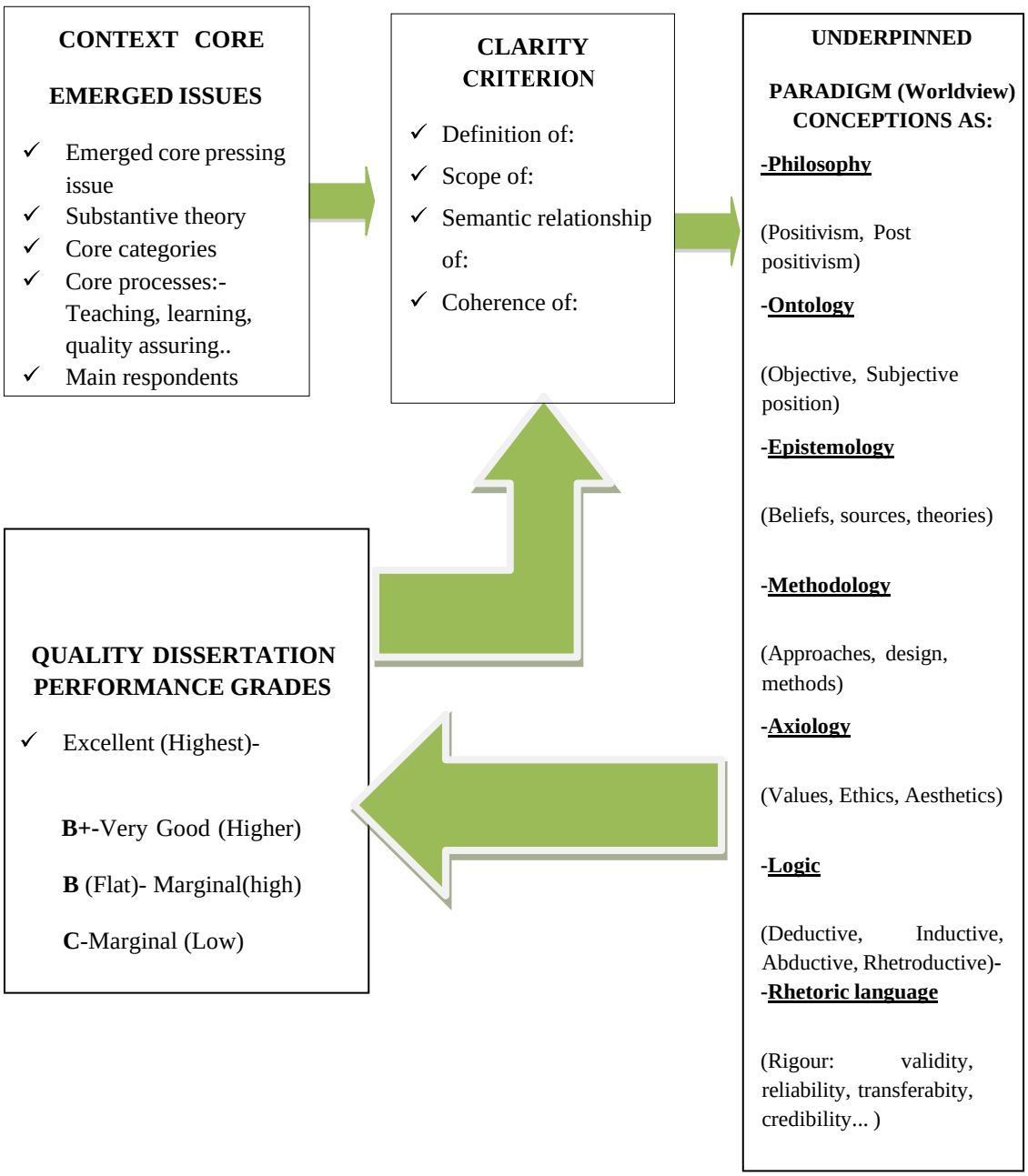

Figure:2.1: Paradigm Conceptions Clarity Influencing Dissertation Performance

From Figure 2.1, one sees four constructed boxes connected with logical flow arrowselaborating, how logically the researcher went about in conducting a study leading to the generation of fresh hypotheses and Grounded Theory (GT) as a product at theend of this

study. Normally, the studies using the GT studies do not proceed linearly but in a zigzag or cyclical way as the fourth arrow reveals in Figure 2.1. The logical arrows begin from the context Box1, via Box 2 and Box 3, while the fourth arrow points back to Box 2, a sign of cyclical rather than linear process (Figure 2.1).

In Figure 2.1, Box 1 contains the four emerged initial latent variables also known as construct categories. The emerged construct categories relate to study objective one and its exploratory initial guiding questions, which sought to examine if the studied universities teach explicit paradigm and its implicit philosophical underpinned conceptions. The initial categories became conceptual tools, which informed the researcher about, major processes, how to proceed with a study, and about what to doin the next the second phase of data collection for the initial phase of data collection. Likewise, the initial core construct categories, gave the researcher themes fromwhere to begin.

These latent variables or construct categories had to emanate from the raised exploratory questions for objective 1(i a, ib, ic, and id) as per GT nomenclature. The exploratory initial questions included; what was a core pressing issue in the studied context? What core dominant concepts and construct categories, emerged from the studied context? Who were the major respondents related to the studied phenomenon

context? What were core emerging core processes? This was why the emerged thematic core categories were: (ia) core pressing issue, (ib) core categories (ic) main respondents, and (id) emerged core processes in the studied universities context.

The rationales for beginning with initial sought four core issues from initial raised guiding questions was because the constructivism GT nomenclature demands the exploration of four elements in the studied context before proceeding. The second rationale was because of researcher's option to use pragmatism philosophy underlying the entire study. In Box 2 of Figure 2.1, one may see the most selected core category being clarity, which appears as one of the catchy words in the title of this thesis. The main rationale for choosing it, was because, it emerged as the core category of the external examiners' criterion of performance. It had higher frequency by repeating seven times when compared to the rest six criteria found in the documentary external examiners' assessment form tool of OUT illustrated later in Figure 4.1.

The analysis of this core category of clarity, proved to have wider scope with four sub categories constituting it namely: definition, scope, semantic relationship, and coherence detailed later as one may read (Suddaby, 2010). The emerged latent categories in Box 2, partly addressed the rest of sub research questions of Objective 1(ii, iii, and

iv). The researcher decided to study the clarity sub categories along with the explicit research paradigm appearing in Box 3 because the paradigm construct category in Box 3, became the second and central catchy word in the title of this thesis.

The rationale for choosing this paradigm as a core category in this study was threefold: first, it prompted the researcher; secondly, it seemed foreign and with rare uses among studied candidates, supervisors, and external examiners; thirdly, the university context in primary documents of the process of scoring candidates' dissertations quality. Moreover, the wider scope of the explicit paradigm emerged from the studied researchers' opinions on its conceptions reveals varying opinions suggesting seven repeating conceptions constituting the model for this study in Box 3of Figure 2.1. Yet, the exploration on the scope of the explicit paradigm reveals further that the emerged conceptions belong to the field of philosophy of science.

Besides that the framework in Figure 2.1 (Box 3), identifies more how the context of the studied university implicitly use philosophical underpinnings of: philosophy, ontology, epistemology, methodology, axiology, logic and rhetoric language(POEMALOR). The POEMALOR became one of the outcomes of this study, as an elaborative framework guiding researchers in universities to clarify it when teaching, learning, writing, supervising, defending, and assessing the holistic

explicit research paradigm in dissertations and theses. In addition, the emerged sub categories in Box 3, guided the researcher to address the research questions in phase one, two, and three, in objective one, two, three and four.

In Box 4, the study pointed out core latent variables related to the quality of dissertation performance, which was the outcome of the process of improvements universities quality assurance illustrated in Figure 2.1. Finally, the emerged latent variables in Box 4 of Figure 2.1 included, dissertations quality grades suggesting the descriptive statistical nominal and ordinal ranked scores. Such scores ranged between 100 and 70 marks, along lettered grades A between 70 and100, B+ between 69 and 60 marks. Moreover, grades B (flat) ranges between 50 and 59 marks, C between 40 and 49 marks, D between 30 and 39 marks, and finally E ranges between 0 and 29 marks. The grades in both studied universities. (Figure 4.1; Tables 4.1a, 4.1b; 4.2a-4.2 d).

The dissertations quality performance as a core category became the third catchy word in the title of this thesis. The rationale for including it in the study was because;the paradigm core category emerged in the processes of assuring quality of candidates' dissertations by the external examiners (EEs). Thus, the researcher sought the relationship between the researchers' clarity of the explicit paradigm conceptions and its influence on the increase of dissertations quality completion

and final score grade performance rates.

Precisely, the four boxes and their four logical arrows implied that the EEs' score grade awards for candidates' dissertations quality performance, among other factors; was the function of one's clarity of explicit research paradigm conceptions in emerged processes of teaching, learning, writing, supervising, and defending, dissertations culminating into varying quality completion and pass rates in studied universities context.

Citing Polit and Tatano (2004) as well as Ravich and Carl (2016) in their paper Hussein and Agyem (2017), state that the conceptual frameworks are always constructed by researchers. They add that conceptual frameworks are generative diagrams that reflect the thinking of the entire research process. Mostly, these diagrams are created to clearly define the constructs or variables of the research topic and their relationships shown by the use of arrows (Hussein and Agyem, 2017). Latham (2017) argues that the entire methodology must agree with the variables, as well as their relationships and context.

2.7 Chapter Summary

Chapter Two consisted the review of the related theoretical and research findings to illuminate the emerged substantive GT and other conceptual categories in this study in relation to research objectives, questions, and the framework that were developed in Chapter One. The chapter consisted three main sections: the overview, the conceptual or theoretical literature about the historical roots of the constructs of paradigm, clarity,

and research evaluation of the theories on how the quality of a research works is perceived by different philosophers of different schools of thought. Likewise, the chapter covered the strengths and weaknesses of the global reviewed empirical studies about the clarity of the explicit paradigm with its implicit conceptions in relation to dissertations quality completion and pass rates among the postgraduate Masters (M.A) candidates. In the next page find chapter three.

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CHAPTER THREE

3.0 RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

3.1 Introduction

Chapter three is about the research methodology. It begins with an introduction, then researcher's paradigm of choice, research approach, and research design follow. Thereafter, the chapter presents the study area, study population, as well as sample size and sampling procedure, research methods for data collection, data analysis plan for phases one, two and three. Additionally, the chapter clarifies the rigor controversy between trustworthiness versus reliability and validity, ethical issues.

The chapter three ends with the chapter summary.

3.2 Paradigm assumptions that guided researcher's decisions in this study

First, prior to this thesis the researcher assumed that each phenomenon is dynamic not fixed. As such, the researcher had to select suitable philosophical system of assumptions in line with pragmatism philosophy. It was pragmatism philosophical assumptions which informed the researcher's decisions to arrive at appropriate choices of this study research problem, framework, literature, methods of data collection and analysis as well as research rigour. The rationale for opting pragmatism philosophy was because of its maxim that says, "What works best is what should be taken to solve a problem at hand." This philosophy is in line with the researcher's opted post positivism paradigm.

Another rationale for opting pragmatism philosophy was because of its flexibility in suiting all emerging categories in the field, suggesting borrowing what works from either positivist or post positivists' paradigm strategies provided they solve existing

problem. Commenting on relevance of pragmatism philosophy, Dobson (1993), Tashakkori and Teddlie (1998) note that pragmatism supports formulation of research questions and objectives during the fieldwork and after not before. The authors contend that purism has led to what is known as, incompatibility thesis as well as paradigm war controversies, one can avoid such controversy of choices by opting pragmatism philosophy that belong to the post positivists.

The researcher followed opted pragmatists 'advice in this study. By so doing, the pragmatism philosophy freed the researcher from incompatibility thesis and paradigm war controversies. The third rationale for opting pragmatism it is as proposal of research experts that without nominating the research paradigm prior to conducting research, any research project will begin with a wrong footing (Mackenzie and Knipe, 2006). The other researcher's assumption was an ontological relative position of observing the investigated phenomenon. The researcher was informed of the existing two extreme positions of observing any phenomenon namely subjectivism and objectivism.

In order to avoid such researchers' extreme controversy, the researcher opted the relative position, which suggests that; it depends who observes what, from where one observes, when, how and why one observes the given phenomenon. The opted relative position of observing the phenomenon suited to investigate the phenomenon freely and systematically avoiding fixed rules pertaining to either extreme. The rationale of opting relativism position was because of its neutrality between subjectivism and objectivism positions. Much more, another researcher's assumption prior conducting research was about how the researcher regards knowledge**.**

The researcher of this study regards knowledge to be socially constructed not discovered as objectivists' views to be outside there waiting for discovery. Knowledge is the result of what the knower and the known agree socially to be evidenced constructed knowledge. It was for this rationale that the researcher opted the social constructivism nomenclature of the GT to inform decisions of constructing knowledge in this thesis. On choice of methods the researcher assumed prior to choose eclecticism, where the researcher opted to triangulate multivariate methods to inform the methodology of this study.

The rationale for eclecticism included the researcher assumed that no single method with its strengths lacks weaknesses. The triangulation would balance weaknesses found with a single method. On the values position in research, the researcher in this study assumed that no research is free from values. It was for this reason that the ethical issues were considered in this study. Consequently, the researcher assumed that some axiological values burden could surround this study, in decisions to arrive at appropriate choices from multivariate methods. This was why the triangulation was to be opted to reduce biased values. The logic that informed the current study was abductive. The abductive logic warranted the triangulation of inductive and deductive logics.

The rationale for opting the abductive logic for this study was because, the researcher assumed that the deductive logic has its weaknesses just as inductive is. The abductive logic allowed the use of flexible conceptual framework as per context instead of

borrowed theoretical models. Much more, it allowed the researcher to take essential emerging data from the field outside the original designed models. Thus, the eclectic abductive logic absorbed such weaknesses just as some authors recommend its use (Lewis, 2003; Mayer and Lunnay, 2013; Rwegoshora, 2014).

Finally, the post positivists' rhetoric language dominates this.

Suffice to say that the rationale for uses of suitable language as per opted post positivist in particular the constructivists' criteria are as per suggestions in (Patton, 1990). Upon those assumptions, the researcher was in position to choose any sub themes of methodology section being informed, the research approach came first.

3.3 Research Approach

Based on the researcher's held paradigm assumptions, the choice of the approach for this study was essentially grounded in the qualitative approach, which is flexible to consider the emerging data that might require the triangulation of multi methods from the quantitative approach. The researcher was aware that approaches are normally not mixed, at the level of paradigm except at the shop floor levels of sampling as suggested in Sandelowsky (2000). Two reasons led the researcher to opt for the GT qualitative approach. First, it was because the nature of the purpose for this study, which explored researchers' perspectives to generate the fresh hypotheses and the underlying GT at the end of this study, rather than falsifying and confirming the existing theories. The researcher's opted philosophical assumptions justified the choice of the research design as detailed in the next subtitle.

3.4 Research Design

The researcher's opted research paradigm as well as the research approach eased the choice of the appropriate research design. The researcher opted for the constructivists' GT design, which is characterised by being emergent, sequential, serendipitously, and scheduled in (Charmaz, 2006). This design is said to be essentially qualitative and it resembles the mixed sequential exploratory design with notation QUAL→quan design (Tashakkori and Teddlie 1998; Creswell, 20012). The rationales for opting the GT research design was because the GT design is capable of exploring research subjects "emic" perspectives capable of producing the rich information capable of generating a substantive theory that begins right from the entrance of the field.

The second rationale was because of the nature of this study, which is exploratory but also due to the purpose of the study of generating a GT about the studied phenomenon. Goulding (2002) in Descombe (2011) advocates its use, when the nature of the study is exploratory, when the topic of focus has been ignored and not given due attention. The third rationale was because the constructivists' research design alone is capable of unveiling the hidden agenda of the research subjects and objects. The fourth rationale for the choice of this design was because the chosen researcher's post positivists' paradigm assumptions in particular the pragmatists' philosophy of choosing what works, suits this design to explore the studied area.

3.5 Study Area

This study was conducted at the University of Dar es Salaam (UDSM) and the Open University of Tanzania (OUT). Both universities are in Dar es Salaam city within Kinondoni municipal. The rationales of selecting the universities were twofold: first, both universities have long experience in teaching philosophy of education as a foundation course to all university students undertaking Bachelor degree in Education. It was therefore, assumed that thesis and dissertation supervisors were aware of the paradigm essence as far as GT is concerned. The second rationale was because the researcher obtained prior insights from the primary document of the EEAFs encountered at the headquarters of the OUT, which contained rich information about clues of the expected data to be collected.

The very primary document revealed more insights indicating that OUT has mutual relationship with the UDSM academically despite the differences of the two universities in historical background and in terms of modes of delivering degree courses. In contrast, while the UDSM uses the conventional or formal mode of delivering education, the OUT uses ODeL. The interdependence on human resource such as external examiners (EEs) between the two studied universities was another third rationale for opting the said area of study. In other words the majority of the assessors for OUT dissertations, were found to originate from the UDSM, the sign that OUT entrusted them the role of external assuring the quality of its academic research products as the policy provides in (OUT, 2008; 2014).

3.6 Study Population

The target population in this study meant a specific group with same characteristics proper for the problem to be investigated, at which the researcher focuses. All dealers in provision and pursuing of the postgraduate Masters degrees programme in education by distance and conventional modes of learning in Tanzania universities were the target population. The targeted population for this study was to be found in the studied universities of OUT and UDSM. Unlike in social science studies, where the unit of analysis focuses on describing individual people, or objects, in the GT studies the unit of analysis is on peoples, objects, and roles occurring in ongoing processes (Charmaz, 2006).

Consequently, the emerged objects and peoples' roles in this study worthy investigation were those related to candidates' writing, supervisors' supervising, and external examiners' assuring the dissertations quality. The rationale for involving graduates and prospective candidate graduates was because these were active in the process of attempting to write the quality dissertations. The supervisors too were involved because of having active role of supervising candidates to write quality dissertations. The EEs were involved because of their active role of assuring quality dissertations at OUT. The sampling issues come next.

3.7 Sample Size and Sampling Procedure

In this study the sample size and sampling procedure were not predetermined, but were determined in the field, where by the data collection process was done simultaneously with data analysis. This practice was done as per suggestion of three versions of the

Grounded Theory nomenclature; both suggesting avoiding detailed predetermined blue prints.

3.7.1 Sample Size.

3.7.1 Sample Size. The selection of the sample size in this study followed the emerging GT nomenclature, whose logic is to generalise findings based on the contexts and categories rather than hugeness of sampled population. Consequently, the emerged insights from a single collected case of primary document known as the external examiners' documentary assessment tool for dissertations, was analysed inductively to get amount of sub themes, categories and respondents to include. This sufficed to guide the researcher in illuminating the researcher where, how many, whom to sample, and to what extent to end sampling procedure (OUT, 2004-2016; Appendix. xiv).

The rationale of sampling, and focusing more on OUT than the UDSM in this study, was because the explicit construct of the explicit paradigm sub theme 6.3.(i) emerged from OUT assessment tool for dissertations, whereby the external examiners examine it in the process of assuring the quality of created knowledge. The researcher contrasted the same sub theme with same construct in the similar tool of the UDSM, misses such sub theme, though other contents are similar (Figure 4.1;

Tables 4.1a, 5.1 and 5.2). The breakdown of the sample size was as illustrated in Table 3.1.

Table 3.1: Study Respondents Sample Size Breakdown

S/N	**Respondents' category**	**Targeted Respondents**	**Suited set Criteria**	**Studied Total**
1.	Candidates	109	88	68
2.	Supervisors	20	14	14
3.	External Examiners (EEs)	17	06	06
	Grand Total	**146**	**108**	**88**

Source: Field Data (2018)

Looking at Table 3.1, one sees how the researcher selected suitable research respondents as elaborated later in the sampling procedure. It was previously said that the OUT-assessment tool form gave initial insight that by 2014, only 109 candidates graduated at the level of Masters degree through open and distance modes of learning. The researcher discovered that 61 candidates had graduated and 48 were prospective graduands by 2014 (OUTFAFI, 2014-15). The same analysed field documents EEAFs gave insight that the studied faculty had a stock of 20 internal supervisors and a pool of 17 External Examiners (EEs) together they totalled 146.

However, since time was inadequate only 88 respondents were sampled for this study out of 146 as detailed in the section of sampling procedure. The accessible population was 146 who according to the field university primary documents were found dealing with theses and dissertations in the studied period. It was from this accessible population the sample size of 88 was drawn. This sample size proved to be adequate for all phases of data collection in addressing eight sub research questions for this study. So, while 44 participants drawn from 88 were adequate to get in depth rich data by interview and

observations theses provided rich information for objective one research question in phase one and two. The rationale of this small sample size in the qualitative studies, follows the rationale that the size number does not matter, even a single case of participant may be adequate. Moreover, the number of 40 respondents is adequate to provide to yield in depth rich information (Patton, 1990). The researcher used varying sample sizes drawing from the parent sample size of 88, according to the requirement of each varying phase of data collection and nature of data as GT nomenclature suggests (Charmaz, 2006).

Again, the researcher used the entire parent sample size of 88 respondents, when collecting data for phase three by questionnaire, which yielded the statistical data. Whether 88 sample size was adequate, was done through Kaiser Oklin Measure (KMO) and Bartlets' tests as detailed later.

3.7.2 Sampling procedure

The sampling procedure in this study was not pre-determined either, but it followed the post positivists' non-probabilistic sampling procedure of the constructivists' GT, which is purposive triangulating criteria and theoretical sampling procedure at saturated categories as proposed in (Charmaz, 2006). Upon this understanding, the researcher followed systematic steps to obtain the required sample size of the study respondents. The abductive logic guided the sampling procedure done at two levels of: initial sampling and theoretical sampling, each with different purposes and criteria as elaborated further.

3.7.2.1 Initial criterion sampling procedure

In the initial phase of this study, the researcher established sampling of relevant criteria to select without bias and identify core cases, documents, codes, concepts, categories, themes, processes, objects as well as main respondents in the field first. The rationale for the initial sampling procedure was crucial in this study because this was where the researcher started to establish sampling criteria for selecting respondents, cases, situations even contexts before entering the field in line with (Charmaz, 2006). The researcher had to prepare the guiding criteria for selecting categories, objects and research respondents to avoid biasness in selecting them.

Such criteria were relevance, higher frequency, and unique in possessing special qualities. To that end, the researcher selected two universities OUT and UDSM initially from several others in Tanzania simply because either their course outlines or assessment tool were unique in mentioning the construct of the paradigm and conceptions related to the research paradigm explicitly as illustrated in (Figure 4.1; Tables 4.1 b ; 4.1 c). After the initial sampling the researcher focused to study, a single university namely OUT. The rationale was because, unlike UDSM, the construct of paradigm is explicitly mentioned, and it appears in the assessment process of assuring quality of dissertations.

The researcher selected other items like core concepts, constructs, and themes, categories, from the rest, on criterion because of appearing repeatedly either with high frequency or being mentioned rarely. These criteria enabled the researcher to select core concepts, which emerged from the EEAFs (Figure 4.1; Appendices. IIIA; III B; XI; XII).

For categories of assessment forms and course outlines, the assessment tool was selected on criterion that it was either assessed consistently or inconsistently, while the course outlines were selected on rationale that they mentioned either research paradigm or conceptions related to it explicitly.

Three categories of respondents were selected on basis of possessing unique qualities as per researcher's established criteria. For instance, the university whose candidates were selected, their assessment tools had the sub theme of research paradigm item being assessed by the external examiners, this criterion selected OUT as unique and left the UDSM candidates out. For the research respondents' criteria to qualify selection, a candidate should have been a potential candidate expecting to graduate or to have been a graduate in the period between 2004 and 2014 by doing educational research at OUT.

Secondly, a candidate had to possess criteria of having a library-stored hard copy of a dissertation, readily available external examiners' assessment report, with available e mail address and cell phone number as well. These criteria too assisted the researcher to select OUT as unique, and left the UDSM because of having all those requirements readily available during the time the researcher conducted this study. Much more, punctuality in consenting and returning questionnaires assisted the researcher to select the 88 candidates easily, though saturation varied between 68 and 88 out of 109. For the supervisors and external examiners to qualify for selection, was to have been a supervisor in the said period.

Suffice to say the research participant to be selected had to qualify as one, who punctually returned the consent forms, the questionnaire as well as shown readiness to participate in the study by providing a cell number and e-mail address. These criteria assisted the researcher to select 14 supervisors out of 20 and 6 external examiners out of 17 and the study enthused as per universities primary documents revealed in the field. The criterion sampling involves selecting cases that meet some pre set criteria of importance. Finally, the other sampling strategy was theoretical sampling. This assisted the researcher to sample some core categories from several emerged concepts (Patton, 2001).

3.7.2.2 Theoretical sampling level

Whereas in the initial sampling in GT the researcher started to establish criteria for sampling prior to entering the field, the theoretical sampling level was the stage, which purposefully directed the researcher, where to go next to get data for explicating the emerged core categories. The purpose of this theoretical procedure in this study was for conceptual and theoretical developing not for representing a population or increasing the statistical generalisability study results in line with (Charmaz, 2006). Consequently, theoretically sampled core conceptions were purposefully those, which pertained to similar researchers' experiences of studying education research and conducted it practically.

Likewise, the sampled external examiners' reports of EEAFs (2004-2014) were only those, which purposefully exhibited to have a similar content with emerged substantive theory related to the emerged sub theme 6.3 (i) phrase reading…*clearly explain research*

paradigm and design… Suffice to say that the initial sampling became a point of departure illuminating the researcher on what to do next in later phases, when executing the theoretical sampling procedure. Elaborating the primacy of theoretical sampling in GT studies, Charmaz argues that theoretical sampling is purposeful sampling. However, being the hub of GT studies, it is emergent and purposeful so according to categories emerging from the field analysed data

(Charmaz, 2006).

3.7.2.3 Confidence interval insurance unseen parameter of sample adequacy

Several strategies were justified to ensure relevance of the collected data and adequacy of sample for objectives, two, three, and four. The rationales for employing several strategies were first; the pragmatism philosophy underpinning this study warranted the flexibility of taking what works best rather than clinging on strict rules of conversional research. Though some GT theorists do not entertain descriptive statistical significances, but Glaser and Holton (2004); Charmaz (2003) are in consensus that the GT study may triangulate verbal expressions as well as descriptive statistics.

Secondly, it was because despite the GT being essentially qualitative however, it recognises the use of multivariate strategies as per emerged categories. This was a rationale why in objectives two, three and four the researcher employed the multivariate Explorative Factor Analysis (EFA) strategy, to ensure the sample and data for those objectives were adequate and relevant. In order to achieve these ends, the descriptive statistical Kaiser Meyer-Olkin (KMO) measure of sample size adequacy and Bartlett's tests of sphericity techniques were used, where appropriate. This was to ensure that

certain sample sizes were adequate as well as confidence interval of information on unobservable parameters.

Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin measure (KMO) is a short hand of the manner, in which the small partial correlations are relative to the original zero order. The researcher too, used the KMO measure as the formula for measuring an identity correlation template and the sampling adequacy. However, the KMO sometimes is at 0.5, when the correlation template identity is a unique. Nevertheless, when the KMO reads at 0.5 is arbitrarily undefined. It is also, affirmed that the KMO values more than 0.9 may be considered good (Kaiser, 1970; Cerny and Kaiser, 1977). Some other authors elaborate further that the Bartlett's assessment as used in this study, meant the statistical test of sphericity for the overall relevance of all correlations within outputs of the SPSS matrix as per advice in (Kaiser, 1970; Cerny and Kaiser, 1977; Dziuban and Shirkey, 1974; Field, 2005).

3.8 Research Methods

In this study, the research methods implied the strategies that the researcher used to collect data. The choice of the research methods in this study as well, was not predetermined, but it was selected according to the nature of data from the field. Likewise, the researcher chose the methods according to the nature of the grand research question of "how" that began right from the initial phase. The nature of the emerged five core constructs namely: clarity, paradigm, design, quality, dissertation, assessment, with their emerged categories, dictated the choice of the research methods in this study.

It is apparent that while the clarity, quality, dissertations suggest the use of the post positivists' approach of qualitative stance, the assessment performance scores, grades, GPAs, echoed the positivism stance signifying that the statistical methods could not be avoided, where appropriate. The norm of GT is that; all encountered data in the field may be probable useful data, and that any sources of information may yield relevant information (Glaser, 1978; Corbin and Strauss, 1990). Since this study was grounded by the flexible pragmatists' philosophical underpinning perspective, the researcher did a triangulation at the level of research methods from either paradigm, rather than at the level of paradigms themselves.

The employed sources of information included: archived official field documents, interviews, and observation for objective one on context. These methods yielded qualitative data in phases one and two. Above all, the questionnaire in form of Likert's scale was employed for objectives two, three, and four yielding statistical results in phase three.

3.8.1 Primary and secondary documentaries

The documentary strategy is one of six sources of knowledge popularly known as authoritative source under the epistemological branch of philosophy of research. This method has two major categories: primary and secondary. In this study, the researcher employed varying types of documents to begin with primary category as follows.

3.8.2 Primary documents

The first encountered category of document in the field, from which several conceptual insights and row scores for the dissertations were obtained, was the archived field document known as External Examiners' Assessment Forms (EEAFs 2004-2015; report with results of dissertations (Appendix X). Further analysis of this archival document revealed that it was the policy quality assurance document tool used by the EEs to examine the quality of candidates' dissertations. The insights from this tool illuminated the progress of this study revealing that there were other co-documents on processes related to the assessment process of dissertations (Appendices III; X; XI; XII).

The co documents were: the Government Vision 2025, OUT Vision and Mission, OUT (2008) policy provisions about research and publications procedure, directories, prospectus, and Basic Facts and Figures (OUTFAFI, 2014). The first rationally why the researcher regarded these field emerged archival records as the primary documents was because they emerged with fresh raw data. The second rationale for relying on the primary documentary category was mainly because it emerged in the midst of inductive observation of the candidate researchers, whom I coordinated. Again, it was from the primary document of the EEAFs that the term paradigm in the sub theme 6.3(i) re-emerged illuminating further, the researchers' first experience of the paradigm construct at University of Dar es Salaam (UDSM).

Suffice to say that the re-emergence of the construct of the paradigm at the Open University of Tanzania (OUT) in the studied archived document with a sub theme 6.3.(i)

prompted this study in this thesis (EEAFs, 2004-2014). The rationales for using the primary documents included having fresh data.

3.8.3 Secondary documents

The secondary documents referred to as the published sources of information that were related to the addressed grand research question of" how." While the published documents were in two categories to mention a few: the conceptual and empirical studies reports literature Table (5.6) and Appendix (XII), the conceptual literature related to publications like research books: Charmaz (2006); Mackenzie and Knipe (2006), these sources provided the epistemological theories (Appendix XIII). The empirical studies reports in published journals were articles and research papers at the global level. There has been a controversy in the versions of GT, about where to use or not to use the reviewed literature.

The two classical thesis and antithesis of Glasser and Strauss (1967) as well as Strauss and Corbin (1990), on the GT versions refute to review literature before a researcher goes to the research field in fear of being blindfolded by predetermined claims on the observed phenomenon not existing in the natural field. However, Charmaz (2006) a constructivist suggests a pragmatic use sparingly of literature rather than rigid abandonment of reviewing published literature saying …*scanty use of the focused literature is fine...* where necessary (Charmaz, 2006). The author rebukes bad purpose of forcing unfocused and preconceived ideas from the literature to cohere their fitfulness with the emerged data unnecessarily.

Consequently, the researcher in this study pragmatically used the secondary sources with rationale to illuminate the emerged categories. The second rationale for documentary reliance was because the constructivists' GT paradigm suited

researcher's held pragmatism flexible philosophical stance of weaving the focused literature across the thesis provided it is focused to back up the point at hand. To manage the perusal of the reviewed text, the researcher constructed own analytical schedule, in the field (Table 6.1; Appendix X).

3.8.4 Interviews method

The interview method in this study referred to communication with another person through informal, formal either oral or written questions. In this study the researcher employed both forms of interviews, where appropriate as elaborated further here under (Appendix VI).

3.8.4.1 Semi-structured interview opinion

The semi structured questionnaire referred to the list of questions, whose purpose in this study was used to communicate with respondents, so as to obtain in depth opinions. The researcher prepared interview tool schedule as seen in (Appendix VI) partly with a few closed and open-ended questions that were followed by follow up questions or probes. The tool also was used during face-to-face interviews for the supervisors and the EEs, because these were readily available in their natural settings. The kind of tool the researcher used had no pre-determined themes except those that emerged from the research objectives, and sub research questions, with typical open-ended questions (Appendix VI).

This type of tool was only used to proximal respondents; it was not used to the distant candidates. The rationales for using semi-structured interviews were due to their capability not only to ask a Yes and No questions, but also the possibility of probing with critical questions of how and why. The second rationale for the choice of this method was because the semi structured interviews are capable of capturing extra issues that were formally not in the initial frame work, hence to fit the abductive logic and pragmatism philosophy cherished by the researcher. The third rationale was because some emerged categories necessitated the need to explore the context, in which the research paradigm was provided, taught, learnt and understood among respondents (Appendix VI).

Another rationale was because semi structured interviews were capable of being adjusted according to the nature of respondents and context. Finally, the said category of interviews was used because of its nature of exploration, hence suiting the purpose of this study. Elaborating the semi structured interviews tool, Aufiero and Demand (2015) argue that this tool might contain some readymade questions, although interviewees are free to provide responses. It is added that the interviewer asks open ended questions for the exploration purposes, and that the preceding questions may be followed by the follow up question or probes.

The researcher used the semi structured interviews strategy being aware with its weaknesses. One of its limitations is a longer time it takes to interview a single person. The saturation point strategy of obtaining only relevant and adequate information solved

this weakness. The researcher ensured the repertoire and assured the confidentiality to respondents all the time.

3.8.5 Observation

The other strategy that the researcher used to collect information for illuminating the emerged categories and the substantive GT theory was observation. In this study the researcher employed o focused unstructured participant observation (Appendix, IX). This strategy in this study meant the act of using five senses namely eyes for sight, hears for hearing, nose for smelling, tongue for tasting, and skin for touching in observing the phenomenon. GT is fond of this method in course of observing the phenomenon as it really is, in generating the grounded assumptions and theory. Pons (2009) categorises observation method into two major groups: non-participant also known as structured observation suiting the deductive logic of positivists.

3.8.5.1 Participatory observation

The participatory observation was a type of observation, which was opted in this study. The researcher used the focused and unstructured type of observation to observe 29 candidates, who were defending their dissertations, eight times, as per OUT time table of dissertations defense (Appendix IX). It was focused observation since the researcher entered the field and studied the ongoing processes of writing, supervising, defending, and assessing dissertations openly, when defending dissertations. The researcher with permission (Appendix I) participated as the panellist for the dissertations defense by to listening, recording, seeing (Appendix IX).

The recording of notes was open and silent, so the observed were not easy to detect what the researcher was doing (Appendix IX). The participatory observation category was also unstructured, because the researcher entered the field without having the pre-scheduled plans for observing the phenomenon except the blue print of the discovered problem and a recording notebook. Thus, the schedules were instantly formed according to the type of data emerging from the field. This was because the researcher was not sure on the kind of data that could emerge from the field. The researcher just recorded only live experiences on the ongoing processes of writing, supervising, defending, and assessing the dissertations.

The rationale for opting the participatory observation included: first the researcher's held philosophy is pragmatism that bothers with flexibility to opt what works unlike inflexible rules on methods. Second, the researcher did not assume the detachment from the observed phenomenon. Third, the researcher's axiological position is that research is value laden; meaning that even scientists measuring instrument like a ruler may make error and alter the results on the observed phenomenon. Fourth, it was opted because the researcher's position on knowledge is that knowledge is constructed by both the observed and observer.

The fifth rationale, was because the researcher's position on logic opted the flexible abductive logic that begins with inductive ending with deductive logics. Finally, it was opted because the applied rhetorical language used in this study was one of post positivists' group of constructivists' GT.

3.8.6 Questionnaire method

The study also used questionnaire with the purpose of obtaining information for objective two, three, and four that emerged in phase three of the current study with statistical nature. The need to use a questionnaire was crucial with rationale that objective two, three, and four were related to the ordinal statements but also with variables of dissertations performance like scores, grades, even the GPAs. As such, multivariate statistical methods, where they worked were unavoidable. The Likert's scale rank was employed with the purpose of understanding variability of the respondents' agreement of knowing paradigm claims in relation to dissertations quality pass rates (Appendix V).

The said scale had five continuum ranked scale of agreement and disagreement abbreviated as: SD for Strongly Disagree, D for Disagree, NS for Not Sure, SA for Strongly Agree, and A for Agree. The said questionnaire that was subjected to the SPPS software tool analysis as illustrated in Tables and (Appendix V).

3.9 Data Analysis Plan for Phases One, Two and Three

The data analysis in the current study meant various stages of breaking down the collected data reducing them from bulky into manageable relevant information. It should be recalled that in the GT studies the two processes of the data collection and analysis are inseparable. They occur simultaneously in the field. In this study, the data collection and analysis were done simultaneously at three phases: initial phase, phase two, and three. In all phases, the researcher followed the flexible GT nomenclature and

pragmatism philosophy, which requires one to perform inductive collection of data and instantly analyse them to inform the latter stages.

GT data analysis has two major phases: initial theoretical open coding and focused coding along with constant comparison of analysed data. In coding data the researcher followed the GT four systematic stages of data analysis: coding initially, latter focused coding, axial coding, and theoretical coding followed. This means that the process involved transformation of data into codes first, then into categories by developing concepts, writing memos, themes, tentative codes, and finally writing the text, in this case this thesis or the research report. Systematically, the researcher began with the initial coding as follows.

3.9.1 Initial coding

The initial coding was done in the initial phase of data collection and analysis, where the coding dealt with word by word, column by column, row by row. The rationale for the initial coding was for the researcher to identify the emerging constructs, substantive area, substantive emerging grounded theory, processes, the grand research question, social as well as researchable problem, study intents, as well as sub research questions. The other coding was done on sentence-by-sentence, event by event, datum by datum, temporal codes suggesting what to do next in the literature and research methods as per constructivists' GT proposals (Charmaz, 2006).

3.9.2 Focused coding

In the focused coding the researcher identified the concepts with high and lowest frequency but also the unique concepts that were likely to be taken for granted in this case: clarity criterion repeated seven times, and design only once (Table 1.1). Out of 26 emerged sub themes the paradigm was seen unique of all the concepts in the EEAFs. The researcher also sorted actions ending with gerund form "ing." The verbs with "ing" were used as an indicator signifying the ongoing processes at work. The researcher thus, learnt several emerged processes of enrolling, evaluating, allocating supervisors, supervising, completing, dissertation defending, graduating, supervising, as well as defending the dissertations. From them the researcher obtained enrolment, pass, and completion rates.

3.9.3 Axial coding

In the axial coding, the researcher broke constructs into categories, this stage is equated with the stage of making sense of data as detailed latter on and simply dealt with the properties that aligns with the most repeating concepts as previously said. This axial coding stage dealt with relating categories to sub categories to build their complex huge relationships. It was at this stage that the researcher sorted, integrated and organised large amounts of collected data in phase one and two pooling them together coherently in interwoven way as illustrated in Figure 3.1.

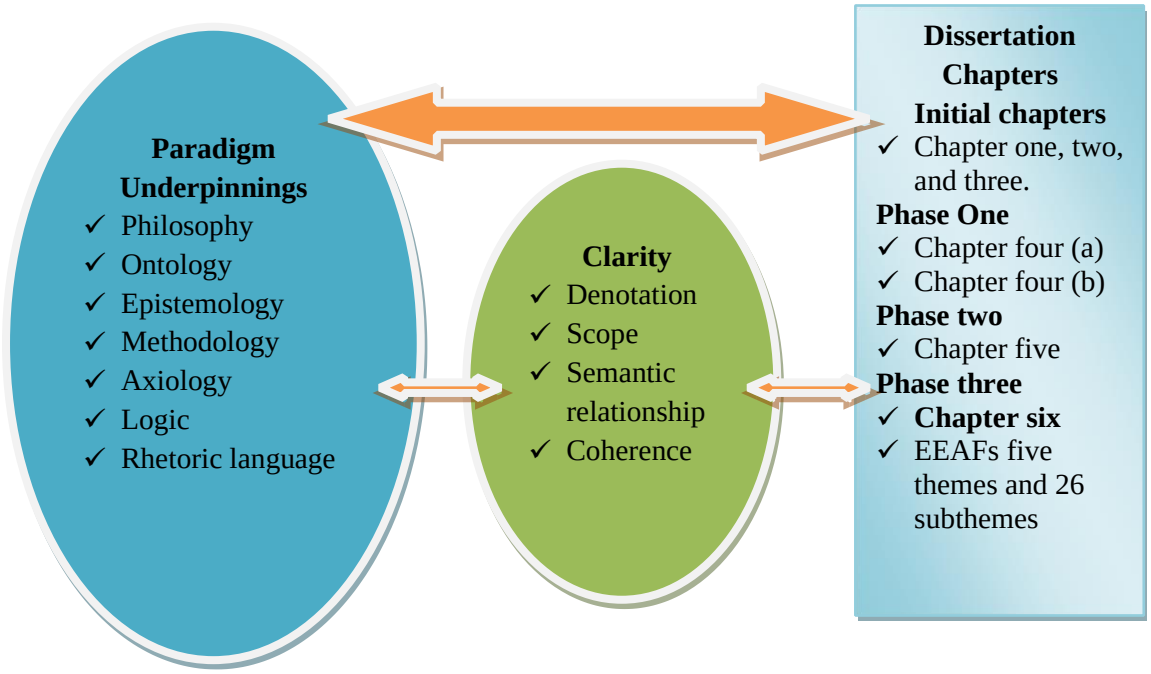

Figure 3.1: Axial Coding Integrated Amounts of Data in Interwoven Way

Scheduling is one of the features of the GT studies (Charmaz, 2003). In line with such advice from the author, the researcher illustrated what axial coding of data was like. In Figure 3.1, one is able to see a complex interwoven stage, whereby the researcher sorted and integrated emerged data from the first oval via the second and finally all lead to the third box. The first oval indicates initially coded sub categories, the researcher tried to deal with several integrated concepts, forming themes such as paradigm with seven sub categories namely: philosophy, ontology, epistemology, methodology, axiology, logic, and rhetoric.

The seven conceptions were constantly compared to each other using the crosschecking lines coded to the clarity construct in the oval at the centre. Likewise, the paradigm philosophical categories and clarity sub categories were again compared to the three phases of data collection versus dissertation five chapters. While Straus and

Corbin (1990), as well as Glaser (1978) suggest the axial coding stage, Charmaz (2006) discourages this stage because of having complex process that might turn to be obstacle to inexperienced researchers, who might not tolerate endless stages. The researcher used axial coding while being aware of its limitations including: having formalities needing the researcher to follow up rigid rules instead of the guidelines that emerge from the process of analysing the emerged data.

However, Charmaz (2006) provides the alternative approach to handle the axial stage without complexions rather than abandoning it. For Charmaz (2006) once one has made sense of data in the theoretical coding, the axial coding is covered automatically. The researcher followed this proposal and made sense of the emerged data at this stage in every phase. The products of axial coding were four core categories: context, assessment criteria, held paradigm perspectives or worldview choice, and epistemological components all related to the dissertation quality performance. Together, these assisted the researcher to formulate four objectives, and nine sub categories leading to nine (9) sub research questions from a bulky of emerged concepts.

3.9.4 Theoretical coding

In theoretical coding, the researcher analysed the collected data to see how every code-by-code of data related to each other. For instance, categorical codes of clarity construct were four as earlier hinted, to formulate the emerged categories forming the major themes and sub themes. In this type of coding, the researcher integrated the sorted categories into a fluent story. From 25 emerged themes, the researcher down sized them into four major themes to fit three phases. Consequently, the initial phase in chapter one,

dealt with the construct, categories deriving and clarity and paradigm emerged as core constructs initially, from which the rest of core and sub categories were derived to form major themes and sub themes.

The two constructs led to the emergence of several categories, which were used to choose appropriate literature in Chapter two and methods in Chapter three. Phase one and two dealt with a core category of context of qualitative in nature emerging with its six sub categories. Phase three dealt with the rest of objectives: two, three, and four on core categories of assessment criteria, worldviews choice influence, and epistemological components versus dissertation quality performance. Other codes were about respondents' pseudonyms, whereby code STUDs# stands for candidates, SUP# for supervisors, and EEs'# for External Examiners. Suffice to say that these codes assisted the researcher to write memos as elaborated further here under.

3.9.5 Memoing

Once the codes and categories had been developed, the researcher transformed the categories into concepts, and then wrote memos by labelling the emerged themes with brief notes on them, ready to write the full text. The codes led to the first memo about the emerged initial phase core constructs in the EEAFs, categories, emerged processes, general research question, purpose, specific objectives, research questions as well as the emerged conceptual framework. The second memo was about the coded categories related to the qualitative data. These memos were presented, analysed, discussed, and interpreted for phase two.

The third memo was about the coded categories related to statistical data presented, analysed, and discussed in phase three. In all memos, the researcher maintained constant comparison of word-by-word, phrase by phrase, sentence by sentence, paragraph by paragraph, as well as event by event. Memoing was followed by sorting of the data grouping them into three phases explicated further more.

3.9.6 Sorting

In sorting process, the researcher combined the memos from all three phases to classify the most pressing one, which the researcher set them aside as core categories. The sorting systematisation assisted me to down size several constructs into only five: clarity, paradigm, dissertation, quality, and performance in the initial phase (Tables 1.1; 1.2). Then, the researcher down sized 25 emerged categories to only four categories with core themes and sub themes: context with six core categories on emerged processes namely: policy context, teaching and learning, awareness, interpretation of paradigm by respondents, difficult level of sub themes, potential factors for assessment under performance, and a way forward in phase two.

Finally, the SPSS down sized 82 categories of knowledge and beliefs derived from the EEAFs descriptive statements to only three: constructivists, interpretivists, and positivists' components in phase three (Appendices XV, XVI; Tables 3.5, 3.6; Figures 3.1. and 3.2). The sorting process assisted the researcher to recognise the relationship between the core constructs and the investigated problem. The sorting process was followed by diagramming as detailed below.

3.9.7 Diagramming

As one may see across this thesis, diagrams in terms of figures and tables were used with the rationale of the constructivists' GT nomenclature. For better clarification, the researcher supported analytical claims with diagramming. The diagrams clarified abstract concepts to be understood easily as one may as seen in (Tables 1.1; 1.2; Figures 1.1;3.1). Explicating the role of diagrams in the GT studies, diagramming is said to be an essential part of the process of the GT studies (Clarke, 2005). The analysis of the data in three phases was finalised by the integration as elaborated here under.

3.9.8 Integration of data three phases

The integration process was a continuation of processes of coding, in which the researcher synthesised the data to form different paragraphs according to the emerged three phases. The rationale for the integration process was to ensure the coherence of how the entire thesis flows logically. Suffice to say that coding, memoing, sorting, diagramming, and integrating constructed knowledge under objective one. The manner in which the integration for each specific phase was done is elaborated beginning with the initial phase as follows.

3.9.8.1 Initial phase data integration

In the initial phase also known as phase one, data were inductively collected, instantly analysed, constantly compared, and finally integrated in the field. As it was earlier pointed out in GT studies, the data collection and analysis are inseparable, only few data that required detailed analysis were reserved till later moment for categorizing, and memoing. As such, at the initial phase, the data served the purposes of conceptualising

the initial stage focusing on the study. It also served the purpose of preparing suitable tools for data collection as per emerged data in the field, and discovering the puzzles in terms of defining the problem.

The remaining data in the initial stage were used to prepare the first part of Chapter four. The findings from the initial phase illuminated the decisions to be made on choices of what to do in the next phases of data collection and analysis methods. Not only for phase two, but also phase three.

3.9.8.2 Phase two data integration

The second phase of data collection, analysis, and integration also addressed the emerged categories in sub research questions that emerged under objective one about the context signalling the second part of the qualitative phase. Six contextual emerged themes related to the emerged substantive GT were: policy provisions, teaching, and learning processes, awareness of paradigm wider scope, and sources of knowing research paradigm. Observation, documentary, and interview suited as tools to address the six sub research questions under objective one. Answers for objective one was coded, memoed, and integrated to illuminate the core categories that continued to refine the emerged substantive GT.

3.9.8.3 Phase three data integration

It should be recalled that the purpose of this study was to explore peoples' understanding of the manner, in which the paradigm is contributory factor among factors, to come up with grounded theory on how it relates to the increase of dissertations quality

underperformance scenarios. The data analysis results in phases one and two suggested what to do in the phase three. The data for phase three were collected by a Likert's scale rank questionnaire method and it was subjected to the Software Package for Social Sciences (SPSS) analysis version 21IBM (2012) that yielded SPSS outputs matrices as seen in (Appendices VII; VIII). The exploration purpose of factors called for a multi variate approach known as the Exploratory Statistical Analysis strategy explicated as follows.

3.9.8.4 Exploratory statistical analysis (EFA)

The Explorative Factors Analysis (EFA), which is the SPSS software statistical multivariate method, was employed. This method was integrated in the SPSS software along with other formulae including the Pearson's' ("r") correlations, Principle Component Analysis (PCA), measures of central tendency like Standard Deviations (SD), as well as the Chisquare were applied, where appropriate. The multivariate strategies were used with rationale that no single strategy suffices for effective EFA results as advised in (Williams *et al*., 2010). The Pearson's strategy was integrated because one of the properties of clarity is semantic relationship.

Therefore, the Pearson's strategy together with the Chi-square measure were capable of determining the degree of existing relationship between two latent constructs in a questionnaire expressed in nominal numbers on the SPSS spread sheet. The Pearson too, was capable of showing the extent of strengths in terms of correlation coefficients read at values of r = + 1 or -1. The Pearson's strategy as well, was capable of measuring the direction of existing relationship as negative or positive.

The measures of central tendency were used because objectives two, three and four, which had some categories calling for mean, cumulative frequencies as well as deviations requiring measures of variability as advised in (Enon, 1998; Frankel and Wallen, 2009; Williams *et al.,* 2010).

The EFA protocol was preferred in this study with several reasons first, because it proved to be fit for interpreting the self-report Likert scale questionnaire, as noted in (Williams *et al.,* 2010). The PCA was used with the rationale that it was capable of extracting core components from multitude. The second rationale for employing the EFA method was because the purpose of this study was exploratory for generating the GT. The third rationale was because the EFA was capable of reducing the bulky of data into few relevant and manageable ones. The fourth rationale was because it was capable of founding underlying breadth of triangulated statistical variables versus the qualitative or latent constructs.

The fifth rationale for using the EFA was because it suits social science studies. The sixth, it was selected because it is capable of examining the format of relationship among variables and constructs. Above all, it was capable of proving and disapproving any generated theory, as also suggested in (Williams *et al.,* 2010). Once the questionnaire data had been entered on the SPSS spread sheet the researcher followed the EFA method of five steps to run the SPSS as elaborated hereunder.

3.9.8.5 EFA five steps protocol followed to integrate data in phase three

Exploratory Factor Analysis (EFA) method has five steps to be followed systematically for better results. In the first step the researcher had to determine if the collected data through questionnaire were suitable for using EFA method. Issues that were considered in the first step included four: The researcher ensured that the sample size was to be used in EFA. The rationale was also to ensure that theoretically saturated sample was adequate to address the core categories that would emerge in objectives two, three, and four. Since there is rare agreement on adequacy of sample, when using EFA, the flexible advice of small sample size between 50 and 150 was followed as per (Sapnas and Zeller, 2002).

This advice was used wit because of the researcher's held philosophy of pragmatism. Besides that, factorability of correlation matrix significance was ensured at $R = \pm 0.50$ as advised in (Williams *et al.,* 2012). Much more in the first step the researcher performed several multivariate tests including: Kaiser- Mayor Olkin (KMO) measure index was to be ensured between 0 and 1, while the Bartlett's, test for sphericity significance of respondents' response data were ensured at less than $p < .05$ as suggested in (Costello and Orbone, 2005; Williams *et al.,* 2012).

In the second step of using EFA, the researcher decided how the factors would be extracted. The researcher preferred the Principal Component Analysis (PCA) with since it was capable of reducing factors from multitude to few plausible ones. Second rationale was because of the (PCA), which is recommended to be used when there are no pre demined hypotheses and theories to prove, but generate theories and hypotheses as it is in GT as some several researchers suggest see (Gorsuch, 1983). The third step of using

the EFA the researcher considered the multiple decision rules that are supposed to be used simultaneously.

The researcher selected the multivariate criteria rules for its simplicity that would help to decide factors extraction. This was why the decisions had to be done. The first decision rule was KMO criterion, which was used along with the Eigen values greater than (> 1) rule as per (Kaiser, 1974). The other was a scree plot break point that would determine the number of factors to be retained as per Bartlett (1950) and Kaiser (1974) in (Williams *et al.,* 2012). The scree plot was more preferred because of its accuracy compared to Eigen value in determining the factor components to retain. The rationale for this was because no single criterion is recommended to suffice for the EFA method, but multiple.

In the fourth stage, the researcher selected a suitable rotational method of extracting factors. This stage was performed because it was capable of showing the area, where the most plausible factors were leaning, hence allowing to proceed with further investigation. The researcher preferred the oblique as the best factor because it was capable of yielding the correlated constructs. Second rationale was because, this study being the GT, oblique method was fit because the researcher had no intention to falsify, or confirm prior variables, rather the researcher sought to generate the grounded theory and hypotheses as advised in (Costello and Orbone, 2005 and Williams *et al.*, 2012). Lastly, in the fifth step the researcher decided on how the extracted factors would be interpreted and labelled as per (Williams *et al.*, 2012).

3.9.9 Constant comparison methods and documentary content analysis

Finally, the constant comparative analysis was employed across the entire study. The rationale for employing comparative method was due to the possibility to consider strengths and weakness of the arguments. Theorists of the GT in all three versions are in consensus that indeed the constant comparison method is a hub of the GT (Glaser and Strauss, 1967; Strauss and Corbin, 1990; Charmaz, 2006). Above all, the documentary content analysis was as well used to analyse contents of both primary obtained official documents like gray dissertations see exhibit (Appendix, II). All these multivariate analytical methods elaborate the triangulation that was done in this study, together they complemented each other.

3.10 Rigor and Trustworthiness versus Reliability and Validity

Reliability and validity are epistemological criteria of measuring credibility of the created knowledge belonging to rhetorical language of positivists' paradigm, whose ontological position of observing reality is objectivism. Since the post positivists' group of constructivists underpinned this study, its ontological position of observing reality was relativism. Consequently, the researcher used the appropriate constructivists' rhetorical language of emphasising rigor, transferability, dependability and trustworthiness rather than reliability and validity criteria.

3.10.1 Research rigor insurance

In this study, the research rigor either referred to some systematic principles pertaining to positivists' or post positivists' groups guided by a certain philosophy. The research rigour in this study was guaranteed by triangulation of multivariate methods, prolonged

engagement and member checking and auditing. By a strategy of using the multivariate strategies the researcher triangulated at a shop floor level appropriately by using various qualitative methods, where they worked as proposed in (Sandelowsky, 2000). The pragmatism philosophy that underpinned this study permitted the flexibility on what worked best.

That philosophy was a rationale for choice of the GT rigor. Second, the rigor was ensured by studying the respondents in the studied context for 11 months for collecting data as the permission letters reveal, and the analysis, and writing this thesis, took even longer from 2012 to 2017. Third, the research rigor was ensured by means of member checking and auditing. This was done before going to the field. The brief undetailed blue print proposal was presented at the faculty of education of OUT for faculty the members to give their inputs. Distant graduate participants were checked through telephone and e mails.

Those graduates had to confirm receiving a questionnaire, their consent to participate in the study. The collected and analysed data were critiqued and edited several times by researcher's supervisor. Time to time consultation of educational research experts, and other PhD interested mates read the researcher's thesis. The critiques were used to sharpen tools in the field and latter sharpened the thesis itself. Addressing the lessons learnt, while conducting the grounded theory study, Bowen (2005) in one of his suggestions encourages the qualitative researchers to abandon "numbers flight phobia" saying; "*…never be afraid to include numerical data that may emerge along qualitative research…"*

It is advised that the appropriateness is what is required to find where numbers may be complementary in providing adequate explanation of the collected qualitative data. Elaborating the research rigor Bowen (2005) presents six strategies mentioned previously that exist for ensuring rigor of the created knowledge.

3.11 Ethical Issues

In this study, ethical issues refer to the axiological fifth part constituting any research paradigm. It relates to morality on the issue of what researchers ought to do correctly, when conducting any research project and avoid fallacies like plagiarism.

In this study ethical issues were ensured by obtaining legalised permission from the Open University DRPS, that introduced the researcher to administrators of areas of conducting this study at University of UDSM and at OUT (App. I). Secondly, ethical issues involved the permission to read candidates' 86 dissertations as illustrated in exhibit gate pass for reading gray theses (Appendices IA; IB; IC).

Much more, the issues of ethics involved the issue of confidentiality and observing human rights by the researcher. In view of this, the researcher ensured that every respondent had to consent to participation (Appendix IV). The researcher also promised confidentiality for every respondent whatever the talk was held. On issue of beauty sub branch of philosophy, qualified and experienced editors edited this study. So far, several other experts including my supervisors scrutinized the document before submission to the EEs.

3.12 Chapter Summary

Chapter Three covered the comprehensively the research methodology as per constructivists' GT. It covered the area of the study, target population, issues of saturated sample size, and the theoretical sampling technique, as well as research methods. Towards the end of the chapter, the issues of epistemological conditions of true knowledge as reliability, validity, axiological ethical issues, and emergent analysis plan and chapter summary were presented.

CHAPTER FOUR

4.0 DATA PRESANTATION, ANALYSIS AND DISCUSSION

4.1 Introduction

Chapter four is a continuation of what began in the previous three chapters. It forms the first part of data presentation, analysis, and discussion about researchers' clarity of the research paradigm conceptions in relation to the dissertation quality scores performance for initial phase one of data collection. Part two consists of the analysed data from phase two of data collection forming chapter five. Besides those parts, part three on the same, consists of analysed data from phase three of data collection forming chapter six. The rationale for having three separate chapters in separate phases was based on the rationale that, the GT requires a separate initial phase to address obligatory four exploratory guiding research questions.

The generated findings from exploratory questions become conceptual building blocks for the latter chapters. The initial exploratory questions too, are supposed to inform the researcher on emerged core pressing issue, core conceptual categories, participants and core ongoing processes, the number of phases to have, and on what to do in subsequent phases. The second rationale for having three separate chapters was because the researcher collected data in three separate phases, hence necessitating three separate chapters for clarity sake. Much more, the researcher thought the separation would make this study more readable to avoid bulky information under one chapter.

Suffice to say that, the data presentation, analysis, and discussion in this study followed the pragmatism philosophy as well as Grounded Theory (GT) nomenclature suggesting

the organisation of the study to follow objectives with their sub research questions. The GT nomenclature suggests beginning with the initial phase first to address four initial guiding exploratory research questions. Such initial exploratory guiding research questionswere1 (i a) asking what core pressing issue emerged from the studied universities context? 1 (i b) Which core dominant conceptual categories emerged from the studied universities context? 1(i c) who were the main research participants emerging from the studied universities context; and 1 (i d) what ongoing core processes emerged from the studied universities context?

By so doing, the obtained insights guided the researcher what to analyse next in the subsequent phases in line with GT studies nomenclature requirements (Charmaz, 2006). The analysis of objective comes first.

4.2 Research for Dissertations: Core issue, Categories, Respondents, Processes

The grand research question underlying this study was *how is researchers' clarity for the research paradigm (worldviews) philosophical conceptions a contributory factor among factors influencing quality dissertations completion and score grades pass rates in the studied universities?* The main objective of this study was to explore the studied respondents' perspectives capable of generating fresh hypotheses and GT, explaining how the clarity of the explicit research paradigm and its implicit philosophical conceptions, influences candidates' increase of low dissertations completion, and marginal low-quality final score pass rates in the studied universities. By so doing, the researcher expected to come up with interventional way forward proposals of improving the observed phenomenon. Analysis of objective one begins.

Consequently, objective one (1) examined if the studied universities teach explicit research paradigm “worldview” and its implicit philosophical conceptions to the Masters (M.A) candidates in the course of teaching educational research for dissertations. The chapter begins by addressing obligatory four exploratory initial guiding sub research questions as required by the GT nomenclature. These exploratory initial guiding questions in objective was 1(I a) what core ongoing pressing issue emerged in the studied context? The researcher used documentary and interview methods to collect data, while the content and constant comparison methods were used to analyse data where appropriate for objective one.

4.2.1 Emerged core ongoing issue from compared universities assessment tools.

The first encountered documentary field data was a single assessment tool form report also known as the External Examiners’ Assessment Form report (EEAFs 2004-2017) for dissertations/ theses at the Open University of Tanzania (OUT) for the Faculty of Education illustrated in Appendices (XI; XII) and Figure 4.1 illustrated hereunder.

PART A

ASESSED ITEMS	EEAFs Subthemes		Scores	
		%	Maximum	Actual
6.1. Abstract	i) Clear statement of abstract	**4**	4	
6.2. Theoretical background	i) **Clear** identification of statement of the problem.	**22**	3	
	ii) **Clear** hypotheses/questions.		3	
	iii) **Clear** objectives.		3	
	iv) Well defined significance and scope.		3	
	v) Background knowledge/literature review.		5	
	vi) Empirical studies		5	
6.3.Research Methodology	**i) Clear** explanation of research **paradigm** and **design.**		5	
	ii) Research design is appropriate.		2	
	iii) Full description of sampling.		3	
	iv) Sampling procedures/methods are appropriate.		2	
	v) **Clear** explanation of unit of inquiry, measurement, and methods.		2	
	vi) Clear description of data collection procedures/methods is appropriate.	**25**	3	
	vi) Data collection procedures are appropriate.		5	
	vii) **Clear** formulation of research instruments.		3	
6.4. Analysis of findings	i) Explanation of data cleaning.		2	
	ii) Testing of reliability and validity assessment.		5	
	iii) Appropriate.		7	
	iv) Analysis/presentation-of methods.		6	
	v) Systematic analysis and interpretation of results.	**40**	14	
	vi) Conclusion: implications of research findings to knowledge research and policy.		6	
6.5. Presentation	i) Well presented, text and exhibits well organised.	**9**	4	
	ii) Notes, Bibliography and appendices well presented.		3	
	iii) Overall presentation of the dissertation well done.		2	
		Total	**100**	

***Letter Grade * Quality Letter Grades: A=70-100; B+=60-69; B=50-59; C=40-49; D=35-39, E=0-34**

Figure 4.1: Contents of OUT External Assessment Form for Dissertations

Name of Examiner.....Signature.....Date.....

From Figure 4.1, one observes the sample of the assessment form that the researcher encountered at OUT. In the same document, one also observes several assessed items, column with major themes in serial Arabic numbers from 6.1 to 6.5. One of the sub themes under the major theme of methodology reveals the engulfed sub theme 6.3 (i) with a phrase reading; *...clear explanation of research paradigm and design...* This became a central focus from where the catchy words for the title of this study were derived. Implicitly, this sub theme obliges the studied candidates, supervisors, and the External Examiners (EEs) to pay attention in ensuring clarification of the explicit research paradigm is done prior, along the research design in methodology section (Figure 4.1).

The engulfed sub theme 6.3 (i) prompted the researcher to conduct this study. Under Figure 4.1, one also observes the column with scores in measures of maximum and actual. Below Figure 4.1 the documents ends with a key giving insights about descriptive statistics type of non-parametric statistical ordinal values in terms of ranges of scores from 0-100. The key interprets further the values of non-parametric nominal descriptive values in qualitative letter grades from A to E, representing the quality of varying dissertations scores performance. The initial analysis of the encountered field document also known as the External Examiners' Assessment Form report (EEAFs) at OUT.

The EEAFs document suggested to the researcher to further pursue a similar document with similar assessment process for Master's degree programme of research for dissertations from the University of Dar es Salaam (UDSM). This move of seeking another similar document from another university with similar context was essential,

because of opted constant comparison analysis method. Table 4.1a illustrates the UDSM assessment tool on similar part A.

UDSM/PG. F9

UNIVERSITY OF DAR ES SALAAM SCHOOL OF EDUCATION Internal and External Evaluation form FE699 (Dissertation)

Table 4.1(a): Contents of UDSM External Assessment Form for Dissertations

Candidate's Name.....

Areas Assessed	Out of	Marks	Grade	Remarks
✓ Preliminaries	05			
✓ Introduction	10			
✓ Literature Review	15			
✓ Methodology	20			
✓ Data Presentation and Discussion of Findings	35			
✓ Conclusions	10			
✓ References/Bibliography	05			
✓ **Total**	**100**			

Key: The weighting of different grade scores is further interpreted as follows.

A	B+	B	C	D	E
70+	60-69	50-59	40-49	30-39	-34

***Signature of Examiner..... Date..... Print Name**.....

***Date passed to coordinator of Post Graduate Programmes**.....

From Table 4.1a, one observes the similar sample of the assessment form tool of the UDSM labelled with similar role of assessing Master's degree candidates' dissertations contrasted with that at OUT. Unlike OUT tool, which has three columns in Figure 4.1, that of the UDSM has five columns, whereby the first has areas to be assessed, column

with marks out of 100 statistical score grades are in grade letters with the examiner's remarks (Table 4.1a). The analysed assessment tool of OUT, carries only five major themes detailed with sub-sub themes to guide assessors of dissertations. In contrast, the UDSM same tool consists of eight major themes without details to guide external examiners (Table 4a).

One sees further that the emerged themes with multi concepts in part A of the UDSM same tool being: preliminaries, introduction, literature review, and methodology. However, in contrast while the OUT same tool mentions the research paradigm in the major theme of methodology explicitly in Figure 4.1. Unlike OUT, the UDSM same tool lacks the sub theme about the explicit research paradigm. The absence of the research paradigm in the UDSM same tool, casts doubts whether the external examiners assess this sub theme as OUT does at this level. The absence of such theme in the UDSM assessment tool in Table 4.1a became a rationale that guided the researcher to focus the entire study at OUT, in which the sub theme of the explicit paradigm emerged from its assessment tool (Figure 4.1; Table 4.1a).

The fifth major theme of the UDSM assessment tool is data presentation and discussion of findings, the sixth is conclusions, the seventh is references and the eighth is Bibliography (Table 4a). When the UDSM assessment tool is compared to that of OUT, it ends with parametric values from 0-100, which the EEs use to award marks for quality of varying assessed items across the dissertations in both studied universities. These numerical values are further interpreted in terms of nonparametric

qualitative weighting grade scores namely A as a symbol of highest quality, while letter B+(Positive) symbolises higher Very Good quality.

The key also reveals the marginal grade categories namely: marginal high-quality B (flat) symbolising marginal high quality, while marginal low-quality lettered C symbolises marginal low quality, marginal lower quality D and the marginal lowest lettered E for the assessed dissertations in the studied universities context (Figure 4.1; Table 4.1a). The simultaneous field analysis of both documents has more details in part B, which is the second part of these compared assessment tools illustrated in latter (Table 4b). Part B, consists of the examiners' recommendations for the dissertation and category of verdicts in both universities of OUT and UDSM as in subsequent Table 4.1b.

Table 4.1(b):OUT Categories Emerged from External Examiners' Tool Verdicts

7.1	PASSES	Tick appropriate Verdict
	7.1.1 Dissertation **PASSESS AS IT IS (**No revision or typographical corrections required).	
	7.1.2 Dissertation **PASSES SUBJECT TO** (No revision or typographical corrections and other minor changes as detailed on separate sheets(s) or in the dissertation. Dissertations **PASSES SUBJECT** to major changes as detailed on separate sheets(s) or in the dissertation.	
7.2	**NOT ACCEPTED AS IT IS BUT MAY BE RESUBMITTED** after one or more of the following items (specify) or in the dissertation. a) Additional data collection b) Additional analysis c) Additional literature review d) Re-writing e) Others (specify)	
7.3.	**REJECTED OUTRIGHT** **7.3.1.** Dissertation is rejected outright, specify reasons on separate sheet.	

External-Examiners (EEs)……Signature…….....

From Table 4.1(b), one sees the second part of the assessment form tool for assuring quality of dissertations for the Open University of Tanzania, in the studied faculty as detailed in later constant comparison of part B with similar document from the UDSM in Table 4.1c.

.... UDSM/PG. F9

UDSM RECOMMENDATIONS SUMMARY ON MASTERS' DEGREES DISSERTATIONS/THESES PART B

Name of Candidate.....

Degree registered.....

Dissertations/ Theses Title.....

Table 4.1(c): UDSM Categories Emerging from External Examiners' Verdicts

1.	Thesis PASSES AS IT IS (No revisions or typography) **(Tick)**
2.	PASSES SUBJECT TO typographical corrections or typographical corrections and other minor changes (list the errors/changes on separate sheet).
3.	NOT ACCEPTED AS IT IS BUT MAY BE RE-SUBMITTED after one or more of the following. Please (V). * ✓ Additional data collection (...) ✓ Additional analysis (...) ✓ Additional literature review (...) ✓ Re-writing (...) ✓ Other (specify on separate sheet)
4.	Thesis REJECTED OUGHTRIGHT (Specify) reasons on separate sheet)

Source: Field Data (2018)

Key:
*****Minor changes refer to editorial corrections, slight re-organisation of sections and minor modifications of tables, programs or sentences.

Comparatively, from contents of Tables 4.1(b) and 4.1(c), one observes part B of the UDSM assessment form with similarities; with part B of the OUT assessment tool in (Table 4.1a). One could sum up some emerged major themes and sub themes as the result of comparing two universities assessment tool contents found in the field as Table 4.1d illustrates.

Table 4.1(d): Comparison between Assessed Major Themes and Sub themes

OUT Assessment tool with eight undetailed major themes	UDSM assessment tool with assessed detailed eight assessed major themes
✓ Abstract (with single subtheme). ✓ Background to the problem (with six sub themes) ✓ Research methodology (with eight sub themes, ne is ***clear of research design*** ✓ Data presentation (with six sub themes) ✓ Analysis of the findings (with three sub themes) Key **Key** Parametric values scores from 0-100 Parametric values scores from 0-100 and Non-parametric letter grades A-E (Figure 4.1). Non-parametric letter grades A-E (Table 4.1a). Examiner's remarks From part B **From part B** Similarly, the tool has examiners' recommendations for recommendations, for the dissertation the dissertation and category of verdicts. and category of verdicts.	✓ Preliminaries ✓ Introduction ✓ Literature review ✓ Methodology ✓ Data presentation paradigm ***and*** ✓ Data Discussion ✓ Conclusions ✓ References/Bibliography

Source: Field Data (2018).

From Table 4.1(d), the researcher identified major themes and sub themes addressing exploratory guiding question of objective one 1 (ia) asking, which core issue emerged from the studied universities context. The merged themes precisely were;

- ✓ Lack of consensus on exact meaning explicit research paradigm conceptions ongoing issue
- ✓ Lack of consensus on amount of implicit conceptions constituting paradigm ongoing issue
- ✓ Reductionism fallacy from varying perspectives on research paradigm

4.2.1.1. Lack of consensus in compared universities assessment tools issue

From the initial constant comparison of the studied universities assessment tool contents in their parts A and B, one draws some insights about the emerging ongoing pressing ***core issue*** in both studied universities context. The initial analysed data suggested the pressing issue to be the lack of consensus on the extent of emphasising and including the explicit research paradigm sub theme, with its implicit underpinned philosophical conceptions in the course of research for dissertations, as detailed further in chapter five (Appendices IIIA; IIIB; Table 4.1d). The constant comparison method of the primary documents revealed that either the two studied universities seem to be at liberty to include or not to include the explicit research paradigm subtheme.

The researcher's observation is exhibited in Figure 4.1, where the OUT includes the explicit research paradigm sub theme under the methodology part but the UDSM does not include it anywhere in the assessment form (Table 4.1a). Furthermore, the analysed

documentary data revealed that there is lack of consensus among the studied researchers about the scope of concepts constituting the holistic paradigm during the process of teaching the social (educational) research course constituting the holistic research paradigm. However, both universities seem to be in consensus of including some few implicit underpinned philosophical conceptions pertaining to the explicit research paradigm. This is exhibited in the studied universities course outlines in Appendices (IIIA and IIIB).

4.2.1.2 Lack of consensus on implicit conceptions making paradigm issue

While the UDSM includes four conceptions namely ontology, epistemology, methodology and interpretivism (OEMI), the OUT-course outline two conceptions of philosophy and methodology (PM) appear (Appendices IIIA; IIIB). This finding suggested the ongoing ***reductionism fallacy*** in the studied universities, implying the habit of including only some conceptions making up the holistic paradigm, as if other conceptions are not part making the whole. The initial analysis of interviewed participants, primary, as well as secondary sources in this study revealed that the holistic paradigm is made up of seven implicit philosophical conceptions. These are namely: philosophy, ontology, epistemology, methodology, axiology, logic and rhetoric language (POEMALOR) see interviews responses (STUD #35; EE #2: 16.5014; EE#2: 6.9.014; Table 5.6; Appendix XIII).

4.2.1.3 Reductionism fallacy from varying views on research paradigm

The analysis too suggested that the habit of including only some philosophical conceptions during teaching, learning, writing, supervising, defending, assessing the

research for dissertations perpetuates the reductionism fallacy in the studied universities context. The analysed primary documentary data suggested further that the studied researchers not only lacked consensus about the meaning, relevancy, but also on the primacy of the explicit research paradigm. This finding seems to be in line with the existing secondary knowledge among expert philosophers of social research like Carr. Commenting on the place of some paradigm implicit conceptions like philosophy and axiology in educational research Carr (1995) asks;

> *"…can those who carry out educational research safely ignore that part of their subject of philosophy that underlies their own investigations…?* [For Carr the relevance of values in educational research cannot be over emphasised adding that;]*…although educational researchers may, and usually study educational values, this should not be taken to mean that philosophy and values do not permeate their works…"* (Carr, 1995:90-97).

Carr cautions further that; *values are so vital an ingredient in educational research that their elimination is impossible save by eliminating the research enterprise itself…* (Carr, 1995).

The studied researchers were interviewed about whether they were aware of the relevance of inclusion of the explicit paradigm construct and its underpinned philosophical conceptions in processes of teaching and learning of the research for dissertations course. The responses from the interviewed participants exhibited the lack of being conversant with the meaning, relevance, scope, and primacy construct of the research paradigm and its conceptions in the course of the research for dissertations as exhibited in the following excerpts from interview responses. When asked to say what

the candidate understands about the research paradigm construct in relation to educational research, the graduate STUD# 87 from OUT had the following opinions to respond;

> *"…If I understood your question well, asked me to elaborate what the paradigm refers to in relation to educational research.* [Sure, you are quite right!] *Well, in the first place, I don't know what the paradigm refers to, and how it relates to the research process.* [When asked why it was so while it was imperative to be informed about varying research paradigms prior to the field, the response was;] *"But my supervisor neither asked me nor bothered to mention or elaborated such strange term to me, how could I have known its relevance...!"* (STUD#87: 27.11.014).

When asked to indicate whether the explicit paradigm and its scope in terms of its properties are clarified by the university lecturers and supervisors in educational research for dissertations course, some more prospective graduand graduates on cell phone and on line to site few STUD#32 of OUT responded on cell phone responding to the researcher's probes;

> *"…Mheshimiwa [implying honourable], in your questionnaire, I read the list of paradigm components, I never read the concept of paradigm nor been exposed to the list of its conceptions as you outlined them to me, not before, during, after the course work or my fieldwork. For this matter, I am of the opinion that I don't know what paradigm refers to and how it relates to the research process…"* [When encouraged to explain whether his supervisor clarified the paradigms clarity, the response of the same candidate wrote through online questionnaire]; *"…No one time my supervisor dared to ask me nor bothered with the term paradigm. I suppose my ignorance of what paradigm implies in research, as you revealed identified them to me on your questionnaire are new to me. Whether this was one of the responsible factors for my lower achievement of "B" instead of grades of "B+ and A", Am not certain …"* (STUD# 32: 7.5.014).

Another interviewed candidate STUD#23 contributed on the same on-going motion, responding that;

> *"…Truly, I am aware with the term paradigm in research as perspectives I may say it relates to the field of research because this is, where I encountered it. Nevertheless, the way it relates to the dissertation's performance is a puzzle to me. I mean, I cannot exactly elaborate further, how it does. Though I had an ample time with my supervisor, but we never discussed such a concept in my research, or maybe we discussed it in an indirect way…*" (STUD#23: 6.5.2014).

Responding to the researcher's probe on whether the lecturer is familiar with a relevancy of research paradigm construct in research for dissertations course, one of the expert lecturer supervisors (SUP#8) at OUT responded saying that;

> *"…Yap, am familiar with the term paradigm though, I use it rarely in my lectures! Suffice to say that the research paradigm belongs to social science research in particular educational research. However, it is not commonly applied term especially at the level of M.A at our university because in Tanzania universities I happened to teach educational research, researchers use it sparingly in. Nevertheless, unlike abroad universities like the one, where I studied the research paradigms emphasis on clarity of research philosophical issues like paradigm are certain, before beginning research field. To me paradigms are important since they are* ***ways****, where one finds a guide on how to write appropriate set up of research problem, appropriate methods, to rationalise why and how of the decisions especially on methodological components…"* (SUP #8: 17.3.2014).

The other EE# 2 lecturer at the UDSM added curiously wondering;

> *"…Duh! You have raised out a very difficult area in the research that culminates into a dissertation. In fact, even at the level of the PhDs, is not well articulated by several inexperienced researchers. Fortunately, I am marking one of the dissertations for the Ph.D. of my university, I can tell you that no mention of the paradigm anywhere across the dissertation. The researcher has only provided the philosophy of pragmatism. Do you know pragmatism? Is it a philosophy or paradigm? But I suppose it is not a paradigm, isn't' it…?"* (EE# 2: 16.5.014).

Much more, when probed to say on the familiarity of what the paradigm refers to, the expert respondent EE#2 a lecturer at the UDSM had this to say;

> *"…Well, to me paradigm is just a* ***parameter*** *that determines a scope of the study. It has to do with both positivists' and post positivists' schools of thought translated in the* ***qualitative or quantitative*** *or both, I suppose. However, the term paradigm is not commonly used in our universities in particular at our UDSM, though its relevance cannot be questioned in the course of research…*" (EE#2: 16.5.014).

Suffice to say that the compared data from two universities tool's contents and some interviewed participants' responses provided the researcher with some emerged core themes as initial conceptual building blocks for subsequent sub chapters of chapter four and five. The analysis suggested the possibility that the lack of consensus on what the paradigm refers to as well as the amount of concepts constituting the holistic explicit paradigm, has been giving loophole to the examiners to award marks on the theme of paradigm as they wish inconsistently at OUT. This being the case the sub theme 6.3 (i) has been robbing candidate their 5 marks. The analysis too suggested that apart from lack of clarity of paradigm factor, the EEs' inconsistencies in the tool of EEs has been one of the factors for increase in dissertations low completion and marginal low-quality score pass rates **(**Tables 5.7 and 5.8); Appendices (XI; XII) in chapter five.

While this has been a trend for almost past 13 years ago at OUT, the initial analysis finding, seemed to suggest that the emerged lack of consensus in clarifying conceptions constituting the explicit paradigm in social (educational) research, is another potential contributory underlying factor for increase of low dissertations completion and marginal low quality performance rates in particular at OUT faculty of education. This finding tallies with some existing knowledge in authors like Mackenzie and Knipe (2006) criticism for their fellow authors, who do not exhaust the topic of paradigm in research texts.

The blame is upon authors for covering little contents on the explicit paradigm either at the beginning of a text or late at the end of texts (Mackenzie and Knipe, 2006). These authors add that by so doing, they expose the inexperienced learners of scientific research not knowing, where particularly the research paradigm fits in the research process (Mackenzie and Knipe, 2006). Other related secondary existing knowledge cementing this finding in this study includes, Patton cements further pointing a finger on some university's lecturers, whom he labels conservatives, who blindfold their students by not telling them the relevance of paradigms in the research process (Patton, 1990).

Other tallying primary reviewed sources like Jacob supports the previous views by Mackenzie and Knipe (2006) contending that indeed; the research paradigms role is unpopular among the researchers almost in all fields of human learning. Researchers take research paradigms for granted as irrelevant (Jacob, 2009). The perspectives of what the research paradigm consists of are well documented in Guba and Lincoln (2005). Carr (1995), Bogdan and Biklin (1998), and Williams (1998). Other supportive reviewed conceptual sources to this finding were Creswell (1994, 2010; 2012) view constituents of paradigm as philosophy, ontology, epistemology, and methodology (POEM).

Teays (1995), Chilisa and Preece (2005), Guba and Lincoln (2005) view it as involving methodology, axiological values, logic and rhetoric language (MALOR). This was why the researcher combined varying and repeating perspectives to come up with holistic paradigm model constituted of seven conceptions namely: philosophy, ontology,

epistemology, methodology, axiology, logic and rhetoric language abbreviated (POEMALOR). From the précis of compared EEs' dissertation scores report contents for two universities in Table 4.1d and from interviews further emerging issues for further discussion were;

- ✓ Emerged unique trend about the potential close relationship from compared paradigm subtheme and dissertations scores signalling crude GT.
- ✓ Emerged core constructs in the studied context
- ✓ Emerged sub construct categories in studied context
- ✓ Emerged main respondents in the emerged processes
- ✓ Emerged core ongoing activities and processes.

4.2.2. Compared paradigm subtheme and dissertation scores unique trend

The relationship between one's clarity for paradigm sub theme was not known prior until, when the researcher compared scores for the paradigm subtheme versus the entire dissertations. In other words, the researcher was still puzzled not knowing how the engulfed sub theme in Figure 4.1, about one's clarity of research paradigm subtheme might be a factor among factors influencing increase of candidates' dissertations quality completion and final pass rates. The initial constant comparative analysis findings from the assessed primary documents, whose contents are in Figure 4.1, Tables 4.1a, 4.1b, and 4.1c, suggested to the researcher what to do next.

- ✓ Emerged unique trend about the potential close relationship from compared paradigm subtheme and dissertations scores signaling crude GT.
- ✓ Emerged core constructs in the studied context
- ✓ Emerged sub construct categories in studied context

- ✓ Emerged main respondents in the emerged processes
- ✓ Emerged core ongoing activities and processes

The generation of the GT requires the researcher to collect and analyse data simultaneously in the field, the researcher subjected 64 out of 68 candidates' reports from the external examiners for the assessed dissertations. The researcher used purposefully criterion and theoretical saturation sampling procedure to obtain adequate analysed reports and to discover the resulting trend. The external examiners' awarded scores were manually analysed to get the sense out of these.

4.2.2.1 Compared excellent scores for paradigm subtheme and dissertations trend

Having collected 64 reports from two studied universities contexts, the content data were initially subjected to the manual analysis. The manual analysis of data from the same assessment tools revealed that they portrayed varying final scores ranging between 0 and 100. The letter grades from A to E accompanied awarded marks for dissertations as the keys of the assessment tools from two universities in Tables 4.2a, 4.2b, 4.2c, and 4.2d reveal. Table 4.2a comes first.

Table 4.2(a): Excellent Grade- "A" Dissertations versus Paradigm subtheme

Dissertations performed Grade	Achievers	Paradigm Theme Performed	Achievers
A	05	A	03
		B+	01
		B	01
		C	----
		E	**05**
Total	**05**		

Source: Field Data (2018).

- ✓ **Key:** Grades reflecting the achievement encountered in the EEs' assessment tool in relation to the paradigm subtheme 6.3 (i) within it.
- ✓ **1**: EEs' field assessment score range for Entire dissertation Scores and grades: A=70-100; B+=60-69; B= 50-59; C=40-49; D=30-39; E= 0-29.
- ✓ **Key 2:** External Examiners' awards for paradigm sub theme 5 out of 5 Marks.
- ✓ Marks range: Letter A-ranges between 3.5 and 5 out of 5 marks =70-100; B+ ranges between 3.4 and 3 out of 5 marks = 60-69.
- ✓ B= ranges between 2.9 and 2.5 out of 5 marks =50-59; C ranges between = 2.4 and 2 out of marks 5 = 40-49; D ranges between 1.9 and 1.5 out of 5 marks 3039; E ranges between = 0 and1 out of 5 marks =0-29.
- ✓ GPA- referred to Grade Average Point.

Table 4.2(a), shows sixty-four reports that the researcher analysed for candidates' dissertations from external examiners with aim to compare paradigm sub theme 6.3 (i) in Figure 4.1, versus performance for the entire dissertation. The researcher put those reports in groups as per their verdicts and grade keys in (Table 4.2a). It was revealed that group one had only five candidates, who were the best performers in writing excellent dissertations, hence were awarded by the EEs the quality grade lettered "A" for entire dissertation and similarly, they obtained excellent scores on the clarification of the sub theme 6.3 (i) with research paradigm and design (Figure 4.1).

4.2.2.2. Compared very good paradigm subtheme and entire dissertations scores

Out of five candidates, one (very few) was awarded a marginal B (flat) while four candidates out of five (the majority) were awarded either excellent "A" or with Very Good B + quality grades. None was awarded a (poor) C, (poorer) D or a (poorest) E. Table 4.2a continues with portrayal of candidates wh0 passed with a very good letter grade B+.

Table 4.2(b): Grade- B+ Dissertations Versus Paradigm Score Performance

Actual Dissertations Performed Grade	Number of Achievers	Paradigm Theme Performed Grade	Number of Achievers
B+	18	A	04
		B+	11
		B	---
		C	03
		D E	-- -
Total	**18**		**18**

Source: Field Data (2018).

Table 4.2(b) shows eighteen achievers. Four (few) out of eighteen candidates, were awarded "A" grade for excellent quality, while the (majority) eleven out of eighteen had a Very Good B+ quality grade on both, sub theme of paradigm and design and entire dissertation. However, none in this category of performers performed with low marginal B (flat) quality grade. However (very few) three out of eighteen candidates performed had a marginal C grade indicating lower quality. No candidate was awarded with marginal D or E grades for lowest quality of graded sub theme or the entire dissertation.

4.2.2.3 Compared marginal high scores for paradigm subtheme and dissertations trend.

The other group of the dissertations was those normally categorised with the marginal average low scores with B (Flat) grade as Table 4.2c portrays.

Table 4.2(c): Marginal Grade- B Dissertation versus Paradigm Theme scores

S/N	Actual Dissertations performed Grade	Number of Achievers	Paradigm Theme Grade	Number of Achievers
	B (Flat)	34	A	02
			B+	11
			B	08
			C	12
			D	---
			E	01
	Total	**34**		**34**

Source: Field Data (2018).

From Table 4.2(c) 34 candidates had similar results by scoring a B (flat) grade as a score for the entire dissertation. However, they showed differences in paradigm theme score whereby; two candidates (2) scored highest A grade, eleven 11 candidates scored a higher B+ grade, eight (8) candidates scored marginal high B (flat) grade, twelve (12) scored marginal low C grade. No candidate scored marginal lower D grade, while only one (1) candidate scored the marginal lowest E grade. In this thesis grades B, C, D and E for dissertations, were labelled as the marginal grades.

The labelling resulted from the researcher's observation of candidates' progressive report in their SARIS in Tables 6.3; 6.4 revealing that once a candidate's dissertation achieves one of those grades, they affect the entire course negatively by lowering the General Point Average (GPAs), no matter how the course work was outstanding. Conversely, when the candidate achieves grades A and B+ for the dissertation, these higher grades affect the candidate's entire course positively by raising it to the best GPA

ranging from 3.8, no matter the coursework had marginal high B(Flat) score grades (see Tables 4.2c; 6.3; 6.4).

4.2.2.4 Marginal low scores for paradigm subtheme and dissertations trend

The fourth category of performers was of candidates, who scored scores worthy lower letter grade C, D, and E for the entire dissertation. Unfortunate at Masters level verdict ranging in these categories are regarded as of low quality, leading to the verdict of failure in the studied universities. These verdicts category had (very few), seven out of sixty-four candidates, whose performance was on the entire dissertations versus paradigm sub theme as Table 4.2(d) illustrates.

Table 14.2(d): Lower Grade C to E Dissertations versus Paradigm Scores

S/N	Actual Dissertations Performed Grade	Number of achievers	Paradigm theme performed Grade	Number of achievers
	C, D, E	07	A	---
			B+	02
			B	----
			C	02
			D	01
			E	02
	Total	**07**		**07**

Source: Field Data (2018).

In Table 4.2(d), one observes that only seven candidates out of sixty-four achieved low quality grades, C, marginal lower D, or marginal lowest E on the entire dissertations. The analysis still reveals that (the majority) five out of seven dissertations were graded at the marginal low, lower, and lowest grades with the exception of (very few) two out of seven, which were awarded a (Very Good) B+ grade. From the data, the analysis makes it clear that dissertations in this category were of major corrections and were to

be resubmitted too. Labels for verdict comments in this category are either to "re-do, or reject outright" (Table 42d).

Further analysis reveals that none of the candidates out of seven got an excellent award, "A" grade on the paradigm sub theme. So far, none of the candidates in this category had a B (flat) grade. Only one (very few) had a marginal lower D grade on paradigm sub theme. Conclusively, from the comparative analysis of sixty-four (64) candidates' dissertations assessment reports from the external examiners with varying verdicts for assessed contents, one sees four emerged lessons about clarification of explicit research paradigm along design sub theme 6.3 (i), versus entire dissertations as follows:

- ✓ That, the majority, three out of five best candidates, who managed to clarify the sub theme 6.3 (i) on the research paradigm and design scored an A grade, and maintained similar excellent quality scores on the entire dissertations, as per external examiners 'reports (Table 4.2a).

- ✓ That, the majority, eleven out of eighteen candidates, who managed to clarify the sub theme 6.3 (i) on research paradigm and design scored a B+ grade signifying Very Good quality performance and maintained a similar score on the entire dissertation, as per external examiners' reports (Table 4.2b).

- ✓ That, the majority, twenty-one out of thirty four candidates, who managed to clarify the sub theme of 6.3 (i) on research paradigm and design performed at moderate or marginal low quality with a B(Flat) grade and maintained a similar score on the entire dissertation as per external examiners' reports (Table 4.2b).

However, in this marginal category, few thirteen out of thirty four, deviated the trend by scoring either excellent A highest or very good higher B+ score grades; likewise the marginal B (Flat) high grade on the clarity of paradigm sub theme compared to performance of the entire dissertation (Tables 4.2c; 4.2d).

- ✓ Finally, the majority, five out of seven candidates, who managed to clarify the sub theme of 6.3 (i) on the research paradigm and design had either marginal grades reading lowest D, and lowest E quality grades but maintained similar marginal scores respectively, on their entire dissertations. However, very few, two out of seven candidates deviated the trend by achieving very good quality score grade lettered (B+) on the explanation of paradigm sub theme, though they achieved the marginal lowest score grades on the entire dissertations. In this category, none achieved excellent, A, or marginal high B (Flat) quality grades for explanation of research paradigm theme (Table 4.2 d).

From that constant comparative analysis of OUT 64 candidates' dissertation reports from the external examiners on the assessment tool contents in Figure (4.1); Tables (4.1a, b, c, d); Tables (4.2a, 4.2b, 4.2c, 4.2d); checklist 9Appendix x), one may initially infer a crude emerged substantive grounded theory. The emerged substantive GT at an initial stage of analysis in Tables (4.2a; 4,2b; 4.2c and4.2d) suggested two main initial lessons. First, it suggested that the ongoing pressing core issue in both studied universities context related to the course of research for dissertations, is lack of consensus about how one's clarity for the research paradigm may be a factor among

factors influencing increase in candidates' dissertations quality completion and final score pass rates in the studied universities context.

The constant analysis in similar tables from 4.2a to 4.2d too, suggested the initial unrefined or crude substantive GT suggesting unpopular existing closer relationship between one's clarity for the explicit research paradigm likewise increase of dissertations quality completion and final score pass rates for dissertations suggesting that;

> ***The more the candidates explained clearly the subtheme of research paradigm along research design the more they were likely to influence external examiners to award either Excellent (A)or Very Good (B+) quality final score grades for their entire dissertations, and the opposite was true to the marginal high, low, lower, and lowest dissertations score grades.***

Despite these results about possible closer relationship between one's clarity fro the research paradigm and entire dissertation performance, yet the researcher was aware not rush to conclusion that the emerged relationship is really a cause for increase of low completion of dissertations and marginal dissertations final pass rates. Cautioning about correlation and causation, Aldrich (1995) cautions that in statistics, many statistical tests calculate correlations between variables and when two variables are found to be correlated, it is tempting to assume that this shows that one variable causes the other (Aldrich,1995:364).

4.2.3 Emerged core constructs and concepts

Having obtained what a pressing was in the studied context, the researcher is advised by the GT nomenclature to search the emerging construct, concepts, and categories which

emerged from the collected data but which the studied participants are frequenting using. This was why the second exploratory guiding question of objective 1 (ib) asked, what core constructs, concepts, categories emerged from the studied universities context? This question was crucial because in building, the GT study one has to use the emerged contracts, concepts and categories from the field collected data as building blocks of the subsequent chapters in this thesis. Consequently, from the first analysed primary documentary data in Figure 4.1, Tables 4.1(a); 4.1(b); 4.1(c), and 4.2(a)-4.2(d) several concepts, categories, themes, processes and activities in two studied universities emerged.

4.2.3.1 Concrete construct removed from empirical level to abstraction level

The researcher reminds the reader that in building, the GT the multi concepts need to be down sized first from the empirical observable phenomenon to abstraction no observable noumenon. The downsizing analysis assists to identify the most general concepts relating to operational concrete phenomenon. The aim of this stage was to obtain very few manageable core constructs from multi emerging categories for this study. Consequently, the researcher identified three core constructs as Table 4.3(a) reveals.

Table 4.3 (a): Emerged core Constructs and Categories wider Scope

Core construct codes	Categories constituting constructs
Clarity	Definition, scope, semantic relations, and coherence
Paradigm	Philosophy, ontology, epistemology methodology, axiology, logic, and rhetorics
Design	Qualitative approach: Case studies, grounded theory, ethnography, evaluation, even historical research
	Quantitative approach: survey, experimental, quasi experimental

Source: Field Data (2018).

From Table 4.3(a), three-emerged core constructs namely clarity, paradigm, and design appear in the first column. The second column shows the other accompanied conceptions along identified sub constructs from the same analysed primary field documentary data in (EEAFs, 2004-2015). Another role in building the GT is to find out the umbrella concepts in the core contracts with several properties relating to the study. In order to select few constructs for the study, the researcher had to establish criteria for selecting some more relevant concepts from irrelevant ones.

The high frequency of repeating as well as uniqueness of concepts assisted the researcher to down size concepts from multi to few constructs or variables. It became evident that the concept of clarity appeared eight times as a criterion out of seven identified criteria of performance in dissertations (Figure 4.1; Tables, 4.3a). Again, it became apparent that despite clarity being a construct occurring eight times in the EEAFs; it is made of four properties elaborated in previous (Table 4.3a).

4.2.3.2 Clarity construct high frequency with its four properties

The researcher identified the construct of clarity because it exhibited to have the highest frequency repeating five times when compared to the rest of emerged criteria for performance such as appropriateness (Figure 4.1). This construct became one of the catchy words in the title of this thesis. Further exploration of the construct of clarity revealed that it is constituted with four properties as further detailed in Table 4.3(b).

Table 4.3(b): Emerged Clarity Core Category Criterion with its four Properties

Clarity construct	Operationalised properties at empirical level
Definition	Denoting (strict meaning) and connoting (broad meaning) boundary
Scope	Considering concept's, depth, breadth or dimension
Semantic relations	Relating words by what they share in state of common affairs
Coherence	Organising the content logically or consistently

Source: Field Data (2018).

Looking at Table 4.3(b), one observes the operationalised construct of clarity emerging with its four sub constructs at the empirical level in form of gerund action verbs with (ing) suffix. The researcher sought to understand the manner how clarity construct core category varied in the process of research for dissertation at OUT. This construct frequented appearing in the assessment tool of OUT EEAFs, while it lacked in the UDSM similar assessment tool.

The compared frequency of clarity amid other emerged criterion conceptions are illustrated in Figure 4.2.

Criteria	Emphasis frequency
Clarity	Eight times
Appropriateness	Five times
Wellness	Five times
Reliability	Only once
Validity	Only once
Systematisation	Only once
Cleaning of data	Only once

Figure 4.2: Criteria for Dissertations Performance found in Assessment Tool

In Figure 4.2, one also observes seven criteria conceptions namely: clarity, appropriateness, wellness, reliability, validity, systematisation, and cleaning of data as emerged from the OUT-assessment criteria for dissertations performance (Tables 4.2(a)-4.2(d), 4.3(a). From Figure 4.2, it was evident that the emphasis frequency of each criterion is given. In comparison, while the "clarity" criterion repeats eight times, appropriateness, and wellness criteria frequent five times. The rest criteria of reliability, validity, systematisation, and cleaning, frequented only once. Consequently, the researcher discarded those from the collection and analysis of data processes.

The researcher's focus concentrated on the "clarity" criterion not other criteria (Figure 4.2). For this purpose, the clarity criterion was selected by the researcher as one of the catchy words and core construct in the title of this study as it stands reading, Researchers' *Clarity of research Paradigm philosophical Conceptions influencing Dissertations Performance in Tanzania universities: Grounded Theory Perspective*." From the analysis of that construct in Table 4.3(b) and Figure 4.2, one observes emerged

thematic insights. The researcher did the downsizing and removed the concrete concepts from the level empirical to the abstraction level to come up with the following categories from the criteria for dissertations performance.

Further analysis of the construct of clarity construct emerged as umbrella construct with four properties operationalised as:

- ✓ Definition
- ✓ Scope
- ✓ Semantic relationship and
- ✓ Coherence
- ✓ Clarity criterion accompanied with other criteria for evaluating studies

4.2.3.3 Clarity construct core category properties: definition of concepts

One of the core construct that emerged from the field for assessors' documentary form of the EEAFs was clarity. The theory of clarity informs this construct. It states that constructs have to be free of ambiguity (Suddaby, 2010; Rwegoshora, 2014). To disambiguate is to define a term is to give it a boundary in its uses. The surfaced core construct has properties or categories namely: denoted definition, like when someone provides a strict meaning, and a description of concepts like when one provides a broader meaning of a concept in terms of synonyms. Contributing to how one may define concepts, Aristotle provided his causation theory stating that, definitions should be clear and concise fulfilling four criteria namely: material cause, formal cause, efficient cause, and final cause, all for the sake of clarity (Walsh, 1985; Kairembo and Mwereke, 2012).

One of the roles in building the GT is to find out the core concept categories of construct or umbrella words noted with several properties related to a particular study. Elaborating construct Kerlinger describes it as …*a concept consciously invented for special scientific purposes*…, [so does paradigm] (Kerlinger, 1973:29). That contention is similar to what Kuhn (1960s) had earlier observed that the scientists' communities have their technical terms known to a particular scientific community belonging to old or new paradigm. Clarifying further the term construct, Rwegoshora says that it is a concept abstracted from a certain reality by focusing on certain aspects of that reality.

The author adds that the construct is an idea or credence based on evidence (Rwegoshora, 2014). As per Suddaby (2010), constructs need clarification first, in order to build up better theories. Detailing the term construct Suddaby (2010) sees it as a scientific one. The emerged constructs from the EEAFs proved to have a wider scope as such, the researcher down sized them further as conceptualisation progressed to reduce concept and remain with few ones to handle.

4.2.3.4 Clarity core construct properties: scope of concepts

The second emerged property of the construct of clarity was "scope" or dimension of a construct, meaning the extent of contents in it. Elaborating dimension, Sanchez sees dimension of concepts to refer to length and width of the concepts such as: their suffixes and prefixes (Sanchez, 2012; Wikitionary, 2015). Scope belongs to variables theory stating that, scope must specify, where an item should be used a longevity, when it ceases its function (Suddaby, 2010). This raises more questions for this study, in which

context are candidates, their supervisors and EEs aware of the wider scope of research paradigm construct.

4.2.3.5 Clarity construct core category: semantic relationship of concepts

The third merged property of clarity was semantic relationship. This property belongs to a theory of study of meanings. One also may argue that, this concept of semantic relationship leads one's curiosity to raise the question in this study inquiring, how are studied researchers capable of relating the construct of paradigm to their processes of writing, supervising, and assessing the research for dissertations? In other words, concepts are not in isolation; they have to relate to each other, to bring about desired meanings. Explicating the theory of meaning some authors state that 'a meaning of a concept depends on the manner it is used in a particular environment (Suddaby, 2010).

Again, it seems that the semantic relationship property belongs to the theories of holism and reductionism. While holism theory insists on taking the entire meaning in relation to the rest, it is the opposite of reductionism, where researchers tend to commit the fallacy of reductionism, when they look only at some aspects of an issue but ignoring other parts that are less attractive as observed in (Polikinghome and Smith, 2013; Ney, 2015). This fact is in line with the construct of paradigm explicated later on, whose scope is wider with seven constructs: philosophy, ontology, epistemology, methodology, axiology, logic and rhetoric language (POEMALOR). However, often researchers pay attention to only one part of paradigm namely methodology, but fail to pay the same attention to other parts (Tables 5.4 and 5.5). The consistency property follows.

4.2.3.6 Clarity construct core category: coherence of concepts

The fourth emerged property of clarity was coherence in other words consistency. Theories about consistencies informed this study too. This property refers to the issues of being consistent by avoiding contradictions in arguments. It relates to several theories: one is correspondence theory, stating that; truth or fallacy of the proposition is judged by the manner it correlates to actual affairs being studied (Hanna and Harrison, 2004). This contention raises the question, how are studied candidates coherently articulating the epistemological components across the research process? The sub theme clarity for paradigm fits the contention of Shavelson (2002) that any practice has a theory or a principle to guide it.

Elaborating his contention implication, the author outlines six guiding principles underlying all scientific inquiry pointing out, that his first opinion for any research is: for the researcher to pose significant questions that can be investigated empirically. The second opinion is for the researcher to link the study to the relevant theory since every research connects to some theories explicitly or implicitly. The third opinion is to use appropriate methods that allow direct inquiry to address the raised questions (Shavelson, 2002). His fourth opinion is for the researcher to give coherent chain of reasoning, since the scientific reasoning needs the advancement of logical flow from evidence to theory (Shavelson, 2002).

Based on Shavelson's opinions, the researcher explored further to understand how the construct of paradigm works among educational research practitioners in two

Tanzania studied universities, OUT and UDSM versus external examiners' assessment criteria used to judge the quality of dissertations for M.A degree programmes in particularly at OUT.

4.2.3.7 Clarity criterion and other emerged criteria for evaluating studies

The researcher argues that in building GT, the initial phase exploratory questions about the studied context, be completed first, to yield concepts, categories, themes, memos to illuminate later stages of the study, whose excerpts are grounded in the collected and instantly analysed data. One may also argue that the researcher first dealt with conceptualisation by deriving conceptions from empirical level to abstraction level. The theoretical sampling of concepts saturation selected three core construct categories namely clarity, research paradigm, and design. From these three the researcher operationalised their properties at the level of observed entities (Table, 4.3a; 4.3b; 4.3c; Figure 4.1).

The diagrammed analysis of emerging core codes, constructs, categories, and memos, themes, is a reflection of nomenclature of the GT building, to further down size multi concepts scope, to remain with manageable ones as a conceptualisation process to reduce the scope. The researcher established criteria for selecting cores. One of those criteria emerged in high frequency of a repeating construct of all the rest. The established criteria assisted the theoretical sampling of cores. The emerged core construct category from the analysed primary document was "clarity," with the highest frequency appearing eight times followed by appropriateness criterion with the higher frequency appearing five (Table, 4.3a; 4.3b; 4.3c and Figure 4.1).

The other surfaced criterion was “wellness,” with high frequency repeating four times while, the rest criteria like validity, reliability, and systematisation had low frequencies appearing only once as seen (Figures 4.1; 4.2 and 4.3). The analysed data revealed that issues of judging the quality of dissertations belongs to the philosophical conception of axiology earlier mentioned about values of correctness and rightness in social research particularly educational research. These are criteria or moral standards of evaluating human actions. In this case, the conducting of the research process culminated into the writing of this study report.

The criteria of performance appeared in Figure 4.2. From the analysed assessment forms of both universities of the UDSM but in particular of OUT, revealed that the external examiners base on established assessment criteria to evaluate dissertations. Precisely, the analysed documentary data suggested that the emerged standards of performance in the studied context were eight criteria of performance surfaced namely: clarity, appropriateness, wellness, reliability, validity, systematisation, and cleaning of data (Figures 4.1 and 4.2). The paradigm construct as well emerged as the second core category of construct, because it consists of more than one concept made of seven properties detailed in Figure 4.2.

Again, the design emerged as a core construct because of being umbrella construct consisting more than one concept made of several typologies of research designs detailed in (Table 4.6; Patton, 2009; Creswell, 2012). Guiding on how to construct the GT Glaser and Holton (2004) argue that once the researcher arrives at abstraction level,

then the conceptualisation successfully ends. They further argue that the construction of the GT is emergent, serendipitous, and scheduled. Besides those authors, Cohen *et al*. (2001), Charmaz (2006) see the construction of the GT as a zigzag and never a linear process seeking to identify core constructs and categories from learned processes.

Elaborating a construct Kerlinger describes it as …*a concept consciously invented for special scientific purposes*… (Kerlinger, 1973:29). This contention is similar to what Kuhn (1960s) had earlier observed that the scientists' communities have their technical terms best known to a particular society that might belong to old or new paradigm. Elaborating further the term construct Rwegoshora says that it is; …*a concept abstracted from a certain reality by focusing on certain aspects of that reality leading to identify categories... It is added that] the construct is an idea or a belief based on evidence* (Rwegoshora, 2014:28).

For Suddaby (2010) constructs need clarification first, in order to build up better theories. Detailing the term construct Suddaby (2010) sees it as a scientific term.

Describing operationalisation of a concept, Rwegoshora sees it as …*an act of changing a concept from abstract term into observable entities...* (Rwegoshora, 2014). Thus, one may understand the clarity of an abstract concept through the definition by denoting or connoting it, by its scope, relations, and by coherent logical flow. Clarifying the concept "definition," Sanchez describes it as denotation or translation of a sign in literal sense; and connotation, translating into a sign by relating it to other implications (Sanchez, 2012).

Suffice to say that the constant comparative analysis between entire scores performance of the dissertations and sub theme 6.3 (i) on research paradigm of sixtyfour reports, yielded the unique trend insight signifying a substantive theory at an initial stage. Writing on ways employed to evaluate the postgraduate students' dissertations quality, Northcote (2012) observes that normally evaluators base on quantitative criteria, emphasising objectivity, validity, and reliability or the qualitative criteria (Northcote, 2012). The emphasised criteria in evaluating qualitative studies are several namely: transferability, credibility, dependability, ontological, conformability, vitality, and goodness.

The author points out that student are in dilemma on decisions to choose the right rigour of assessing the qualitative research. Among the outlined dilemmas, include whether to align on appraisal standards or not (Northcote, 2012). Elaborating the Arab Open University (AOU) rights and responsibilities of external examiners, Hashim (2007) shows that AOU regards the external examiners' as a part of quality assurance. The author adds that one of the examiners' roles is to guarantee fairness for every student without biasness; secondly, is to maintain the university fame (Hashim, 2007). Third, the examiners are supposed to evaluate students' works without any external pressure.

Fourth they are supposed to officialise any set, examination regulations before assessing any paper, and finally, is to guarantee to the university on whether the set objectives were met (Hashim, 2007). While authors are in consensus with those criteria nevertheless the issue, of who judges the criteria of what quality of the winning dissertation or a thesis should be, remains relative among the universities (Barbara,

2005). For Doherty (2008) quality is fitness for purpose implying the extent at which the intended goods, and services satisfy the intended consumers (Doherty, 2008). The concept of quality despite being abstract, it controlled and assured through observable actions. On one hand, quality assurance is a systematic process of supervising as per set procedure to ensure the achievement of specified quality.

When adhered to, it brings confidence to consumers of the produced services and products (Hoy *et al*., 2000). On the other hand, Chua (2012) describes the quality control as a means of detecting limitations to correct them. For Chua (2012), if done well then, it regulates performance and it prevents unintended changes in the quality of the provided products and services (Chua, 2012). Goodness of dissertation also depends on which paradigm the assessor believes in. Characterising believes on goodness of research for five paradigms, some authors characterise the positivism, anti-positivism, and the post positivist groups including critical positivists or critical realists, interpretivists, constructivists, emancipationists feminists and liberalists on criteria for judging the quality of research variously (Cohen *et al*., 2001; Cohen and Crabtree, 2006).

To be able to evaluate effective research four criteria are seen as essential to the positivists including: validity, parsimony, reliability, and generalisability. For positivists any research reports should meet such four criteria, for judging the winning study report (Cohen *et al*., 2001; Cohen and Crabtree, 2006). Nevertheless, not all experts accept positivists' objective standards of quantification, reliability, and validity for judging study reports. Instead, social scientists either follow the post positivists' or anti-

positivists' paradigm standards of qualitative. The earlier mentioned first social scientists group consists of the critical realists also labelled as anti-positivists.

These replace positivists' validity and reliability standards with flexible terms of credibility, plausibility, and relevance. Thus, for critics a good research is the one that is credible, plausible, and relevant to the community (Cohen and Crabtree, 2006). The second social scientists group includes interpretivists with sub groups namely: constructivists, pragmatists, liberalists or emancipationists such as feminists. These two groups are in consensus that facts about the observed phenomenon are subjective and socially constructed hence subjective elaborated further in (Angen, 2000; Cohen *et al*., 2001). Some versions of constructing GT as that of Glaser (2003) view quality study report in case it fulfils some criteria namely: fitness, relevance, workability, and modifiability (Glaser and Strauss, 1967).

Still, the other GT version is that of Strauss *et al*. (2014) view the quality study report to depend on followed systematic process to produce it (Borgatti, 2014). That Charmaz' GT version remains neutral between the said classical authors, proposing more criteria for judging a study in case it fulfils criteria of credibility, originality, resonance, and usefulness (Charmaz, 2006).

4.2.4 Research design construct properties along paradigm

The second and third emerged core construct conceptual category from the analysed document was the research design accompanying the in the sub theme of the clarity of paradigm as illustrated in Figure 4.1, to be detailed further in chapter five. The

researcher selected the paradigm as the second core constructs appearing in the study title. This was because, the analysis of the documentary data showed that the emerged research paradigm construct has rare uses among the studied researchers as. Figure 4.1 and Table 4.1(a) and 4.3(a), revealed rare uses among the studied researchers construct, when compared to the rest of other emerged common constructs like clarity. The researcher had to investigate properties constituting it as Table 4.3 (c) reveals.

Table 4.3(c): Research Design Properties Scope Operationalised

Research designs per paradigm approaches	Operationalised properties of study designs
Quantitative approach	Objective/statistical facts for positivists' related designs: surveys, quasi-experimental, and experiment means.
Qualitative approach	Respondents' subjective views for post positivists' groups related designs: Case studies, diagnostic, longitudinal, constructivists' grounded theory, historical, historical, evaluation, ethnography as well as historical.
Mixed approaches	Sequential Exploration: QUAL-Quan; Explanatory: QUAN-Qual; QUAL-; QUAN-Survey…..

Source: Field Data (2018).

The researcher selected 'research design' as another core construct with rationale that it accompanied the research paradigm from the field document illustrated in Table 4.3(d). In Table 4.3(d), the construct of research design emerged. In this study, the approach refers to an entire structure upon, which the inquiry is conducted. From Table 4.3(d), one sees the surfaced insights about the construct of design sub theme constituted by three categories namely:

- ✓ Research approaches and designs according to major research paradigms

- ✓ Positivists' research designs (Experimental, quasi-experimental survey...).
- ✓ Post positivists' research designs (Case study, evaluation, GT) and
- ✓ Mixed approaches.

4.2.4.1 Research designs as per major paradigm approaches

The researcher detailed this emerged sub theme under chapter three, but much more in chapter five. Suffice to say that the analysis of 64 primary documents in Figure 4.1 and candidates' dissertations hard copies revealed that OUT expects its Masters candidates to describe the research paradigm prior to choosing the research approach, to illuminate the chosen research design. In this study, the researcher distinguishes between the research approach and design. While the research approach refers to the researcher's decision to choose either from the positivists' paradigm fond of quantitative approach, or from the post positivists' paradigm fond of qualitative approach.

In general, one sees how the educational research process is inseparable from the paradigm and approach conceptions. The analysis seemed to suggest that before the choice of the research design, one has to consider the clarity of the paradigm of choice (Figure 4.1). The researcher opines in line with the analysed primary document, that once decisions on choice of a single approach or paradigm is done, the next decision is to decide whether to remain pure or mixed. The decision on whether to triangulate or not to triangulate at the paradigm level, led the researchers to consider some questions too, on whether mixture is possible or not possible. If possible, then, what, when, where, why, and how should one mix?

Arguably, it is at this stage that the researcher should clarify issues of paradigm and approach, before being stuck at later stages. At this stage of research approach, the researcher has to decide clearly whether to choose a single approach or two. There is a consensus among experts of social research, that the major research approaches are according to those two major paradigms, and that the mixture or triangulation at paradigm or approach level is incompatible. Any attempt to mix at either paradigm or approaches level leads one to consider paradigm war controversy as well as incompatibility thesis previously stipulated in the study of Jick and Leonard (1979), Tashakkori and Teddlie (1998); Guba and Lincoln (2005).

4.2.4.2 Research designs according to positivists

Details of this sub theme are in chapter three also in chapter five. The two studied universities are in consensus that methodology is one of the major themes taught at Masters degree research level (Figure 4.1; 4.1a). It was revealed that in both universities details of the dissertations have the major sub theme of methodology, where design is a sub theme. The UDSM assessment tool details are implicit while those of OUT are explicit (Appendices X; XI; Tables 5.2). However, the analysis too revealed that only one candidate in practice attempted to follow pure positivists' research design.

The analysis too revealed subthemes in candidates' dissertations suggesting that the research approaches treat sub themes like: research approaches, design, study area, target and accessible population. Others are sample size, sampling techniques, methods, analysis plan, and ethics as emerged sub themes in both universities. The extent to which the candidates inform their dissertations with clear research paradigm of choice was

beyond the scope of this study. Several authors (Patton, 1994; Creswell, 1994; Bogdan and Biklin, 1998; Guba and Lincoln, 2005; Rwegoshora, 2006; Omari, 2011) are in consensus of existence of such research designs.

4.2.4.3 Research designs according to post positivists' paradigm

The other type of emerged research design conceptions in analysed candidates' dissertations encountered in the field belonged to the post positivists' flexible sub post positivists' research paradigm namely: interpretivism, constructivism, feminism, even hermeneutics fond of qualitative research designs. Such listed designs include exploratory, case studies, evaluation GT, ethnography and historical designs. Elucidating the research design Rwegoshora (2006) contends that it is an arrangement of situations for collecting and analysing data, in other words a researcher adapts a technique to suitably study the phenomenon. Generally, experts agree that a single approach method cannot alone suffice to collect data reasonably without weaknesses. This call for consideration of the mixed research methods not paradigm is viable.

4.2.4.4 Mixed design worldview consensus between positivists and post positivists

Most of the analysed primary documents for a mixed design, also known as triangulated design to be detailed in Chapter Six (Appendix X). At OUT only one candidate out of sixty-eight studied opted for pure quantitative approach. Such finding reveals the paradigm shift from opting pure qualitative or quantitative methods alone to the eclectic research design among the studied researchers at both studied universities. The extent to which the candidates inform their dissertations with clear research paradigm of choice

was beyond the scope of this study. The findings by this study are in line with several experts' observations about the paradigm war and incompatibility thesis that reigned between 1970s and mid-1990s.

Arguably, research experts (Omari and Sumra (1997); Tashakkori and Teddlie (1998); Guba and Lincoln (2005) have long ago resolved paradigm and incompatibility thesis revealing that it is now possible to mix or triangulate research methods or techniques from any approach belonging to either quantitative or qualitative approach. Writing on what, where, when, how and why to mix research methods, Sandelowsky (2000) suggests that the researcher can mix at the 'shop floor' levels of sampling, and methods, not at the level of paradigm. This finding shows when to mix or not to mix. Sandelowsky (2000) informs that possibility of mixing at the level of research paradigm or approach is incompatible.

The author is of the view that one has to mix the research methods or techniques from either quantitative or qualitative approaches at 'shop floor' levels of research sampling procedure, and methods but not at paradigm or approach level. The researcher too, argues further that either a candidate expects to conduct a research and present the data based on only one paradigm approach, which assists the researcher to adopt positivists' available research designs such as: experimental, quasi experimental or survey designs as also elaborated in (Rwegoshora, 2006; Omari, 2011). Last, the researcher further down sized the subsequent emerged insights from previous tables and figures into a single succinct hypothetical proposition signalling the substantive GT at early stage illustrated in Figure 4.3.

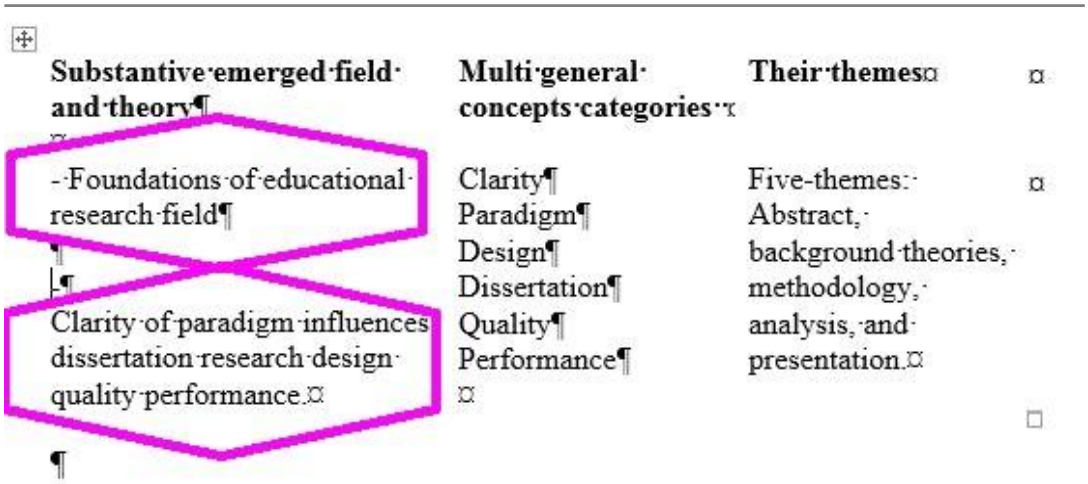

Figure 4.3: Emerged Multi Concepts versus Core Constructs

Figure 4.3 is a summary of the reduced core categories from the emerged major themes and subthemes, which the researcher used to build chapters five and six. Suffice to say that Figure 4.3 is a summary of findings for exploratory guiding questions in précis for objective one 1(i b), which asked, which core emerged constructs, concepts and categories emerged from the studied universities context? From contents of Figure 4.3, one observes the emerged substantive field of study being philosophy, where the construct of paradigm belongs. From the very Figure 4.3, one gets insight on subthemes worthy further analysis and discussion on emerged categories as follows.

- ✓ Emerged multi summed conceptual categories (clarity, paradigm, design, quality, and performance
- ✓ Dissertation five themes (abstract, background to problem, methodology, data analysis, and data presentation
- ✓ Substantive emerged field
- ✓ Substantive grounded theory statement at infant stage

4.2.5 Emerged substantive field from dissertation five major themes

Figure 4.3, yielded multi conceptions namely: clarity, paradigm, design, dissertations themes, quality, and performance. So far, the emerged substantive GT theory at an infant stage was engulfed in the phrase 6.3. reading (i) *...candidate researchers' clear explanation of the research paradigm and design* … (Figure 4.1). It was evident that it belongs to the philosophical foundations of social (educational) research field conceptions. It was this phrase that enabled the researcher to formulate the catchy words of this study titled, *Researchers' Clarity of Research Paradigm philosophical Conceptions Influencing Dissertations Quality Performance in Tanzania universities: Grounded theory Perspective*.

4.2.5.1 Paradigm construct belongs to Philosophical foundations field

From Figure4.3 the analysed data yielded some more three groups of phrases as seen in the very figure beginning with substantive emerged field and emerging theory; multi general conceptual categories, and the major themes which emerged from the analysed candidates' dissertation external examiners' report (Figure 4.3). The analysed data in that figure suggest that the explicit research paradigm construct could properly be situated under the emerged field of the philosophical foundations. Likewise, the very figure reveals, how the construct was accompanied with other core constructs under the general conceptual categories (4.3) column. These emerged five major themes emerged from the analysed candidates' dissertations. In building the GT, the researcher is advised to situate the emerged multi concepts in the proper core categories as well as situate the emerged core pressing issue in a proper field as illustrated in Figure 4.3.

4.2.5.1 Emerged multi conceptions related to dissertation five themes

In reference to Figure 4.1 and Table 4.1(a) about the assessment, there emerged tool forms of the two studied universities (OUT and UDSM) that among the surfaced content were themes and sub themes. Among the emerged Five Major themes from OUT assessment tool were abstract, theoretical background of the study, research methodology, data analysis and presentation. Arguably, while the abstract is about executive summary of the study about major findings, the background theme concerns issues of historicity of the studied problem deriving it from global to national and specific studied area (Figure 4.1; Table 4.1a; Appendix X).

It is also about the statement of the problem, definition of the problem focusing the study through main purpose, specific objectives, and research problem. Other little components of this part are framework, rationale, limitation, and delimitation for the study. The last but not least part of this background theme includes, operational terms and chapter summary. This is a deductive and positivists' flow of the dissertations (Figure 4.1; Table 4.1a). The third emerged major theme is methodology. In contrast, unlike OUT that puts the literature chapter in the background part, the University of the UDSM has a separate theme on conceptual and empirical literature. In contrast while the first main theme of assessment form of OUT is abstract that of the UDSM is preliminaries (Figure 4.1(a) and Appendix, X).

While the second theme of OUT same tool is theoretical background to the problem, that of UDSM is introduction. Moreover, while the third theme of OUT is research methodology that of UDSM is literature review. The fourth theme of OUT is data

analysis that of UDSM is methodology, meanwhile the fifth theme of OUT tool is data presentation that of UDSM is data analysis and discussion of findings. In addition, while the assessment tool of OUT ends with five major themes that of UDSM has more major themes namely: conclusions and references or bibliography (Figure 4.1; Table 4.1a; Appendix X).

Furthermore, unlike the UDSM assessment tool that has only eight major themes, that of OUT each major theme has varying sub themes (Figure 4.1 and Table 4.1(a). While theme one of abstract has a single theme, theme two has six, and theme three has eight sub themes. It is the first sub theme 6.3 (i) *clear explanation of the research process and design* which is missing in the UDSM assessment tool. The fourth sub theme has six, while theme five has only three sub themes (Figure 4.1; Table 4.1a; Appendix. X). Suffice to say that the two universities studied assessment tools varied in contents though were similar on essential contents of the research process (Figure 4.1; Table 4.1a; Appendix X).

The central theme of this research paradigm versus dissertations performance surfaced from the OUT-assessment form tool (Figure 4.1). The variation findings in this study, echoes the observation hinted earlier in Lovittis (2005), who studied 74 faculty departments across 10 disciplines at 9 universities of North America (Lovittis, 2005). Applying a critical criterion sampling, the researcher targeted faculty assessors, who had produced high number of PhDs in fours science disciplines. Among the researchers' findings one was that the member assessors of faculties characterised the dissertations/theses in six components namely:

The first is a statement of the problem, then literature review with epistemological theories, also, research methods, analysis and discussions. It was also found that the said assessor members judged the dissertations quality on general criteria of grades as: outstanding dissertations or theses, very good, acceptable dissertations, and unacceptable (Lovittis, 2005). In addition, the same author found that the faculty members had general and implicit judgement values, captured in words like, outstanding, very good, acceptable and unacceptable dissertations (Lovittis, 2005).
This finding too, echoes the study of Starr-Glass and Ali (2012) done in Czech Republic about double standards in assessing dissertations.

Those researchers examined the Czech students from undergraduate accredited American college degrees, in which dissertation writing skills was part of the course (Starr-Glass and Ali, 2012). The researchers were in consensus that assessment process is a part of pedagogical beliefs and axiological components regarded as paradigm. The researchers found out that there exist competing and conflicting paradigms, which dominate educational evaluation of dissertations (Starr-Glass and Ali, 2012). Nightingale (1984) is a study that also tallies with this finding of variation of items in the studied universities.

It assessed fifty-eight examiners' comments on theses in Australian universities. The purpose of this study was to investigate on how different assessors assessed and detailed their comments on the dissertations from different universities (Nightingale, 1984). The findings by that study suggested that the examiners require detailed criteria rather than short statements to assess what the PhD, theses ought to illustrate, and

adequately contribute knowledge originally. The report recommends the standards, at which the university theses were to be assessed needs clarification, so that the assessors get light to give detailed comments with specification varying across the universities.

4.2.6 Substantive grounded theory statement at infant stage of data analysis

Finally, the emerged core issue, core constructs and categories suggested initially the hypothetical assumption as a symptom of unrefined or substantive GT proposition in this study stated that;

> *The more the majority of candidates scored excellent scores for clarifying the subtheme of research paradigm along research design, the more the majority of them were likely to be awarded excellent scores for the entire dissertation by external examiners and the opposite was true* **(**Tables 4.2a, 4.2b, 4.2c, 4.2d).

4.3 Emerged Main Research Participants Emerged in the Field

Having obtained core emerged ongoing issue and conceptual categories, from the studied context; the researcher of the GT is advised to search for main participants who are related with the studied research problem. This was why the objective one 1 (i c) inquired, who were core respondents responsible with the issue of research paradigm construct conceptions found among the studied research practitioners in a studied university. The primary documents were used to get the list of lecturers, supervisors and candidates in the studied process at OUT and UDSM. The content and constant comparative analyses were used to analyse the data on this sub question. It became apparent from these methods that the sampled respondents were in three groups:

External Examiners coded as (EEs #), supervisors abbreviated and coded as (SUP #), and candidates as (STUDs #), whose socio-economic statuses are presented, analysed, and finally interpreted as follows in Table 4.4.

Table 4.4: External Examiners' (EEs') Profile

S/N	Respondent's sex	Level education	Rank	Role at OUT	Experience of assessors
Code#1	M	Ph.D.	Full Professor	External	5 years
Code# 2	M	Ph.D.	Full Professor	External	4 years
Code# 3	F	Ph.D.	Associate Professor	External	5 years
Code# 4	F	Ph.D.	Senior Lecturer	External	1 year
Code# 5	F	Ph.D.	Senior Lecturer	External	1 year
Code# 6	M	Ph.D.	Senior Lecturer	External	3 years

Source: Field Data (2018).

In Table 4.4, one observes the data on the category of EEs#. The table presents slashed codes, respondents' sex, level of education, rank, the played role, and experience of assessing the dissertation at OUT. It is clear that the six out of seventeen EEs participated in this study. The data too, show that the researcher considered gender balance exhibited by three female and male experts respectively. The researcher identified their roles to be external quality assurance of dissertations with the maximum experience of five years and the minimum of one year in assessing candidate researchers' dissertations by distance mode at OUT (Table 4.4).

It also surfaced that, the majority of the EEs at the OUT are from the UDSM, a sign of long-time mutual relationship between the studied universities, only a few were from other universities. One of the expert external examiners EE # 6 from the UDSM doubted whether OUT has adequate, qualified work force in place to serve the ever-increasing number of the admitted candidates. Pointing at the other potential factors that could be at work contributing to alteration in dissertations how quality passes and low completion rate, a respondent coded EE # 6 had the following words to say;

> *"…As for me I see OUT efforts in its an ambitious move of enrolling the limitless number of the M.A candidates without at the same time ensuring adequate qualified human resource in the ODL mode of learning are tin place. Consequently, OUT seems to waste candidates' time because of lacking adequate supply of human resource to meet the ever increasing demand, for higher education through the ODL mode of learning according to my experience, of working on contract with OUT. Your candidates in the regional centres are yawning and being lonely most of times the OUT M.A and Ph.D. candidates are in frustration. This is in particular when they arrive at conducting research stage…"* (EE # 1: 21.3. 2014).

The second category of respondents in the studied context were supervisors, whose role is to guide studied candidates to write quality proposals, conduct research, and write quality dissertations as they were observed in their departments of faculty of education. The profile of supervisors comes next to answer the raised doubt of the previous respondent (EE # 1) as illustrated in Table 4.5.

Table 4.5: OUT Studied Supervisors' Profile

S/N	Sex	Level education	Rank	Role at OUT	Experience
Code# 7	F	Ph.D.	Senior Lecturer	Supervisor	5 years
Code# 8	M	Ph.D.	Lecturer	Supervisor	1 year
Code# 9	M	Ph.D.	Full professor	Supervisor	7yrs
Code# 10	M	Ph.D.	Lecturer	Supervisor	3yrs
Code# 11	F	Ph.D.	Senior Lecturer	Supervisor	5 yrs
Code# 12	M	Ph.D.	Associate professor	Supervisor	4yrs
Code# 13	F	Ph.D.	Lecturer	Supervisor	3 yrs
Code# 14	F	Ph.D.	Associate professor	Administrator	7 yrs
Code# 15	M	Ph.D.	Lecturer	Supervisor	4yrs
Code# 16	M	Ph.D.	Lecturer	Supervisor	1yr
Code# 17	M	Ph.D.	Lecturer	Supervisor	1 year
Code# 18	F	Ph.D.	Lecturer	Supervisor	3 yr
Code# 19	M	Ph.D.	Lecturer	Administrator	3yrs
Code# 20	F	Ph.D.	Lecturer	Administrator	3 yrs

Source: Field Data (2018).

Table 4.5 portrays supervisors' profile coded SUP#, in this study totalling fourteen. It exposes their sex, level of education, ranks, their role at OUT, and experience in dealing with matters of educational research on processes of supervising candidate researchers towards graduation. In this group the gender was considered since it included adequate number of females almost equal to males, who participated in this study. Table 4.5 also, indicates the level of education that all the studied supervisors were holders of doctorate

degree compared to EEs. The majority of the supervisor respondents were lecturers, senior lecturers, associate professors, and one full professor (Table 4.5).

The supervisors' roles in this study were mentoring the studied candidates on how the process of educational research proceeds. The same respondents varied in experiences of supervising the candidate researchers at OUT between the maximum of seven years and minimum of one year. The researcher did not inquire the status of candidates because it would be a tedious work in relation to scarce time, but also because of the status of candidates as either inexperienced researcher graduates or prospective graduates. The findings on the existing list of both external examiner as well as supervisor experts of educational research provided partly the responses to one of the EE's doubts (Table 4.5).

The third category of respondents was of inexperienced researchers. In this study, the researcher labelled as candidates and coded them with slashed abbreviation (STUDs #). All studied candidates were teachers by profession studying at OUT in the studied faculty. The rationale for studding only OUT candidates on this sub category, was because the subtheme of the research paradigm appears in the external examiners' assessment process form of OUT unlike the UDSM, where it occurs in course outlines. The analysis revealed that the studied candidates had attained the undergraduate Bachelor degree in education either in Bachelor of Education (BED), Bachelor in Education (B.A Ed.) or with equivalent qualifications of Post Graduate Diploma (PGDE).

The list of graduates by early 2014 were 61 and prospective ones in the same year were 48 all amounting to 109 (OUTFAFI, 2015). These 68 candidates were sampled through theoretical and purposively criterion procedure out of 109 as elaborated in the sample (Table 3.1). The studied candidates were only those, who qualified set researcher's, criteria as detailed in chapter three. From the analysis of the observed core research respondents, four thematic insights emerged.

- ✓ Highly informed research respondents
- ✓ External examiners' profile
- ✓ Unknown research gap about emerged main respondents

4.3.1 Highly informed research respondents

From the core respondents' list for this study, it could be argued that the researcher dealt with the most informed participant capable of providing credible rich information, about the core process of summative evaluation of the created knowledge through research. Suffice to argue that the initial findings on studied researchers' profile provided an answer to the exploratory questions for in roman (i) in the initial phase of qualitative data, which required the researcher to understand, the core ongoing processes, the core substantive puzzling issue, and main respondents in the studied context. The encountered field document of EEAFs (2004-2016) revealed that one of the ongoing core processes at the faculty of education of OUT, is a summative evaluation of the academic research reports, also known as dissertations.

4.3.2 External examiners (EEs #)

While studied EEs had background in professional formal education, only one lecturer had typical background in adult education and non-formal (ODeL). Whether the experts' lack of the background in ODeL teaching and learning modes is one of the missing links was beyond the focus of this study. Likewise, the study revealed that the studied faculty admitted qualified candidates as per Tanzania Commission of Universities (TCU) directives. The use of EEs for quality assurance sake, exhibits the good practice of involving qualified work force in creation of the quality knowledge in educational research at the higher learning level.

Some authors like Masenge (2012), Chua (2012), Mosha (1990), Northcote (2012), Lovittis (2005), Herman *et al*. (1991), Hoy, Jardine and Holt (2000) support this finding on good practice of quality assurance.

4.3.3 Supervisors (SUPs #)

In this study, supervisors refer to invigilators of research candidates writing dissertations process who form a crucial channel between a candidate and administration of the university. Commenting on scarcity and the need for OUT to have workforce with background in ODeL, during the commemoration of OUT 20th anniversary, Babyegeya (2012) challenges the stakeholders of OUT to see the need for establishing the ODL infrastructures, having a positive ODL policy, and the critical mass of graduates who know the ODL mode of learning (Babyegeya, 2012). Masenge (2012) also observes, employment of quality inputs to implement quality processes equals to quality outputs.

Writing on tensions between students and institutional conceptions of post graduates research McCormack (2004) in similar manner, Denicolo (2003) found out the existence of a considerable gap between students understanding about the manner of conducting research and what supervisors expect of them versus what supervisors thought candidates were to perform (Denicolo, 2003; McCormack, 2004). Presenting findings Lumadi (2008) reports that candidates have high expectations of their supervisors, but in turn, supervisors delay candidates' feedback on the submitted works. Again, the author adds in that study that some supervisors have complained about preparedness for dissertation completion, with poor language skills delaying quick speed of supervisors to quicken feedback of dissertations to supervisees.

Explicating the relationship between supervisees and supervisors, Moses (1984) reports that there are times supervisors' interest mismatch with those of their allocated supervisees, and that alone might be a factor for low expected scores.

4.3.4 Candidates (STUDs #)

It may be argued that the discovered candidates were professional teachers, majority of them undertake the Masters degree of Education in Administration, Planning, and Policy studies, studying (MEDAPPs) by ODL. These research respondents varied, some held bachelor degrees and some postgraduate diplomas, worthy pursuing Masters Degrees in education variously. Generally, initial findings implied further that, OUT has been a symbol of the paradigm shift in modes of learning among universities in Tanzania, committed to offer quality higher learning by means of Open, Distance, and electronic Learning (ODeL) modes.

4.4 Emerged Ongoing Core Processes

Having obtained core ongoing issue, core emerged constructs and categories, and main participants in the studied universities context, the researcher of GT is advised to identify emerged core processes featured by gerund of "ing," which is the hub of the GT studies. This was why objective one fourth 1 (id) exploratory guiding question asked, which core processes emerged from the studied context? Documentary method was used to collect data on this sub question, while content analysis and constant comparative methods were used to analyse those data.

Initial phase one of data collection, presentation, analysis, discussion, and interpretation which is part one of chapter four the researcher continued to compare and contrast data of assessment tools illustrated in(Figure 4.1, Tables 4.1a, 4.1b, 4.1c; 4.2a; 4.2d) about ongoing core process in the studied two universities. Tables 4.3; 4.5; 4.6 and later Tables 5.1 and 5.2 portray emerged ongoing core processes which were encountered in the Faculty and School of Education of the two studied universities of OUT and UDSM. The emerged subthemes included; university policy statements providing, teaching, learning, writing, supervising, and oral defending of the dissertations. Keen analysis revealed the following sub themes;

- ✓ Quality assuring of created knowledge process
- ✓ Summative evaluating and quality assuring of dissertations processes
- ✓ Teaching research for dissertations course process
- ✓ Learning research for dissertations course process
- ✓ Proposals and dissertations writing process

- ✓ Supervising of the dissertations process
- ✓ Oral defending of the dissertation report process
- ✓ Policy provisions about quality research process

4.4.1 Dissertations Quality assuring and summative evaluating processes

The initial analysis of the encountered field assessment tool labelled the EEAFs (20042014), had initially informed the researcher that the sub theme 6.3 (i) about research paradigm emanated from the core process of summative evaluation of the candidates' dissertations quality as final examination. The summative evaluation in this study implied the final examinations of the dissertations quality, normally done at the end of a semester after the completion of the M.A degree programme course work. Normally, the formative or continuous evaluation tests learners daily, weekly, or monthly as opposite of summative evaluation. Likewise, one may argue further that the researcher understands the act of allotting scores to any test or examination is an assessment process in this thesis. The issues of quality assurance in the studied universities are as well exhausted in chapter five.

4.4.2 Quality assuring process

By quality assurance the researcher, understands the procedure of ensuring that any institutions like universities maintain the established quality criteria or standards are maintained. In both studied universities of OUT and UDSM, the researcher noted that each university has a research directorate or bureau of ensuring quality in the process pertaining to the dissertations maintained as stipulated in their primary documents called

prospectuses an university policies (OUT, 2017 and UDSM, 2017). According to OUT field primary document of policy and procedure provides that;

> *"...The research issues of quality assurance are a concern of every individual both staff and students. OUT considers quality in all activities specifically in the areas of research, consultancy, teaching and learning. Cognisant with the university's vision "To be a leading excellent University in the delivery of affordable quality education through Open distance learning, dynamic knowledge generation and application", the Open University of Tanzania (OUT) established the Directorate of Quality Assurance and Control…"* (DQAC, 2008: 2.3.8.1: i).

Consequently, at OUT, the academic research issues are under the Directorate of Quality Assurance and Control (DQAC), so does the UDSM as detailed further in Chapter Five (Tables 5.1 and 5.2). Given that the research paradigm construct appears in the EE Assessment form, whose formulation is provided by universities policy statements and operational procedure. In both studied universities assessment tools they consist almost similar major themes: The OUT tool has five major themes namely: Abstract, theoretical background, methodology, data analysis, and data presentation (OUT, 2008; Figure 4.1).

The insights from the similar policy document OUT (2008) provides, that OUT has to ensure the quality of its research results for the entire process of conducting research by having in place clear guidelines at each stage, beginning with proposal writing, proposal approval, monitoring of research activity, and finally clear report writing. It is for this purpose that OUT has its internal quality control technical committee of research publications, consultancy RPPC. It is this committee with mandate to identify external reviewers of created knowledge reports EEs in (OUT, 2008).

Comparatively, in both universities the researcher learnt that the research for dissertation course is assessed by practical writing of the research proposals culminating into written dissertations or theses at Masters level, assessed at the end after ending of the course work, also termed as a formative evaluation (Figure 4.1, Tables 4.1a, 4.1b and 4.1c also 5.1 and 5.2; Appendices, IIIA and IIIB). In comparison, both universities of OUT and UDSM, have research for dissertation courses coded OED 626: Research Methods and OED 699 code for dissertation at OUT. In contrast, the UDSM has a course coded FE 600a for the similar Research Methods, while the FE: 699 is a code for dissertations (Appendices IIIA; IIIB).

4.4.3 Universities Research for Dissertations course Teaching/Learning processes

In both studied universities, the educational research courses are first taught theoretically through a course work or except by thesis at (OUT). In both universities, teaching and learning of theories about research, guides candidates' practice going to field physically to collect fresh data, when the responsible research proposals and dissertations, the faculty and school committees have the mandate to permit candidates to proceed to the field for conducting actual research. Such emerged core and other co related processes were exhibited in varying analyzed primary documents of the two studied universities detailed later on in a phase two for data presentation, analysis, discussion in Chapter Five part two (Figure 4.1;Tables 4.1a, 4.1b; 4.1c ; Tables 5.2a; 5.2b).

The analysed data too revealed that both studied universities carry continuous assessment, also known as formal evaluation done by writing term papers and book critique as detailed in chapter five part two. The analysis of the official field data from

OUT prospectus (2014-2018) provided further insights, that among other things the universities exist for three roles: teaching, research, and consultancies (OUT, 2014-2015). The very document outlines educational postgraduate degree programmes offered by the studied faculty including PGDE and the Post Graduate Curriculum Design and Development (PGDCDD).

At Master level, the first-degree programme is Master of Education (M. Ed). The second emerged degree programme is Master of Education in Open and Distance Learning MED (ODL). The third is Master of Education in Administration, Planning and Policy Studies M. ED (APPS), the fourth is at the level of Doctor of Philosophy (PhD). The analysis of that primary documentary data revealed further that the general emphases of the three levels of the higher degree educational programmes are also given. The emphasis is about the creation of knowledge through research in sub sections 2.4 stipulating that first, is to prepare students on skills and practice in scientific inquiry.

The second is 2.5 to generate theories and knowledge through research and evaluation. The third is 2.6, to stimulate and inculcate the engagement and practice in research and evaluation (OUT, 2014). The analysis of the official primary documents data too, revealed several courses of study under each previous mentioned programme. The data suggested that the main emphasis is often on the focus of the research course of study and behold the data indicated that the registered candidates in the M.Ed. degree programmes do the coursework and dissertations. As such, candidates are obliged to register in various research methodology courses of study depending on the area of

specialisation such as the: Research Methodology and Computer Science coded OED 602 worthy 2 units (OUT, 2014:178).

The registered candidates in M.Ed. (ODL) by coursework and dissertations are also required to register in a course of study of the ODL 604: Research and Evaluation in the Open and Distance Education and research project with 2 units (OUT, 2014). Furthermore, the content analysis of the primary documentary sources revealed further that the candidates, who register in the MED (APPS), are likewise obliged to undertake the course of study in the OED 626: Research Methodology as well as the Computer Application and Statistics with two units. It was finally learnt that all Master degree programmes register candidates in all programmes, and are obliged to finalise their courses of study by doing a research report known as the dissertation or thesis with code (OED: 699).

The primary documentary content analysis revealed more that, an obligation for candidates to undertake the research coursework and dissertation. The evaluations provided by the OUT policy revealed two modes of assessment namely course work by term papers and writing of dissertation findings detailed further in chapter five and in (OUT, 2014).

4.4.3.1 Proposals/ dissertations writing and oral defending process

Much more, the primary documentary analysis revealed that, both studied universities have the Masters degree programmes in education by coursework. This process findings is to be detailed

4.4.3.2 Proposals and dissertations writing process

In the studied universities, the candidates conduct educational research observed writing the proposals and later dissertations practically. In both universities, the data revealed that the candidates begin with research proposals writing then writing of dissertations/theses follow. As detailed later in interview responses findings in chapter five

4.4.3.3 Supervising of the dissertations process

The other emanated process was the supervision of candidates' dissertations and theses. Normally, the findings revealed that faculty and school of education in both schools allocate supervisors through legal committees pertaining to the research for dissertation (SUPADMN #20: 29.3.2014). The findings on this process are further detailed in chapter five and six.

4.4.3.4 Defending of dissertations report process

The analysed field data revealed that after submission of the dissertations, they are forwarded to the external examiners. Studied candidates after *submitting* the research report they wait to be subjected to oral defense of their findings face to face with educational experts' panels Figure (4.1), Tables 4.1(a), 4.1(b); 4.1(c); OUT (IIA; IIIB).

It was learnt that OUT has its documented policy guideline on viva voce stipulating directors to …*ensure to conduct a forums where the candidates are subjected to the oral discussion of research results…*to determine ownership of the presented study (OUT, 2008:2.3.8.3iv) as its findings are detailed in chapter five and six.

4.5 Chapter Summary

Having analysed objective one (1) addressing four initial exploratory research questions 1(ia) about what core ongoing pressing issue emerged from the studied context; 1(ib) what core dominant conceptual categories emerged 1(ic), who were the main participant, who emerged from the studied context, and (id) which core processes emerged from the studied university context? Having analysed the field primary document, and having obtained the results of the repeating the researcher obtained several insights about the manageable core conceptual categories, core processes, and the main respondents.

The emerged insights from 64 external examiners (EEAFs) report documents content analysis assisted to reveal a unique trend signifying the initial unrefined GT theory about the close relationship between one's clarity of the research paradigm and the entire dissertations final scores in (Tables 4a, 4.1b, 4.1c,4.1d; 4.2a, 4.2b, 4.2c;4.2d ; 4.2d).

The précis of findings from the initial analysis in phase one in chapter four revealed that;

- ✓ The surfaced theoretical ongoing pressing issue was unnoticed unique trend existing between one's scores for quality clarification of sub theme of research paradigm along design 6.3 (i), and scores for quality entire dissertation, a symptom of unrefined GT at an initial stage of analysis (Figure 4.1; 4.2).

- ✓ One of the studied universities of OUT has the explicit research paradigm sub theme at the level of summative evaluation process of dissertations, but the UDSM hasn't (Figure 4.1; Tables 4.1a; 4.2).
- ✓ The two universities are not in consensus on the level of placing the said sub theme during teaching process. That is, they seem not in agreement on whether the explicit research paradigm should be included at the level of course outline, or assessment level.

- ✓ External Examiners, supervisors, likewise candidates, are not guided what it implies by 'clear explanation of research paradigm' to warrant certain scores. This is because clarity as construct implies four properties: definition, scope, semantic relationship and coherence. Likewise, research paradigm a construct has seven conceptions detailed later on. Whether by clear explanation of research paradigm means explaining it along the identified conceptions, is not transparent.
- ✓ Surfaced implication is that the external examiners are at liberty to assess candidates this sub theme in subjective manner they think paradigm means, this practice seems to trigger variation of some examiners to award lower marks for subtheme 6.3 (i), while others award highest scores on the same, without uniform criteria.
- ✓ This finding seemed to imply, that lack of clear conceptions of research paradigm to guide studied researchers might be one of the probable factors for increase of marginal scores for the dissertations at OUT in a studied faculty.

The initial analysis revealed precise hypothetical proposition about the core ongoing pressing issue in the studied universities context revealing hypothesis that;

> ***The more the candidates explained the research paradigm conceptions sub theme clearly and explicitly, the more the majority of those candidates achieved the excellent final scores for entire dissertation from the external examiners and vice versa was true*** **(Tables 4.2a; 4.2b; 4.2c; 4.2d).**

Despite this finding about the emerged potential existing close relationship between one's clarity of the explicit paradigm and quality final scores for dissertations from the analysed data, experts advise not to rush to conclude that the correlation exists just from the initial analysis resulting from a single method. This is because correlation does not imply causation always. The multivariate methods are required to refine the emerging substantive theory, to warrant the correlations, the task that is accomplished in chapter six (Aldrich, 1995). The results from the initial phase of data collection presentation, analysis, discussion, and interpretation suggested to the researcher what to do in the second phase of the study, which comes next in chapter five.

The emerged processes with gerund (ing) assisted the researcher to easily identify ongoing activities in the studied universities context. The emerged core processes process became the building blocks for chapter five. The GT is mainly anchored in emerged process rather than descriptions of event as further detailed in a separate chapter five that follows.

CHAPTER FIVE

5.0 DATA ANALYSIS AND DISCUSSION

5.1 Introduction

Chapter five comprises part two as a continuation of data presentation, discussion, and interpretation that began in initial phase one in chapter four. It consists of detailed data which were collected for phase two for building chapter five about the emerged core processes in previous chapter. The generated findings from chapter four informed the researcher what to do next, in this chapter five. In this chapter, the reader should expect to find the emerged explicit paradigm as "worldviews" and its implicit conceptions coexist with emerged on-going core universities processes namely: teaching, learning, policy providing, writing, supervising, defending, and assessing quality research for dissertations.

5.2 Reflection of Paradigm Conceptions in Universities Core Processes

The grand research question underlying this study was on *how is researchers' clarity for research paradigm (worldviews) is a contributory factor among factors for increase in dissertations completion, and marginal quality score pass rates in studied universities?* The main objective of this study was to explore studied participants' perspectives capable of generating fresh hypotheses as well as the GT as a product. These would explain the manner, in which researchers' clarity for research paradigm conceptions has been a potential contributory factor among factors for increase of candidates' dissertations low completion, and marginal low-quality scores pass rates in the studied universities context.

In order to achieve the identified purpose chapter five is a continuation of objective one exploratory research questions 1(ii), and 1(iii), which guided this study. Research question 1(ii) inquired to what extent were: ongoing universities teaching, learning, policy provisions, writing study resources, and quality assuring core processes, found covering wider scope of research paradigm as worldview conceptions, in the studied universities*?* The primary and secondary documents, live participant observation, and interviews methods, became were the sources of data for this sub research question.

5.2.1 Presence of paradigm conceptions in university teaching processes

Having analysed the first category of encountered primary document of assessment tool form labelled EEAFs (2004-2017) at OUT, its findings suggested that the core process of quality assurance through assessment of course work as formative evaluation, is complemented by summative or final evaluation process by assessing candidates' dissertations externally. However, despite such findings, the researcher could not establish how, the emerged core processes of teaching, learning, policy, dissertation defending, and study resource writing, in studied universities adequately cover the sub theme of explicit research paradigm as worldview with its implicit conceptions.

The initial findings thus fell short of informing the researcher about that. It was for that reason that the findings on the initial phase guided the researcher, to go back to the field to collect more data as a second phase. The said data are presented, analysed, discussed, and interpreted in part two of chapter five. The researcher succeeded to access the second category of the primary documents known as course outlines for both studied

universities of OUT and UDSM. The UDSM course outline comes first as illustrated in Table 5.1.

Table 5.1: University of Dar es Salaam Course Outline

UNIVERSITY OF DAR ES SALAAM

STUDIED SCHOOL

(Logo)

FE 600a Research Methods -1

12 Credits

Core course

Offered in Semester 1

Contents

Course Description

This course is meant for researchers and practitioners to equip them with knowledge and skills to describe an education event accurately and vividly....

Course Aims and Objectives

This course introduces a student to education research methods...More specifically the objectives of the course are:

i) Develop understanding of the role of research...

ii) Acquire skills for conceptualising a research project... iii) Acquire basic knowledge of conceptual framework...

iv) Develop ability for research...

v) Acquire basic knowledge and skills for research designs...

vi) Develop skills to critically evaluate research...

vii) Develop professional report writing skills

Course Contents

Module1: The nature of scientific inquiry and educational research

1. Sources of knowledge
2. The nature and purpose of educational research
3. ***Ontological*** and ***epistemological*** assumptions
4. Research approaches and strategies of educational research

Module 2: Research Background

1.5 Research problem title

1.6 Sources of research problems.....detailed in (Appendix IIIB).

References

Source: Field Data (2018).

In Table 5.1, one observes a sample of the course outline work of the UDSM with several items namely: name of the course labelled FE: 600a Research Methods 1, with 12 credits offered in semester one (Table 5.1; Appendix IIIB). The surfaced themes from the UDSM course outline were:

- ✓ Course Description
- ✓ Course Aims and Objectives
- ✓ Course Contents in modules
- ✓ The nature of scientific inquiry and educational research
- ✓ Module 2: Research Background
- ✓ References

The primary document of the UDSM course outline with some implicit insightful conceptions relating to research paradigm suggested what to do and where to go next. The researchers went through a similar document at OUT, whose contents are in (Table 5.2).

Table 5.2: Course Outline of OUT

THE OPEN UNIVERSITY OF TANZANIA
(Without university logo)
STUDIED FACULTY
RESEARCH COURSE OUTLINE (BOTH PGDEandM.A)
OED 626: RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

Introduction

Aims of this course includes:

- ✓ To provide the necessary **knowledge**, skills and confidence to interpret, evaluate and carry out research in any education-related setting.
- ✓ To enable you to effectively work with, and perform research in, a variety of sectors, including industry, the public sector, academia, or your own workplace.
- ✓ To acts as valuable preparation if you wish to undertake doctoral studies.
- ✓ To explores a wide range of disciplinary approaches to educational research and the relevance of disciplines such as Sociology, Psychology,
- ✓ History and ***Philosophy*** for undertaking research in educational settings.

To allow one to gain expertise in research procedures such as interviewing, literature reviewing, data analysis, and writing.

Contents

Approaches to Educational Research
Research and the Theoretical Field
Research Methods
Broad range of methods of data collection questionnaires as: interviews, focused groups, observations, and document analysis. Detailed procedures involved in using these various research strategies
Match methods appropriately to research questions through reflecting on the advantages and disadvantages of the methods.
Qualitative Data Analysis
Quantitative Data Analysis
Writing and Presenting Educational Research

References

Source: Field Data (2018).

From Table 5.2, one observes the major and sub themes of OUT course outline

(Table 5.2). The emerged major themes were:

- ✓ Introduction
- ✓ Aims of this course includes

- ✓ Contents
- ✓ References

From the analysis of both course outlines, the derived repeating major themes and sub themes from both Tables 5.1 and 5.2 yielded some more core categories tabulated comparatively in Table 5.3.

Table 5.3: Compared Universities Teaching Course Outlines Process

DSM Course Outline	**OUT Course Outline**
-Course Description	-Introduction
-Course Aims and Objectives	-Aims of this course
-Course Contents in modules	-Course Contents
- Module 1: The nature of scientific inquiry and educational research	-References
-Module 2: Research Background	- Headed paper without logo
-References- headed papers with Logo	

Source: Field Data (2018).

The derived integrated themes from compared tabulation were as follows:

- ✓ Preliminaries: Course title and codes
- ✓ Introductory notes
- ✓ Course aims and objectives
- ✓ Universities teaching process course contents with paradigm conceptions:
  - Philosophy
  - Ontology
  - Epistemology

- Methodology (POEM)

✓ Axiological values conceptions reflected in universities organisation cultures through headed papers in policy provisions process

- Logo (motto)
- Vision
- Mission
- Strategies

✓ Alignment to national, regional, and global visions

✓ References

UDSM and OUT differ in that the paradigm conceptions are either placed in teaching course outline or summative evaluation.

5.2.2 Preliminaries

universities course titles and codes. Comparatively, one observes samples of the course outlines for UDSM studied school, being headed in a similar manner with that of OUT in (Tables 5.1; 5.2). However, while the course title code for UDSM is FE 600a: Research Methods in Education, that of OUT is coded OED 626: Research Methodology. While that of UDSM specifies the field, that of OUT does not specify the field in which it is offered (Tables 5.1; 5.2; 5.3). So far, while that of UDSM has only nine major themes, covered in semester one, while that of OUT has only five major brief themes with 26 detailed sub themes covered in entire course work (Tables 5.1, 5.2; 5.3).

So far, the same document for the UDSM is for candidates undertaking the Master degree programmes by course work in the conversional modes. As for OUT, it is for the PGDE candidates undertaking similar degree by course work, through open, distance, evening, and executive modes of learning (Table 5.3).

5.2.3 Universities course outlines introductory aims and objectives notes

In contrast still, while the UDSM course outline shows modules and semesters clearly that of OUT does not. Much more, the preliminary information of both universities course outline descriptions, indicate notes about what the entire course is all about, stating the aims of particular course. Not only that but also, both universities course outlines consist of intents of the course in terms of course outcomes as general goals, as well as specific objectives. In comparison, both universities run the research course for dissertation aiming to equip candidates with essential knowledge and skills for conducting social research particularly, educational research in various social science fields as indicated in (Appendices IIIA; IIIB; Tables 5.1; 5.2).

Issues of aims, goals, and objectives belong to category of abstracts field of metaphysics branch of philosophy detailed later on. Elaborating the logical flow existing between logic and classroom teaching plans, Kairembo and Mwereke (2012); Komba (2003) contend that the popular classification of what to learn in academic formal and non-formal schools are popularly known as Bloom and Krathwol's taxonomies. It is from this classification of taxonomies, that curriculum developers get action verbs related to the three domains namely: cognitive (what people know), psychomotor (what people

do), affective (what people feel) in formulating a syllabus (syllabi), course works, and objectives at classroom level.

5.2.4 Teaching process course contents with paradigm conceptions

Based on the discussion above, it is evident that the on-going educational research courses for dissertations taught, learned, and assessed among Masters degree candidates in both studied universities of OUT and UDSM, are underpinned with paradigm implicit conceptions namely: philosophy, ontology, and epistemology implicitly (Figure 4.1; Tables 5.1 and 5.2). From the on-going analysis, it may be argued comparatively, that while conceptions of aims of education are broad at national level, the specific objectives are smart able to be achieved at the university classrooms level and that they belong to metaphysics branch of philosophy because of being abstract.

In contrast, the first module of the UDSM course outline mentions paradigm implicitly through three conceptions namely: ontological, epistemological sources of knowledge and methodology research problems unlike the OUT-course outline that mentions only philosophy implicitly (Tables 5.2a; 5.2b). Comparatively, in both studied universities, there is nowhere the course outlines mention explicitly that construct of the research paradigm as worldview construct (Tables 5.1 and 5.2; Appendices IIIA; IIIB). In contrast, while the UDSM course outline in the studied school mentions implicitly ontology, epistemology, and methodology (OEM), that of OUT mentions philosophy and methodology (PM) implicitly (Tables 5.1; 5.2; Appendices IIIA; IIIB).

In Chapter One OUT assessment tool mentions explicitly paradigm at summative evaluation of dissertations level, while the same assessment tool of the UDSM lacks (Figure 4.1; Tables 4.1a, 4.1b; 4.1c). When one joins, the abbreviations may argue that both universities have the POEM replica to the perspective of Creswell (1994, 2012), Chilisa and Preece (2005), as well as Guba and Lincoln, (2005).

5.2.4.1 Presence of philosophical conception in universities teaching process

The educational research courses for dissertations taught and assessed among Masters degree candidates in both studied universities, are underpinned with paradigm associated with implicit conceptions namely: philosophy, ontology and epistemology implicitly (Figure 4.1; Tables 5.1; 5.2). In contrast, the first module of the UDSM course outline mentions implicitly four paradigm conceptions namely: ontological, epistemological, methodological and philosophical source of knowledge and research problem. The OUT-course outline mentions only philosophy (Tables 5.1; 5.2).

Generally, from Tables 5.1;5.2, one observes implicit conceptions insights of paradigm core emerged themes relating to research paradigm on the UDSM course outline including: epistemological issues, six sources of knowledge, ontological issues and methodology (Table 5.1).

5.2.4.2 Presence of ontology in universities teaching and learning processes

In Chapter four, the researcher introduced the implicit conception of paradigm ontology and promised to detail it in Chapter Five. In Table 5.1, the UDSM course outline for educational research, ontological issues surfaces. Table 5.1 seemed to imply that

educational research and ontology are inseparable. Ontology is a sub branch of metaphysics, which also is the first branch of philosophy. On one hand, while the term ontology originates from Greek word with two roots prefix “ontos” meaning “beings” or “entities” and the suffix “logos” meaning “study of” or “science of something.”

When one combines its two roots, gets the study about the order of categories of beings both physical and conceptual in abstract nature or existence. Issues of categories disturbed ancient philosophers Socrates (470-399 B.C), Plato (428-347 B.C), and Aristotle (384-322 B.C.) as pointed out in (Agrwaal, 2003). The term metaphysics in this study refers to words, whose origin is in Greek language with two roots prefix ‘*meta*’ meaning beyond and suffix “physical” referring to the observed natural environment through five senses. Both concepts emerged because of addressing the fundamental question of reality or phenomenon.

It can be logically inferred that all concepts, ideas, categories, and constructs, used by all fields be it pure or social sciences, cannot avoid using ontological branch of metaphysics as a branch of philosophy. In this study paradigm, philosophy, ontological and epistemological concepts, constructs and categories appearing (Figures 4.1, 4.2 and 4.3 also Tables 4.3a, b, c, d, e; Table 5.1). Viewed from the angle of research, one may argue that second conception associated, as part of paradigm is entomology. In this study it emerged in the conceptual model abbreviated as POEMALOR, whereby “O” stands for ontology, with ontological assumptions (Figure 2.1; 4.3c; Table 5.1).

Viewed further from research perspective, ontological issues belong to issues of how researchers perceive the phenomenon objectively or subjectively. The claims about the nature of the observed phenomenon lead one to consider the issue of knowledge whether it is objective, relative or multiple realities (Kairembo and Mwereke, 2012). While objective perspective belongs to positivists, they view phenomenon out there to be discovered, independently from the viewer's biases or values. Arguably, relative or subjective perspective of phenomenon belongs to post positivists, who oppose objectivism.

Instead, subjectivists view reality as socially constructed not discovered, hence subjective viewers. Biases or values are inseparable from the viewed phenomenon (Bogdan and Biklin, 1998; Cohen *et al*., 2001; Guba and Lincoln, 2005; Kairembo and Mwereke, 2011). The metaphysical and ontological sub branches in the dissertation relates to research purpose, objectives, concepts, and strategies of the study. The nature of these intents is teleological in the sense that they are in abstract terms (Kairembo and Mwereke, 2012). Aristotle categorised what people attribute, observe, think, and feel into nine metaphysical categories.

These categories are: space, time, quality, quantity, substance and position to mention a few (Walsh, 1985). For this author the primary realities are those things that stand as specific individual things such as a human being, and an animal. In sentences, they stand as subjects or objects of actions. In GT research, Glaser (1978) mentions ontological categories as codes listing of 18 supposition codes grouped as analytical categories. To cite a few these, include six namely: causes, context, contingencies, consequences,

covariance, and conditions. Others in the list are: degree, dimension, interactive, theoretical and coding Cs families. Together these conceptual categories join to mend the story coherently.

Cementing explication of categories, the constructivist Charmaz (2006) mentions analytical categories that a researcher builds levels of abstraction to keep purifying emerged concepts that could either lead to substantive GT or abstract theoretical understanding of the researched phenomenon (Charmaz; 2006). The secondary category as per Charmaz (2006) is concepts that stand as species or classes explaining individual beings, in which the primary realities are members. This categorization of beings enables the possibility of writing sentences in languages (Apostle, 1979; Charmaz; 2006).

Writing on the rationale for considering the ontological issues in the research process, Mason (2002) argues that: …*before developing a research problem, a researcher has to consider the ontological puzzles including: developmental, mechanical, causal, and comparative forms*… (Mason, 2002:19:23).

> The analysis so far done seems to imply that the relevance of ontology in the research process cannot be over emphasised. It is crucial for researchers to be clear before conducting studies.

5.2.4.3 Epistemology in universities teaching and learning processes

In chapter four, the researcher introduced implicit conception of epistemology in promise to detail it in chapter five. Epistemology implies the study of knowledge. The epistemology sub topic is a branch of philosophy, informing us about three issues. The first issue is about, six sources of knowledge namely: intuition, revelation, rationalism, authoritative, empirical, and research (Table 5.1). Second, is about the nature of knowledge as credence, logical, and as evidence. The third issue is about several epistemological theories to mention a few: theory of coherence, and correspondence. The UDSM course outline mentions sources of knowledge.

It was previously hinted that the first issue that epistemology informs us about is sources of knowledge, which emerged as the first topic in the course outline of the UDSM course outline (Table 5.1). The six other sources of knowledge according to the field of philosophy are intuition, revelation, rationalism, authoritative, empirical and research (Table 5.1). Whereas intuition refers to foresight knowledge from one's perception, it provides shaky knowledge, since one cannot prove it scientifically. However, fortune-tellers, prophets give such knowledge to their client about future events that occur.

The second source of knowledge is revelation, which related to religion. The third source of knowledge is rationalism, a means whereby people arrive at created knowledge through rigorous logical thinking either deductively, inductively, abductively or retroductively. The rational knowledge gained through reasoning is abstract as such; no one can verify it scientifically. Nevertheless, from time immemorial Aristotle's deductive logic has been in practice until recently in deducing conclusions, which have

worked across centuries. The fifth source of knowledge is authoritative, whereby people depend on authorised books to get information.

The authoritative source of knowledge includes textbooks, journals, even magazines. Unlike other four types of knowledge, at least this source of knowledge can be trusted since some information have originated from research hence can be proved scientifically. The sixth source of knowledge is research, whereby knowledge is systematically gathered through scientific means by first identifying the problem, hypothesise, collect data, analyse, present findings, reject or confirm existing theories. Some authors have elaborated in details about the branch of epistemology its six sources, nature and theories of knowledge (Walsh, 1985; Kairembo and Mwereke, 2012).

5.2.4.4 Nature of knowledge in university teaching and learning processes

The other insight that surfaced in Table 5.1 was the nature of knowledge. This sub theme belongs to epistemological branch of philosophy about character of knowledge. Ancient philosophers raised a fundamental question about, what is knowledge and what is its nature? Addressing such question, Plato identified three facets of knowledge saying that knowledge consist of three elements namely: a belief, rational, and evidence. Whereas knowledge as a belief is a situation, in which people tend to believe anything based on hear says, it to believe any issue without thinking over it hence taking issues for granted. Plato in Walsh (1985) discourages such knowledge as of low calibre, and unworthy.

The second nature of knowledge is, that knowledge has to be rationalised. In other words, hearsay information should be rigorously questioned. Reasoning out information

taken for granted became the second stage of knowledge towards authentic knowledge. The third nature of knowledge is evidence. Once the information is reported, it has to be believed initially, then be scrutinised by reasoning, and much more backed by evidence (Walsh, 1985).

5.2.5 Epistemological theories in universities teaching and learning processes

The other issue that epistemology informs the researchers is about epistemological theories. This is a stock of some important theorems and principled stipulations by philosophers and intellectuals in varying fields of knowledge since time immemorial. Just to mention a few they include coherence, correspondence, even parsimony. While coherence refers to consistency, correspondence is about the claim that the credible knowledge should correspond to state of affairs. The parsimonious theory is by a philosopher by the name of Occam. His theory is popular as the 'Occam's razor.' This theory states that entities of studied phenomenon should not be overstated beyond necessity (Walsh, 1985; Kairembo and Mwereke, 2012).

One may argue that the field of research is inseparable from the epistemological conceptions. Jacob (2009) defines a theory as an organized framework of ideas. The author proceeds to categorize the theories into two major groups namely: macro-huge theories (positivism, post positivism) and micro-small theories (feminism, interpretive, coherence, compatibility). Jacob (2009) outlines theories beginning with, 'positivism' a word that August Comte coined to imply, the positive highest third stage of human beings, which would replace religious mythologies and metaphysical paradigm approaches of solving faced problems.

Some authors Mackenzie and Knipe (2006) equate a paradigm as a theory, which is in form of brief but contented statements about what it explains. Second category of theory is social Darwinism based on evolution of species through natural selection.

Third is conflict theory of Karl Marx, who thought that human problems should be studied, basing on conflicting classes in the society, in relation to ownership of the major means of production like land and labour relations. The fourth category of theory is symbolic structuralism, whose focus is about the structure of language use and so on (Jacob, 2009). One may argue that the field of research is inseparable from the epistemological theories.

5.2.6 Universities course outline references or bibliography themes

All borrowed concepts from published syllabi, course works, should appear in reference section. In comparison, both course outlines end with references, a component of authoritative source of knowledge in the Epistemology branch of philosophy (Tables 5.1;5.2; 5.3). The analysis of curriculum material is important to arrive at rational and informed analysis. It determines material relevance, validity, and usefulness in facilitating the teaching and learning process. The references theme reflects one of the sub themes about sources of knowledge, namely authoritative source of knowledge, which is also a sub branch of epistemology major branch of philosophy. Elaborating the authoritative source of knowledge, Walsh (1985); Kairembo and Mwereke (2012) contend that it is a type of knowledge, derived from created knowledge mainly through authorship and research as journals, dissertations, theses, and textbooks of varying.

5.2.7 Ontology conception: objectivism and subjectivism.

In Table (5.1), the UDSM course outline mentions one of the implicit worldview conceptions of ontology. Ontology is a sub branch of metaphysics branch of philosophy. All emerged conceptual categories, constructs in Tables (4.4, 4.5, 4.6; Figure 4.3), belong to metaphysics branch of philosophy. Again, one may argue that all sciences be it pure or social use concepts, words, ideas belong to metaphysics. Consequently, researchers cannot avoid dealing with philosophy and its branch of metaphysics with its sub branch of ontology. In research issues of positions of viewing the phenomenon as objective, relative, or subjective belong to ontology sub branch of metaphysics too.

One may argue that the field of educational research is inseparable from the underpinned philosophical conceptions in particular ontology. Comparatively, in both universities, nowhere in course outlines they mention research paradigm construct explicitly (Tables 5.1; 5.2; 5.3; Appendices IIIA; IIIB). Cementing on the primacy of ontology as a metaphysical conception in educational research, Carr (1995) argues that metaphysical and moral beliefs cannot be expelled from educational research, and that educational research demands much more in the way of association to concrete phenomena than most educational researchers are prepared to admit Carr (1995).

5.2.8 Methodology conceptions practised in universities teaching

In chapter four, the researcher introduced implicit conception and promised to detail it in chapter five. Moreover, in chapter four the analysis revealed core conceptions, one emerged implicit conception was methodology, and the researcher promised to deal with its practicality in chapter five. Keen analysis of Table 5.1; 5.2 reveals that both

universities have theme of research design. The UDSM course outline mentions issues of methodology, module one which is about the nature of scientific inquiry and educational research. It covers sources of knowledge (epistemological content). It covers the nature and purpose of educational research.

It also covers research approaches and strategies of educational research (Table 5.1). The course outline of OUT has details on the issue of methodology compared to that of UDSM. Unlike the UDSM course outline, that of OUT has no modules. However, on the contents theme OUT mentions issues of research methodology, stipulating eight sub themes to be covered by the candidates including approaches to educational research, research and the theoretical field and research methods. It adds that candidates are supposed to cover research methods, broad range of methods of data collection questionnaires as: interviews, focused groups, observations, and document analysis.

It also mentions detailed procedures involved in using these various research strategies as well as matching methods appropriately to research questions by reflecting on the advantages and disadvantages of the methods. Much more, it covers qualitative data analysis and ends with quantitative data analysis (Table 5.2). Suffice to argue that the emerged conception of methodology in phase one was practically found in both universities of UDSM and OUT (Tables 5.1; 5.2).

5.2.9 Axiological conceptions in universities logo and policy process

In chapter four the analysis revealed core conceptions, one of the emerged implicit conceptions, was axiological values and the researcher promised to deal with its practicality in ongoing chapter five.

5.2.9.1 Universities institutions ethical code of conduct

Nowhere are axiological conceptions transparent more than in universities ethical codes of conduct. The researcher analyzed 68 candidates' dissertations, and interestingly all 68 (100%) had a section of ethics. Further analysis of candidates' dissertations revealed that both universities prospectuses encourage all candidates to ensure they have the permission letters from the university introducing them to the fields intended for studies. The researcher argues that axiological issues not only concern with ethical codes of conduct, but also it deals with aesthetics field, where beauty is the major concern. In this study, the aesthetics deals with issues of cleanness of the submitted dissertations.

It was for this reason that the analyzed dissertations were to the greater extent error free submitted copies. Again, all criteria used by the EEs to judge the quality of dissertations, belong to the quality assurance field, part of axiological issues. Suffice to argue that the field of educational research is inseparable from the axiological values conceptions. Commenting on primacy of ethical values in educational research Carr (1995), insists; "*…values are vital an ingredient educational research that their elimination is impossible save by eliminating the research enterprise itself…*" (Carr, 1995).

5.2.9.2 Universities logo as organisational cultural symbolic values

In contrast, while the UDSM course outline is logoed with freedom' torch with university motto "*Hekima ni Uhuru"* implying "*Wisdom is Freedom"* it is headed as school of education owner of the course outline, that of OUT is headed without the OUT logo (Appendices IIIA; IIIB). The lack of logo on the OUT-course outline does not mean that it has none, instead it has its own logo with motto of 'Open University of Tanzania: Affordable Quality Education for All.' In contrast, whereas the logo of OUT reveals its accessibility of quality higher education for everyone, with core mode of learning like Open, that of the UDSM does not. Instead, the UDSM motto reveals its philosophical ideal of "wisdom." Wisdom is a property of metaphysics branch of philosophy (App. IA, IB). Suffice to argue that the field of educational research is inseparable from the axiological cultural values conception.

Some of the analysed primary documents for two studied universities were headed papers with logos. One may argue that the logo is a symbol of autonomous authority in the parastatal institutions, within which the two universities motto statements fall. By university motto, it implies a symbol often drawn with short slogan revealing the organisational culture, philosophy, reflecting the direction, where each university travels. Keen observation of universities logos and headed papers, not only reflect what their visions and mission claim but also type of learning modes.

In contrast, while the logo of the OUT reveals its core mode of learning being open, that of the UDSM does not, except its motto reveals its pursued philosophical ideal of "wisdom" (Appendices IA; IB). According to the OUT policy and procedure research

culture of the OUT recognises that research is crucial in the society because of capability of solving issues and challenges requiring solutions. It is for this purpose that the OUT-policy statement stipulates that, members of staff and students have to be equipped with research knowledge, skills, facilities, and research agenda. Suffice to say that the analysis seemed to imply that the OUT is symbol of paradigm shift in Tanzania in the field of higher education for attempting its unique mode of learning ODeL.

Noting policy statements of universities Mauch and Park (2003) contend that candidates desire to see systematised faculties, which identify and evaluate degree programmes to collaborate in research endeavours. In view of that, they propose to have clear policies guiding collaboration between faculties and supervisees.

5.2.9.4 Universities organisation cultures: vision, mission and strategies

In this study, culture refers to total ways embracing customs, beliefs and norms. Universities are modern formalised communities of intellectuals. Further analysis reveals that universities have visions, missions, and strategies reflecting implicit axiological values conceptions of organisation culture. The vision of OUT envisages it to be a leading excellent university in delivery of affordable quality education through open and distance learning, dynamic knowledge generation and application. Unlike OUT vision, that of UDSM gears it to be reputable excellent university, responsible to national and global needs through creation of dynamic knowledge creation.

While the mission of OUT focuses on achieving bridging the gap by providing affordable quality education for all through ODL, that of UDSM focuses on enhanced

quality outputs in teaching. Both universities aim to achieve equitable sustainable socio-economic development of Tanzania and the rest of Africa (OUT, 2008:1.2 i; ii; www.udsm.ac.tz, 2017). It is seen that in both universities, creation of knowledge through research and quality academic products deliverance, are at the heart of both universities. In contrast, whereas the UDSM is a formalised conversional higher learning organisation with OUT is a non-formalised higher learning organisation.

In other words, partly it consists of informal teaching and learning; whereby learners are distanced from their teachers not necessarily attend in formal classes, formal libraries, or living in hostels. Partly, it is formal since it has flexible official curricula; sometimes it has officialised offices, libraries even examinations. Characterising nonformal systems of learning Babyegeya (2012) argues that ODL has established itself as an effective and equal to the conventional mode in education provision globally. Some authors add to that observation, advancing ODL to ODeL, as cost-effective blended modes opted by developing countries like Tanzania as a complementary, but not supplementary strategy in human resource development (Babyegeya, 2012; Bhalalusesa, 1998; Kisassi, 2011; Ng'umbi, 2012; Rwegelera, 2011; Rwejuna, 2014).

5.2.9.5 Paradigm conceptions in universities strategic plans

The analysed field documentary sources on historical context at OUT made apparent that since 1992, the Parliament Act No. 7 of (1992) established OUT and by 1994 it began to offer undergraduate degree programmes. From 2001, OUT began to offer postgraduate degrees and diploma programmes. The Master's degree programmes by distance modes, began to be offered offer through the open and distance learning modes

aiming at merging the existed gap of inadequate graduates at the university level in Tanzania by then. The analysis too, revealed that the policy provisions procedure and controls through its strategic plan since 2004, was one of the on-going co-processes that initiated the quality assurance process at OUT.

Much more, the analysis shows that one of OUT strategic plan objectives (v) provides the process of creation of academic quality knowledge internally, through the academic research. This policy provision procedure empowers the Directorate of Research for Post Graduates Students (DRPS) to ensure quality control and assurance of its research reports internally and externally, by designing an assessment tool for assuring quality of dissertations. One of those assessment tools was found to be the EEs assessment forms as per policy procedures in (EEAFs 2004-2016; Table 1.1a; OUT, 2008).

It was in this field document, in which the paradigm sub theme originates. It became evident, that the EEAFs tool originated from the OUT policy strategic plan on the quality assurance, providing existence of such an assessment tool. It was from the policy document that the sub theme 6.3(i) obliging candidates to ...*clearly explain the research paradigm of choice and design…,* emanated. Consequently, the explanation of the explicit research paradigm in dissertation is imperative or rather mandatory by policy and not optional for candidates, since the external examiners assess it practically (Figure 4.1).

Elaborating a vision statement in this study, Kairembo and Mwereke (2012) view it as a coherent general statement with direction why, an organisation like university exists for (Kairembo and Mwereke, 2012).

5.2.9.6 Universities policy alignment to regional and global visions

Arguably, the fact that the emerged sub theme 6.3 (i) about research paradigm in the EEAFs exit in the assessment tool document provided by the OUT policy procedure, it is thus inseparable from quality assurance process. So far, another area where the core ongoing processes could be captured was in the studied universities policy provisions on research, in accordance with studied universities' vision, mission. Likewise, universities mentioned strategic statements on research agenda, as they also align not only with Tanzania vision (2025), but also with regional Southern African Development Community (SADC) as one goes through SADC region nine (9) issues.

One of those issues in sub section 3.8.9 is on the research development and dissemination (OUT, 2008; SADC, 2011). In limited research development, research and dissemination about the ODL in the region, the cooperation envisages investing in the ODL research development and dissemination as well as quality assurance; monitoring, evaluation and research are at the heart of the cooperation key policy framework (SADC Draft, 2011, 3.7 vii and viii). The OUT quality research strategic objective (v) likewise UDSM, link with the global United Nations (UN) Millennium Sustainable Development Goals (SMDGS) instituted in September 2015 to end 2030 (UN, 2015).

The OUT and UDSM strategic policy objectives on the quality research objective falls under the 4th SMDGS objective on the role of the higher education in achieving the said SMDGs, "to promote learning, and creation of the new knowledge through research and consultancies" (UN, 2015).

5.2.10 Universities lack consensus on level of including research paradigm

The analysis of the UDSM and OUT two primary documents namely: assessment and course outlines, revealed that the two universities are in consensus that explicit research paradigm and its associated implicit conceptions are crucial to be taught to researchers in the courses of research for dissertations. In addition, the two studied universities vary at the level of including the research paradigm as worldview conceptions.

However, the same universities are not in consensus which particular contents they should teach to their candidates. OUT includes the explicit research paradigm at late level of summative evaluation but does not include it in the course outlines (Figure 4.1; Tables 5.1; 5.2) whereby OUT mentions two conceptions of philosophy namely: philosophy and methodology (PM) in its course outline.

Unlike OUT, the UDSM does not explicitly mention research paradigm construct at all but mentions three implicit conceptions namely: ontology, epistemology, and methodology (OUT EEAF 2004-2017; Figure 4.1; Tables 5; 5.2; Appendices IIIB; XIA; XIB). While the UDSM lacks the explicit paradigm construct in its assessment tool form as shown in Table 4.1a, nevertheless, it includes some implicit research paradigm conceptions namely: ontology, epistemology, as well as methodology (OEM) at the

level of course outline (Tables 5.1;5.2). The researcher argues comparatively, that both universities mention paradigm conceptions in their course outlines implicitly.

In contrast, while OUT mentions two conceptions namely: philosophy and methodology (PM) that of UDSM, mentions three ontology, epistemology and methodology (OEM). If one were to combine (PM and OEM) one gets (POEM). This finding echo observation of Jacob (2009), who says paradigm construct and its conceptions are not popular. Consequently, they take the research paradigm for granted as irrelevant. Interestingly, while the UDSM taught implicit constructs of paradigm OEM tally with perspective of what constitutes paradigm in Guba and Lincoln (2005), while combined constructs taught in both universities of OUT and UDSM tally with proposals of POEM in (Creswell, 1994; 2012).

Upon this observation, Mackenzie and Knipe (2006) add, blaming authors of research books for including contents of research paradigm either too late or too early in those books, and those who attempt write about it shallowly. Likewise, some research experts add blame to writers because of using interchangeable words to define paradigm namely: a framework, as theory, or worldview. By so doing they expose the inexperienced students of research to dilemma of not knowing, where exactly paradigm suits in the research process (Mackenzie and Knipe, 2006; Jacob, 2009). Some findings from analysis of data addressing objective 1(ii), were that;

- ✓ Universities course outlines were found having preliminaries like course title and codes, introductory notes, aims, and objectives.

- ✓ Likewise, the analysis made clear that paradigm conceptions are present in the studied universities teaching process course contents namely: philosophy, ontology, epistemology methodology, and axiological values conceptions reflected in universities organisation cultures through headed papers in policy provisions process exhibited in studied universities in particular OUT logo (motto), vision, mission, and strategies align to national, regional, and global visions.

Finally, references were identified as a taught component of the studied universities teaching process. However, though UDSM and OUT are in consensus that research explicit research paradigm and its associated conceptions are essential to teach and learn in the course of research for dissertations, yet they are not in consensus what specific conceptions are to be taught. Much more, they are not in consensus at which particular level, they should be emphasised.

Conclusively, the studied universities teaching process reflected in course outlines of educational research for dissertation suggested the implication, that it is inseparable from explicit paradigm and its implicit conceptions abbreviated as (POEMALOR)

5.2.11 Paradigm lacks in internal quality assurance for oral defense process

The second research question of objective 1(ii) wanted to know, the if university core processes namely: teaching/learning course outlines, policy process provisional statements of (vision, mission, motto), study resources, and assessment tools contents, covered wider

scope of research, world view construct conceptions, in the studied universities. The researcher sought to understand how candidates and their supervisors adhered to the requirements of sub theme 6.3(i), which obliges candidates to; " *…clearly explain the research paradigm and design*..."

By so doing, the researcher would discover what universities and examiners expect from the candidates on this sub theme. It became evident that the external quality assurance of dissertations through summative evaluation in particular at OUT, is not complete with the feedback of the dissertations report from the external examiner alone. OUT has internal quality assurance process through oral defense for dissertation as a crosscheck examination. Purposive criterion and theoretical sampling procedure assisted the researcher to select saturated sample of only twenty (29) candidates out of 68 for observation after qualifying researcher's prior set criteria.

At this stage, the theoretical sampling strategy reduced the number of universities from two, to only one for further exploration. The OUT qualified for observation with rationale that the explicit paradigm sub theme (6.3), occurs at its level of summative evaluation for dissertations, unlike the UDSM. Consequently, the researcher abandoned the UDSM, and focused to study OUT in the rest of processes. Having obtained the permission from the responsible office on issues of viva for dissertations at OUT, the researcher began observation by attending the first session of dissertations oral defense, without the observation instrument schedule (Appendices IIA; IIB; X). Instead, the observation schedule emerged within the field.

The rationale was because the researcher did not know what was going to happen in protected examination defense rooms. Table 5.4 illustrates general observations from eight times live observations.

Table5.4: General Surfaced Insights from Live Observed Oral Defense

Panel time schedule guide
Objectives of meeting given
Welcome and self-introduction
Members constituting the column check
Assessment forms distributed (App. xv)
Issues to pay attention at (clarity, ownership of work)
Moment for panelists to cross check the defendants
Panelists' mandate to alter EEs' scores (NO)
Ownership of dissertation work done insurance
Panelists' verdicts on (either pass/not passed but accepted/ fail hence resubmission)
Insurance of candidates to explain research paradigm and design (neither panelist nor student did)

Source: Field Data (2018).

Table 5.4 shows OUT panelists' schedule for internal quality assurance process of dissertations through oral defense cross check examination, providing twelve insights. Before doing a thorough analysis of these emerged sub categories, the researcher encountered, yet another primary panelists' assessment document related to oral defense process appearing in (Table 5.5).

Table 5.5: Panelists' Schedule on Dissertation Oral Defense Foci Points

Panellists	Crossed examined themes	Theoretical background	Literature	Methodology	Methods	Data analysis	Data Presentation Given verdict	Comments
	Panelist A	x		x	✓	x	✓ Pass	
	Panelist B	x		x	✓	✓	x Pass	
	Panelist C	✓	x	✓	X	x	x Redo	
	Panelist D	x	x	x	x	✓	x Reject	

Source: Field Data (2018).

In Table 5.5, one observes another encountered document with four rows and nine columns. The researcher discovered ongoing activities previously listed in Table 5.4. Generally, the researcher sought to understand how the studied researchers were familiar with implementing sub theme 6.3(i) ...clear explanation of research paradigm and design… (Figure 4.1; Table 5.5). From the two tables, more sub themes surfaced from the observation on this item.

- ✓ Scheduled panel meeting routine: Preliminaries
- ✓ Issues of clarity, ownership, confidence are similar in Figure. 4.1; Table 5.5).
- ✓ Objectives of the panel meeting
- ✓ Panelists' familiarity of sub theme 6.3 about candidates to explain research paradigm
- ✓ Issues of panelists focus on (clarity, ownership, confidence)

- ✓ Panel's awarded verdicts (for clarity, confidence, ownership of dissertation chapters) Pass/Fail/Resubmission comments
- ✓ Oral defense panel's mandate to alter external examiners' dissertation score grades
- ✓ Any mention, explanation of either explicit paradigm or its implicit conceptions
- ✓ Explicit research paradigm missing in teaching, learning, and defending processes

5.2.12 Scheduled panel meeting routine: preliminaries of oral defense panel

This item is an integration of Table 5.4; Table 5.5. Prior to observation, the researcher sought the permission to attend oral examinations from the responsible office as ethics of research direct (Tables, IIIA; IIIB). Defenses at OUT begin early in March, and end one month before the graduation, November every year. The rationale for beginning early is to give prospective graduands adequate time to adjust their dissertations for varying verdict-requiring corrections as per defense panel. The researcher observed only the candidates, who appeared in a timetable from the studied faculty. The invited panel members and candidates must confirm their availability a week before the panel meeting to have a complete column. The column should not be less than two third of the attendees.

5.2.12.1 Objectives of viva voce sessions for defending dissertations report

In all eight times of researcher's observation, the researcher heard stipulation of similar meeting objectives briefly, that the members meet specifically to rigorously cross examine the candidates' research created knowledge report, keen hearing of the presentations on main five themes. Critically re-assess candidates' noted confidence and

strengths as well as weaknesses. In the words of the chair person, the task of the panel is clearly stated in one of the welcoming note to members that;

> *"...Hi all, welcome to this meeting about oral defense for assuring quality of the already examined candidates' dissertations. However, we internally have to assure ourselves, whether created knowledge through research really is of quality reflecting external examiner's scores as well as the candidate delivery of what s/he found in the field. Remember the results from the internal assurance of the assessed oral presentation from you members, assist the university to decide, which candidate should and who should not graduate. Your given verdicts affect candidates' life. So, I urge you to be rigorous and fair in your cross examination..."* (ADM#19: 24.1.014).

All eight times of observing twenty-nine candidates defending their dissertations, the researcher heard the chairperson welcoming the candidate saying:

> *...You have thirty minutes, use fifteen minutes to briefly tell us your name, your degree programme, and take us through your report. We expect you to tell panel members your brief title, objectives, then detailed methodology, findings, summary of implications and recommendations for your study. Then the panelists will use fifteen minutes to cross-examine you with brief questions from backbenchers. Be free to use the power point presentation...* (ADMSUP#19: 24.1.014).

From the quotation dissertation assessment is internally done to ensure quality. The panel members are encouraged to be fair and rigorous in their verdicts (ADMSUP#19). Candidates have three chances, where they practically learn research for dissertations. The first practical chance is during proposal writing, the second is during data collection, and third is data report presentation through oral examination.

5.2.12.2 Familiarity of studied researchers' groups with explicit paradigm

The observation revealed that once the introductory issues were over, the candidates presented their dissertation reports variously as per arranged schedule. The observation revealed further, that much time for panelists focused on issues of methodology implicit

conception of research paradigm. None of presenters explained or was asked the research paradigm as per 6.3 (i) sub theme by not mentioning the research paradigm made the researcher to inquire more the groups of studied researchers after every end of oral cross-examination to get their views on the matter as per the research objectives of this study.

Interviewer

Congratulations for oral examination day! You have made it, could you tell me, which parts of the educational research course culminating into writing of dissertation you found it so demanding?

Candidate STUD#87:

> *"…Well, to me the proposal writing on issues of stating a research problem, frame work or model, methodology on the choice of design as well as choosing either qualitative or quantitative approaches, sampling or choice of sample size, as well as choice of research methods, involved me a lot because. The methodology part confuses, since the given time was so short. The rest themes of dissertation to me were fairly manageable…"* (STUD#87: 27.11.014).

Interviewer

You said the theme of research methodology on choice of appropriate design; approaches between the qualitative and quantitative were tough to you, why did it become so difficult to you, while am told that you were exposed to various research paradigms for you to decide on those approaches appropriately?

Candidate

The candidate STUD#87 had the following opinions to respond saying;

> *"…If I understood your question well, first of all I don't know what paradigm refers to and how it relates to the research process…* [When asked why it was so while it was imperative to be informed about varying research paradigms prior to the field, the response was;]*…But my supervisor neither asked me nor bothered to mention or elaborated such strange term to me, how could I have known its relevance..."* (STUD#87: 27.11.014).

Responding to researcher's inquiry on whether the lecturer was familiar with a construct of research paradigm in research for dissertations course, the expert SUP#8 responded saying;

> *"…Yap, am familiar with the term paradigm though, I use it rarely in my lectures! Suffice to say that the research paradigm belongs to social science research in particular educational research. However, it is not commonly applied term especially at the level of M.A at our university because in Tanzania universities I happened to teach educational research, researchers use it sparingly in. Nevertheless, unlike abroad universities like the one, where I studied the research paradigms emphasis on clarity of research philosophical issues like paradigm are certain, before beginning research field. To me paradigms are important since they are* ***ways****, where one finds a guide on how to write appropriate set up of research problem, appropriate methods, to rationalise why and how of the decisions especially on methodological components…"* (SUP #8: 17.3.2014).

Much more, when probed to say on familiarity of what the paradigm refers to, the expert respondent EE#2 had this to say;

> *"…Well, to me paradigm is just a parameter that determines a scope of the study. It has to do with both positivists' and post positivists' schools of thought translated in the qualitative or quantitative or both, I suppose. However, the term paradigm is not commonly used in our universities in particular at our UDSM, though its relevance cannot be questioned in the course of research…"* (EE#2: 16.5.014).

Responding to the same question on familiarity of paradigm the experienced EE# 4 had the following responses;

> *"…Yes, let me say I am always pleased to find the subtheme of paradigm being given attention at OUT in the processes of assessing educational research because OUT itself is a symbol of paradigm shift in the field of research process. However,*

> *I do not see its reflection in students' dissertations. To me, the choice of paradigm depends on the school one attended. Most of professors follow what they were taught in their universities, where normally one tends to follow organisational cultural choice, either to follow for stance citation either as per American Psychology Associations (APA), Chicago school or Modern Language Association (MLA) are followed, and the like. Therefore, you find that we have fixed culture of conducting research instead of listening to the students' emerging paradigms. For me, universities choices of paradigms should not hinder lecturers to let their student researchers to come up with their own frameworks depending on the raised questions…"* (EE# 4: 16.5.014).

Adding to the previous opinions the respondent EE#4 had the following views;

> *"…In the choice of research paradigm, I advocate the blended paradigm, where methods from the two dominant positivists and post positivists approaches are considered. Supervisors likewise examiners should be all weather…* [When asked to elaborate more, the respondent argued saying] *… I mean we have to learn a bit of what each paradigm language claims in terms of its philosophical metaphysical, epistemological methodology, logical concepts and rigor. This will assist us to consider or hear students' emerging paradigms different from what we learnt. I mean flexibility is required among assessors, because the world is dynamic. Consequently, we supervise or assess varying students, thus we are obliged to be all weather get informed about what positivists', post positivists', or eclectic of both paradigms..."* (EE# 4: 16.5.014).

Precisely, one may argue that the interviewed research respondents differed on information about the explicit research paradigm. While to some interviewees, paradigm is a foreign term, some studied candidates blamed their supervisors for not informing them about it (STUD#87: 27.11.014). One of the supervisors wondered why in Tanzania universities, philosophical conceptions and paradigms debates are not given emphasis, unlike abroad universities practice (SUP #8: 17.3.2014). As one may read quoted words, some researchers equated the research paradigm with research approaches and advocated the blending or mixing of qualitative and quantitative methods.

The rhetoric language of using the appropriate language according to the chosen research paradigm emerged from interviewees. For example, respondent SUP #8 went further to point out that each researcher should learn philosophical, metaphysical, epistemological, and logic rigor of both positivist and post positivists (EE# 4: 16.5.014). Some interviewees equated research paradigm with referencing styles like Chicago, APA, or MLA. Much more, the perspective of viewing research paradigm as positivism and post positivism schools of research also surfaced from some interviewed researchers (EE#2: 16.5.014).

One of the external examiners pointed out, that although OUT obliges candidates to clearly explain research paradigm prior to research design, but the theme is not reflected in candidates' dissertations (EE# 4: 16.5.014). Using Table 5.5 in Appendix (X) the researcher pursued assessed dissertations of selected 29 observed candidates because their external examiners' reports were readily available. The analysis revealed that none of the candidates' dissertations had mentioned or explained explicit research paradigm. The analysis suggested the inference that the explicit paradigm, not only misses in prior preparations of teaching, learning course outlines, dissertations defense processes, but also misses in candidates' dissertations.

This finding implies that research paradigm sub theme goes unnoticed across the studied process except in the process of summative evaluation, where external examiners assess it rigorously. It was also learnt that, some paradigm conceptions of POEM surfaced in some candidates' dissertations. Findings show that the studied groups of researchers, differed in awareness on the explicit construct of research paradigm as it appears in the

studied EEs' assessment forms (EEAFs 2006-2016). The interview too, provided some insights revealing how the explicit research paradigm, receives less emphasis in classroom situation by lecturers. Some respondents STUD#87 (27.11.014) claimed not to have heard about it from supervisors.

Above all, supervisors and EEs were in consensus that explicit research paradigm is not popular in daily uses in universities they happened to lecture in Tanzania (SUP #8: 17.3.2014; EE#2; 16.5.014).

5.2.12.3 Overall explicit paradigm misses in teaching and learning processes.

Not only the explicit construct of paradigm misses in the process of initial teaching plans in this case the course outlines, but also it misses in the process of teaching and learning in terms of supervision as well as oral defense process.

When asked to indicate whether paradigm and its scope in terms of its properties are clarified by university lecturers, supervisors, some more graduates on cell phone and on line STUD#32 called on phone;

> *"…Mheshimiwa [implying honourable], in your questionnaire, I read the list of paradigm components, I never read the concept of paradigm nor been exposed to the list of its conceptions as you outlined them to me, not before, during, after the course work or my field work. For this matter, I am of the opinion that I don't know what paradigm refers to and how it relates to the research process…*" [When encouraged to explain whether his supervisor clarified the paradigms clarity, the response of the same candidate wrote through online questionnaire]*; "…Neither my supervisor asked me nor bothered with the term paradigm. I suppose my ignorance of these seven properties of paradigm, as you revealed them to me on your questionnaire are new to me. Whether this was one of the responsible factors for my lower achievement of "B" instead of grades of "B+ and A", Am not certain …*" (STUD# 32: 7.5.014).

The other respondent candidate STUD#35 online wrote;

> *"…What paradigm implies, similarly its dimension as well how it relates to the research process, is not clear to me. I remember to have read it in books of research though I cannot tell exactly which one. I cannot remember to have used this term in my dissertation, because some days have passed since I graduated. It is difficult for me to explain paradigm in my own words…"* (STUD#35: 03.8.014).

Another interviewed candidate STUD#23 contributed on the same on-going motion, a responding that;

> *"…Truly, I am aware with the term paradigm in research as perspectives I may say it relates to the field of research because this is, where I encountered it. Nevertheless, the way it relates to the dissertations performance is a puzzle to me. I mean, I cannot exactly elaborate further, how it does. Though I had an ample time with my supervisor, but we never discussed such a concept in my research, or maybe we discussed it in an indirect way…"* (STUD#23: 6.5.2014).

One of the EEs #6 critically responded saying;

> *"…It seems the concept of paradigm is strange and I regard it as a difficult concept among students and among university dons, including me, despite experiencing it in marking OUT dissertations. Here at our UDSM, I witness this concept in the PhD, presentations. The practice would be to teach the paradigms prior in the research methodology, to act as a foundation, yet this is rarely done in the universities I have taught in Tanzania. Further, I do not see it in our UDSM research course outlines involving this crucial term on paradigm. However, let me use a pictorial language that no one can travel without knowing the road. For me the paradigm is a* ***road map****. Overall, the reality of teaching and application might mismatch from one individual to another. I think there is a missing link…"* (EE# 6: 19.9.014).

The other EE# 2 added curiously wondering;

> *"…Duh! You have pointed out a very difficult area in the research that culminates into a dissertation. In fact, even at the level of the PhDs, is not well articulated by several inexperienced researchers. Fortunately, I am marking one of the dissertations for the Ph.D. of my university, I can tell you that no mention of the paradigm anywhere across the dissertation. The researcher has only provided the philosophy of pragmatism. Do you know pragmatism? Is it a philosophy or paradigm? But I suppose it is not a paradigm, isn't it…?"* (EE# 2: 16.5.014).

One of supervisors coded SUP#14 was inquired on the same issue and responded critically saying;

> *"…I think if paradigm concept is within the forms of assessment for our students by chance, I mean it may be due to our custom of picking up words without much analysis and clarification. Recently, the word paradigm has been popular in the Ministry of Education in the phrase "paradigm shift" as "muhamo wa ruwaza" but if you ask its clarification, no one gives you the clarification. I presume that probably the word paradigm, picked in a similar way, and got way in our assessment form by certain fellows attending such workshops. I remember such workshops advocated paradigm shift in teaching and learning, otherwise it is foreign term to many including me. One could rationalise, do they know what it refers to, I suppose not. Nevertheless, my experience of supervising candidates, I never refer to it, when my students are proceeding with conducting research or writing their dissertations. I do not see any impact if my students proceed without using it, and they complete their course without referring to it anyway. My main guide is a prospectus of the university not otherwise…"* (SUPADM# 14: 16.5.014).

Responding to the very category of sub questions about awareness of the paradigm construct the administrator and supervisor respondent SUPADMN #20 gave what the construct refers to in relation to the dissertations quality performance. The given response from the ADMN about awareness, ADMN #20 was;

> *"…What I know is that each faculty has the course for research methodology, so candidates are expected to be informed of it so that they have a prior knowledge on basic concepts. One expects faculties to have included paradigm in the course outlines, since this component is examined by the EEs in candidates' dissertations. It is not mandate of the DRPS to dictate the faculties of what to include in. However, it is the role of responsible deans and department heads to ensure foundation concepts are within the course outlines for students to study is it not so…?"* (SUPADMN #20: 29.3.2014).

Responding to researcher's question, the other newly PhD graduate expert respondent argued saying that;

> *"…Paradigm is situated in research field but it is not commonly applied term especially at the level of M.A, where it is used sparingly and implicitly in Tanzania*

> *universities. Nevertheless, in abroad universities like the one, where I studied, the research paradigm conceptions are explicitly emphasised. To me paradigms are important since they are* ***ways****, where one finds a guide on how to write appropriate set up of research problem, appropriate methods, and to rationalise why and how made decisions on methodological part...*" (SUP #8: 17.3.2014).

Research paradigm exists in the assessment tool of OUT, which the external examiners appreciate such a move. However, the interviews analysis revealed that candidates do not demonstrate explicit paradigm and its conceptions in their dissertations.

Commenting on the familiarity of the term paradigm and research design in relation to the observed underperformance scenarios, the respondent coded EE#4 argued saying that;

> *"…Yes, let me say, I was pleased to find the subtheme of paradigm in the processes of educational research being given attention though I do not see its reflection in students' dissertations. I personally, the choice of paradigms depends on the university one attended. Most of professors follow what they learnt in their universities, where normally they find the inclination of the organisation cultures, such as phenomenology, psychology like in (American Psychology Association (APA), behaviourism and the like. Therefore, you find that we have fixed cultures of conducting research instead of listening to the students' emerging paradigms. However, differences in paradigms should not lead supervisors to hinder their supervisee students to come up with their own frameworks depending on the researched problem…"* (EE#4: 16.5.014).

The interview findings among the interviewees of three groups on neglected construct of paradigm reveal that research paradigm is unpopular among researchers consequently; they neglect it (Jacob, 2009). Much more, the confusion among the researchers on the same, is accelerated by writers of the textbooks written on research paradigm construct, who write shallowly and using interchangeable synonyms in defining the paradigm. By so doing, they are exposing those learners into the dilemma on what exactly it is, where it fits in the research process (Mackenzie and Knipe, 2006).

Daniel and Yosoff (2005) revealing that there is a confusion leading to emerging pseudo mixed paradigm among candidates. Consequently, the construct of paradigm has remained as a mystery to inexperienced researchers, waiting efforts to demystify it (Mackenzie and Knipe, 2006). Contributing to the primacy of paradigm and how experienced assessors mark dissertations, the study of Mullins and Killey found that paradigm is a significant factor influencing examination of theses in studied universities.

5.2.12.4 Final verdict on ownership of candidate's defended dissertations

From observation, it seemed that the general criterion for performance or foci sought by internal examiners in the process of ensuring quality of dissertations is ownership of the presented work (Table 5.5). This finding further confirms observations of negligence of paradigm in research process as noted by (Patton, 1990; Mackenzie and Knipe 2006; Jacob, 2009).

5.2.12.5 Panelists' verdict focuses on candidate's ownership, and confidence

Again, clarity criterion category emerged once more in the process of oral defense. In Chapter Four, Figure 4.2, provided detailed criteria, which external examiners use and clarity construct category emerged with highest frequency, while Table 4.3a elaborated its four sub-constructs categories namely: definition, scope, semantic relationship, and coherence. In oral examination, ownership of the work done, and confidence together with clarity emerged as criteria for performing better in viva voce. While clarity criterion implies four sub constructs previously mentioned, ownership seemed to refer to originality of presented work. Confidence criterion refers to one of the dimensions of

education of dialogical, whereby a learned is able to self-express, and self-reliant in solving faced problems.

5.2.12.6 Oral defense panelists' mandate to alter EEs' final scores

Furthermore, analysis of the panelists' internal assessment form revealed that once the external examiners award the dissertation final grade, the internal assurance committee or panel has no mandate to alter it in any way. However, the panelists may delay a candidate not to graduate as expected, in case the panelists reject, or discover some common errors, which escaped external examiners' attention as an oversight. However, internal examiners have mandate to reject the dissertation, whose presenter fail to prove beyond doubt about its ownership.

Suddaby (2010) characterises clarity with four sub categories namely: definition, scope, semantic relationship, and coherence as detailed in chapter four of this thesis. Whether by clarity of research paradigm OUT implies candidates to explain research paradigm along four sub constructs is not clear. Bennars and Njoroge (1994) characterise confidence as a fourth dialogical dimension of education, apart from the rest three namely: cognitive, normative, and creative (Bennars and Njoroge, 1994). The findings on dissertations of oral defense too, echo observations of Mauch and Park (2003) contending that quality control for dissertations on purpose of the oral defense is controversial and no single agreed measure exists.

Those authors found that the verdict of oral defense remains in the hands of a responsible institution. Likewise, they found that the purpose of the oral defense is to authenticate

whether the presenter followed the required standards of a particular university in a certain degree program (Mauch and Park, 2003). General findings from observation on the sub theme 6.3 (i) about the research paradigm and design were that;

- ✓ OUT insurance of quality for dissertations does not end with external examiners' assuring external validity by allotting dissertations final grades, but also it is done internally by critically judging internal validity and ownership of the examined report from the external examiners, through oral crosscheck examination of the candidate or dissertations to prove ownership of created knowledge through research;
- ✓ Neither candidates examined orally for dissertations, nor internal examiners including representative supervisors as well as administrators, bothered to mention, explain, or ask about explicit research paradigm as obliged by assessment forms, unlike external examiners, who seriously examine the subtheme 6.3 (i);
- ✓ Oral defense panels have no mandate to alter external examiners' awarded score for dissertations, but it can delay a candidate to graduate in case the external examiners' scores do not reflect candidates' ownership of the presented work done. When one of the visiting EE# 4 to OUT defense panel was inquired to say about research paradigm had the following words to say;

"…Well, to me, OUT itself is a symbol of 'paradigm shift' in the field of education unique from convention modes of learning research process yap*…"* (EE# 4: 16.5.014).

The researcher probed what the participant meant by paradigm shift the answers were;

"...Well, paradigm shift refers to change of ways how people do things, and we in Tanzania we have done that if compared to East and central Africa,

> *Tanzania risked to establish distance and learning, and we are moving. So does in research, our students have to be flexible when being supervised...".* (EE#4: 16.5.014).

It was surprising to find one of the EEs mentioning the paradigm shift in research, with clear explanation tallying with Kuhn (1962).

5.2.13 Studied researchers' own sense making of research paradigm construct

Having completed observation of saturated sample of 29 candidates defending their dissertations, some insights from observation methods guided the researcher what to do next. Recall that objective one (1) had four sub research questions. Its third sub research question was 1(iii), in what ways were candidates, their supervisors, as well as external examiners practically observed emphasising, clarifying, and making their own sense of research worldview conceptions in terms of definition, scope, semantic relationship, as well as coherence? Interviews and documentary methods collected the data on this sub research questions. The researcher interviewed the studied groups of research respondents' who were quoted as saying;

> *"…To me the research paradigm refers to a scientific **way** of collecting data in order to get a solution of the problem...* [STUD#07:6.5.014]. [Much more,] *…It is an individual or distinct concept about either a system or **pattern** of thought in conducting research…"* (STUD#08: 6.5.014).

Other interviewed candidates with almost similar views said;

> *...I refer it to imply **patterns** of thought* (STUD#08: 6.5.014). [Still, others saw it as an] …. ***Interpretive** framework…* (STUD#21: 12.012 and 11: 3.2.014).

One of the studied faculties both administrator and a supervisor coded SUPADM #14, had this to say;

> *"…Ok, this was why I assigned you to further read on whether paradigm is not interchangeable word for qualitative and quantitative approaches among educational research. Nevertheless, with reservations I assign you to check whether they do not cover the conception of paradigm. I assume that, it might be hard for candidates, to tell what the paradigm refers to despite obligation found in sub theme 6.3 as you informed me about. Well, I have never thought researchers should wrestle with a little concept of paradigm, instead of concentrating on research process of methodology. I admit that there might be a serious omission of what the term paradigm refers to in our course outlines for research…"* [SUPADM#14: 24.1.014].

Other supervisors were of the views that the research paradigm are either*;*

> *"…**Ways** of writing a research problem* [SUP #8: 17.3.2014]. *To me paradigms might be important since these are ways, where one finds guidance on how to write appropriate set up of research problem, methods, and rationales about why and how to construct the rest of decisions especially on methodological part…"* (SUP #8: 17.3.2014).Briefly, *paradigm refers to **Qualitative, or Quantitative** approaches…*" (SUPADM#14: 16.5.014).

One of the external examiners EEs # 2 too varied from the previous groups on research paradigm, responding;

> *"…Well, the paradigm is just a **parameter** that determines a scope of the study. It has to do with both positivists and post positivists schools of thought translated in the **qua**litative or **qu**antitative or both researches, I suppose. However, the term paradigm is not commonly used though its relevance cannot be questioned…" "…To me the paradigm is about the "world views" determining the decisions of the rest of the elements based on choices of what goes in the chapters of the dissertation. I am aware that this component is within the assessment forms of OUT. I have one sample with me here, it is on the subtheme you have identified as 6.3 (i) Let me say, in almost all dissertations I marked at OUT I have not come across any candidate linking his/her dissertation with paradigm prior to research design as required…"* (EEs # 2: 14.5.014).

In summary, the studied groups imply implicitly what expert writers identified to be properties of explicit paradigm as summarised in (Table 5.6). From Table 6.1, one sees paradigm properties abbreviated (POEMALOR) also found in some secondary documents in the studied library at OUT photograph (Figure 4.1; Table 5.6). From Table

5.6, one sees two rows A about paradigm scope and B about research design compared against three columns. Williams (1998) also Guba and Lincoln (2005) list constituents of research paradigm to be: Ontology, Epistemology and Methodology (OEM), differing from Creswell (1994 and 2012), who views the inquiry paradigm as consisting of: Philosophy, Ontology, Epistemology, and Methodology (POEM).

Other authors Patton (1990), Carr (1995), Teays (1995), Bogdan and Biklen (1998), Tashakkori and Teddlie (1998) and Chilisa and Preece (2005) vary from the previous authors seeing the inquiry paradigm to consist of Axiological values, Logic, and Rhetoric (ALOR) language used. Therefore, when varying expert writers' and practitioners' implicit conceptions for paradigm are put together; they seem to confirm the explicit model of (POEMALOR), which the researcher in this study advocates as a holistic model (Figure 2.1). By so doing, the reductionism fallacy of teaching and learning research course with a single conception or property of methodology ends.

Thus, from Table 4.9, one gets themes to be further analysed, discussed, and interpreted by constantly comparing and contrasting varying paradigm conceptions to be:

- ✓ Practitioners' own sense making of paradigm as (WAQUAQUPAPI)
- ✓ Research writers' views of paradigm as (POEMALOR) in textbooks
- ✓ Practitioners' WAQUAQUPAPI compared to writers' POEMALOR senses

5.2.13.1 Practitioners' own sense making of paradigm as (WAQUAQUPAPI)

Interviewed research paradigm provided their personal perspectives of paradigm sense making, about what they thought research paradigm refers. While to some it refers to

ways, where one finds a guide in research, to some it is a *parameter* that determines a scope of the study (SUP #8: 17.3.2014). To some it is a *parameter* determining a scope of the study. It has to do with both ***positivists*** and ***post positivists*** or both schools of thought translated in *qualitative* or *quantitative* (EE#2:16.5.014).

Paradigm is a road map (EE# 6: 19.9.014). Some could not attempt to elaborate it "*I cannot tell exactly what it is…"* (STUD#35: 03.8.014). I realise the term paradigm as ***perspectives*** (STUD#23:6.5.2014).

It may be further argued, that the first category of implicit conceptions of the assessed research paradigm sub theme, surfaced from the field examiners' document of (EEAFs, 2004-2017). The findings show that the probed research practitioners, varied in describing explicit research paradigm without mentioning philosophical branch terms like epistemology, but mentioning five properties either referring to: Ways, Qualitative, Quantitative approaches, Patterns, Principles, or Interpretations of dealing with research hence a WAQUAQUPAPI model.

5.2.13.2 Research textbook writers' views of paradigm as (POEMALOR)

The second category of conceptions associated to the research paradigm, sub theme 6.3 (i) was from researcher's exploration of varying descriptions for explicit research paradigm by expert writers on scientific social research. The insights from interviewed researchers on what they thought research paradigm means, guided the researcher on what to do next. The rationale for exploring secondary documents was because of seeking understanding the expert writers' coverage of such study resource.

5.2.14 Lack of explicit research paradigm in university own research

Although the construct of explicit research paradigm misses in the teaching, learning, and dissertations defense processes, except in summative evaluation process of OUT, implicit conceptions associated philosophy, ontology, epistemology, methodology, and axiology (POEMA) exist see Figure 4.1; Tables 5.1; 5.2; Kitula *et al*., 2012). So far, the analysis revealed that one of the major means of studying research for dissertations course, is through primary and secondary documents, the researcher had to explore the writing process of the published books stored in the main library of OUT Masters candidates on course work and by distance mode at OUT.

The rationale was to find out whether the authors of the research study resources like primary and secondary publications for candidates stored in the university library pay due attention to clarify explicit research paradigm, and its implicit conceptions. The researcher used theoretical criterion sampling to obtain a saturated sample of five books out of many books in that library. The researcher used the semi structured interviews, and primary documents methods to collect information about this sub sub-sub theme. The researcher interviewed one of the senior administrators and one of the supervisors attending the dissertation defense panel from the studied faculty at OUT.

The SUPADM #14 responded by saying;

> *"…I said earlier that the postgraduate learners are grownups, no need to prepare study materials for them, except compendiums. However, let me say it has currently been a desire for OUT policy, to encourage registered candidates across East Africa region to encourage candidates to be acquainted by online and may be universities to communicate with authentic on line books providers to allow the candidates to access the pre-paid or free study resources. Therefore, it is true our faculty of education has not written study material for the M.A post graduate except*

> *the PGDE candidates, who share study materials with under graduates on some courses. Arguably, the M.A and PhD candidates are expected to have grown up in creating their own notes as per philosophy of distance learning that encourages "self-directed learning" instead of spoon-feeding them. Secondly, it encourages lecturers to ensure they prepare compendia with several suggested bibliographies for specific topic of existing courses at hand…*" (SUPADM#14: 16.5.014).

Further probe inquired the same SUPADM#14 to elaborate what it meant by selfdirected learning, the respondent SUPADM#14 added elaborating;

> *"…By self-directed learning I meant one of the characteristics of the adult learners, who are studying by distance and open modes. The philosophy rather than principles guiding such learners are normally "a goal achieving oriented, self-motivating, self-control, and self-disciplined together you get what it refers to the self-directed learning…"* (SUPADM#14: 16.5.014).

The SUPADM #14 views could not pass without a critique from one of the interviewed EEs. Commenting on the factors for an increase of the observed underperformance scenarios of the assessed dissertations the expert respondent EE# 6 reacted critically by saying;

> *"… It seems there is false assumption among OUT academic staff of over trusting their registered students as self-motivated learners, capable of doing all learning alone because of self-directed learning philosophy. They seem to assume that learners by distance do not need face-to-face lectures. Nevertheless, this assumption is false. There is a lack of close supervision reflected in poorly written methodology section among the candidates, whom I marked their dissertations from OUT. In fact sometimes, I have been tempted to reason out on whether or not such students are guided adequately, taught the research methodology or not! Whether the candidates have adequate study resources on the research methods, it is questionable! I should emphasise that there is lack of support on this area for M.A candidates of OUT, whom I happened to mark their dissertations…"* (EE# 6: 19.9.014).

From an on-going interview response, it seems that the responses from SUPADM#14 contradict the field data on the need for the post graduates to have written text books from the authors of OUT. This finding challenges the responses given previously by the

FED administrator SUP#14, who insisted that candidates of postgraduate never get notes from their lecturers. Instead, the university expects to create their own notes. In view of the external examiner EE# 6, OUT over trusts the self-learning philosophy, which might not be working well (EE# 6: 19.9.014).

5.2.15 Teaching guide for research resource

Despite SUPADM's #14 assumption that OUT does not supply written notes to candidates yet, the researcher came across the DRPS research teaching resource book intended for the social researchers coauthored by (Kitula *et al*., 2012). Kitula *et al*. (2012) have made effort to clarify several concepts to inform inexperienced researchers on the current issues in the social sciences research. This study resource on the research course as it seems, OUT recommends it to all postgraduate candidates, when the team of these authors go for face-to-face facilitation.

The textbook has strength and weaknesses. One of the strengths is that it mentions two implicit conceptions of paradigm namely: philosophy on page 1, and methodology to candidates of research course. Nevertheless, weakness of that written resource is to mention conception of philosophy shallowly without assisting candidates how it links with the entire research process. The analysis revealed further, that much emphasis of authors in that textbook, is on detailed methodology conception as if it were not a part of the whole research paradigm as a worldview. Critically, the on-going analysis revealed, that there is a tendency of studied researchers to pay attention to only some conceptions like philosophy and methodology, while rest implicit conceptions namely: ontology, axiology, logic and hence, the rhetoric language remain unnoticed.

Consequently, the studied candidates fail to clarify by explaining explicit research paradigm holistically as the assessment form obliges them to do, along clarity properties of: definition, wider scope, semantic relationship, even in its coherence (Figures 4.1; 4.2). The analyses revealed lack of uniform guidance to candidates, supervisors, as well as EEs on what particular conceptions the university and examiners expect on clarity of the research paradigm. Again, the analysis revealed that authors use the rhetoric language of orthodoxies of ether positivists, ant positivists, or post positivists approaches.

Much more, the studied textbook of Kitula *et al*. (2014) over advocates the positivists' quantitative approach, without elaborating the essence of how the positivists' POEMALOR link with the research process. Not only that but also, Kitula *et al*. (2014) over emphasizes the quantitative approach as if all candidate on research should undertake quantitative approach of the positivists, ignoring those, who may be interested in the qualitative approach of the post positivists. Arguably, the analysis of interviews seemed to imply that lecturers commit the reductionism fallacy of elaborating research paradigm using only conceptions of philosophy and methodology research alone.

Above all, the authors Kitula *et al*. (2014) seem to have assumed that candidates of the postgraduate on research are from the Faculty of Arts and Social Sciences (FASS) alone, without knowing that law, education, and business candidates have their own ways of approaching their research. Therefore, the analysis of the contents of the that text book, seemed to suggest that text book is relevant for FASS candidates and less fit for the candidates of other faculties of education, law, and business studies, because it does not

adequately cover varying research paradigm like the post positivists except the post positivists.

It seems that the shallow description of philosophy in one of the OUT-research course publication, signifies the manner how the construct of explicit inquiry paradigm philosophical underpinnings in writing process on the research is not given due attention knowingly or unknowingly. The finding about Kitula's *et al.* (2012) attempt to inform candidates about philosophy in the research course reflects Carr (1995) and Crabtree (2012) arguing, that whether we are aware or not aware of our philosophical assumptions, we implicitly use them in the research process. Those authors add that the popular conception of philosophy is research ethics.

Dobson (2002) contends confirms that what makes the researchers to cling on philosophy in social research is because of its capability of empowering its recipients to evaluate strength and weakness of whatever enters in the research reports critically. Besides that, it assists the researcher to understand categories of philosophical positions in the research process. For Dobson, knowledge of philosophy to writers provides the assurance and command to the researcher to argue for different research approaches allowing them to decide rationally, the specialty of activity. Those are rationales, why we bother with philosophy in the research process (Dobson, 2002).

Mackenzie and Knipe (2006) cement on previous authors' observations on the relevance of paradigm in the research process textbooks treat the research paradigm shallowly

either at the beginning or too late in the textbooks. Addressing the place of philosophy, values, and educational scientific research Carr (1995) asks;

> *"…Can those who carry out educational research safely ignore that part of their subject of philosophy that underlies their own investigations…?"* [For Carr the relevance of values in educational research cannot be over emphasised adding that;] *"…although educational researchers may, and usually study educational values, this should not be taken to mean that philosophy and values do not permeate their works…"* (Carr, 1995:90-97).

Carr cautions further saying;

"…values are so vital an ingredient in educational research that their elimination is impossible save by eliminating the research enterprise itself…" (Carr, 1995:87, 88).

The insight about less attention on the inquiry paradigm by the authors of OUT, motivated the researcher of this study, to visit the headquarter library for more information on same published study resources.

5.2.16 Writers' emphasis of paradigm conceptions in secondary document

Having analysed the contents existing in local writers' published books by OUT on the research course, the researcher continued to investigate the extent, to which the research secondary books in the main library at the Head quarter of OUT, inform the studied candidates on the construct of research paradigm. The researcher theoretically selected a saturated sample of five books out of many namely: Mason (2007), Flick, (2009), Descombe (2010), Silverman (2010) and Gilbert (2012). It was encouraging to find the content analysis of those secondary books whereby out of five-encountered research books three books (60%) mentioned the concept of paradigm although with variation. Those three books were (Gilbert, 2012; Flick, 2009; Silverman, 2010).

However, 2(40%) out of five (5) of the reviewed books, did not mention paradigm at all. Those books were of (Mason, 2007 and Descombe, 2010). The absence of written references as compendia that could clarify the basic concepts surfaced as one of the contributory factor for inadequate information to candidates on how the research paradigm relates to the research process. Of course, there is a controversy among the GT theorists, on whether the researcher should use secondary books to refine the grounded theory GT or not. Elaborating such a controversy, some theorists of the GT suggest that any encountered data related to the explored problem in the studied field despite being outside the framework of context is worthy including (Glaser and Holton, 2004).

Following these suggestions, the researcher read several existing secondary documents like published books, used by the studied candidates in the studied context of the main library at OUT.

5.2.17 Practitioners' WAQUAQUPAPI compared to writers' POEMALOR

Having discovered studied practitioners' own sense making of research paradigm versus research expert writers' sense, these insights guided the researcher what to do next. The constant comparison of the two senses was crucial, to realise how the two perspectives vary. Table 5.6 illustrates that constant comparison.

Table 5.6: Respondents' Paradigm Definition versus Explicit one in Texts

Research paradigm Scope	Explicit definition of paradigm in research texts	Respondents' implicit definition of paradigm
✓ **Paradigm properties**	As worldviews, frame works or positivists' and post positivists' perspectives	"…**Ways** to write appropriate research problem; **Qua**litative or **Qu**antitative approaches; **Parameter** that determines a scope of the study; **Pattern** of thought; **Interpretive** framework (WAQUAQUPAPAI)…"
i)-**Philosophy** =>P	-Perspectives, schools of thought of either positivist, ant positivists, post positivists, or (constructivism)	Implicitly respondents dealt with this property without explicit mention in dissertations.
ii)-**Ontology** => O	-Position (objective, subjective, and relativism)	Implicitly studied candidates dealt with paradigm property in dissertations implicitly as research approaches
iii)**Epistemology** =>E	-Validity, reliability, transferability, evidence, rationalisation, beliefs	Implicitly candidates dealt with this property of paradigm in dissertations, on evidence and references explicitly
iv)**Methodology** =>M	-Approaches, design, quantitative, qualitative	The candidates dealt with this property of paradigm in their dissertations implicitly
v)-**Axiology** =>A	-Ethics, confidentiality, values laden	Majority mentioned ethics property of paradigm in dissertations explicitly
vi)-**Logic** (deductive, inductive, abductive, retroductive) =>LO	-Arguments, generalisation, top-bottom, bottom-up mixed and coherence.	Logic property of paradigm was reflected in dissertations implicitly
vii)-**Rhetorical language** =>R	-Formal or informal positivists	The rhetorical positivists', post positivists', languages in dissertation appeared implicitly
B. Research Design	-Frameworks based on research typologies: action, evaluation, ethnography researches so on.	Case studies, quantitative, qualitative, mixed, experimental, quasiexperimental, historical, grounded theory, were mentioned explicitly.

Source: Field Data (2018).

From Table 5.6, one sees two rows A about paradigm scope and B row about research design scope compared against three columns. While row A consists of seven research paradigm conceptions scope abbreviated (POEMALOR) it explicates the explicit language used by writers for some research text books in the Library at OUT headquarters (Photograph, 4.1). Row B is about the research design explicit language found in the same studied books. Furthermore, in the same table one sees the explicit 'denotation", or strict sense definition, versus the "implicit connotation" or definition in a broader sense of the word, as the researcher found being used in some studied texts books and among the studied respondents.

In Table 5.6, one also sees three columns, while the first column is about the research paradigm properties. The second column is about the explicit denotation plain language of what expert writers of research refer to by construct of paradigm in their texts of research. The researcher too, compared two rows versus the third column about respondents' connotation or implicit language of paradigm. From Table 5.6, one sees paradigm properties as one reads some the secondary documents in the studied library at OUT photograph (Figure, 4.1; Table, 5.6). Comparatively, from Table 5.6, one realises that while the studied research respondents by research paradigm, they meant various connotations namely: *ways* of viewing research, *positivists' quantitative* and *post positivists' qualitative* research approaches *or* framework *patterns* as road maps of *interpreting* research abbreviated as (WAQUAQUPAPI).

In a similar manner, while the practitioners' own sense varied so did the expert writers' perspectives varied too in the sense that some associate research paradigm with

philosophy, implying researchers' collective worldviews of doing research (Table 5.6). Some have associated it with ontology implying researchers' objective or subjective positions of observing a phenomenon from different angles. Still other experts associate it with epistemology implying beliefs, sources and theories of knowledge. Much more, other experts associate it with research methodology implying research approaches, design and methods. Other experts view it as axiology implying values it researches such as ethics.

Yet, other experts view it as logic implying consistent way of presenting research reports coherently. Additionally, some experts have associated research paradigm as rhetoric language implying that researchers have their own technical language of dealing with research (Table 5.6). One could abbreviate what expert writers of research implied as (POEMALOR).

Keen analysis of the constant comparison of the studied researchers' connotations and those of expert writers could suit researcher's derived holistic abbreviation of (POEMALOR). Several expert writers are in consensus that such conceptions really constitute the holistic scope of research paradigm as one reads (Kuhn, 1962; Patton, 1990; Creswell, 1994; Carr, 1995; Bogdan and Biklin, 1998; Tashakkori and Teddlie, 1998; Williams, 1998; Dobson, 2002; Mason, 2002; Efinger *et al*., 2004; Guba and Lincoln, 2005; Chilisa and Preece, 2005; Crabtree, 2010). Extra factors for increase of the marginal score grades come next.

5.3 Probable Factors Accelerating Marginal Scores Dissertations Increase

This study grand research question was on *how researchers' clarity for the explicit research paradigm (worldviews) is and its implicit underpinned philosophical conceptions, a contributory factor among factors for increase in low dissertations completion and quality pass rates in the studied universities.* The current study, studied respondents' perspectives capable of generating hypotheses, as well as a GT in explaining whether researchers' clarity for research paradigm conceptions is among the contributory factors for increase in candidates' dissertations low completion and marginal low quality pass rates?

In order to achieve the identified purpose, objective one examined the conduct, in which the studied researchers' clarity of worldview has been a factor for increase of dissertations marginal scores pass and low completion rates compared to surfaced extra factors. Its fourth sub research question 1(iv) inquired, what extra probable factors emerged as accelerators of increase of dissertations low completion marginal low final score grades apart from researchers' clarity of research paradigm as worldview factor in the studied university environment?

- ✓ Studied researchers' confirmation of increase for marginal score grades scenarios
- ✓ Coherence property of clarity as factor for increase of marginal low grades
- ✓ Factors related to candidates' faults in their dissertations leading to an increase of the marginal low quality score grades
- ✓ Consistently assessed dissertations
- ✓ Inconsistently assessed dissertations due to external examiners' faults

5.3.1 Researchers' confirmation of marginal dissertation scores rising

Having completed the sub sub-category on the manner how the studied researchers made sense of paradigm construct by defining it implicitly or explicitly, its findings directed the need to ask the studied groups of researchers to confirm if the increase of underperformance scenarios in dissertations summative evaluation was a real phenomenon or whims among the studied candidates. Criterion and theoretical sampling selected 44 researchers out of 88 from three studied groups namely: candidates, their supervisors and EEs, who responded on this sub sub-theme.

The semi structured interview and documentary methods dominated the collection of data for this sub sub-category. The collected responses on the confirmation about whether the underperformance scenarios has been a real phenomenon or whims, among the studied were presented, comparatively coded and analysed, and latter interpreted. Confirming the certainty of lower pass rate scenarios among the studied candidates, one of the experienced supervisors and administrators coded SUPADM# 20 had this to say;

> *"…Yes, I have noticed the trend of the marginal passes among my supervised students in particular the dissertation I supervised. In fact majority of them end up achieving B, C and D and in rare cases some very few get B+, but very rare to find A grade. I think their ability to convince EEs to award quality grades for better dissertations lacks given their English language proficiency. If wishes were to build castles, I would wish to see my all marked candidates prospering with excellent A and B+, but that is not happening given ethics forbid baking of marks …*" (SUPADMN, #20: 24 .5. 014).

The external examiner coded EE#5 curiously responded with inquiring mind opining the probable reason for the said scenarios said;

> *"…Marginal passes? Em ah! Certainly, given the nature of the students allocated to me, majority achieve lower scores for quite longer time it has been a common*

> *phenomenon. There are millions of reasons for this trend. First is cheating through on line materials, I hate cut and pasted down loadings. I find a lot of unparaphrased down loads in submitted dissertations I mark. It seems the distance learners lack skills for paraphrasing others' works and this to me is plagiarism, a serious case in academics, which should not be entertained! I admit to grade several candidates' dissertations from OUT, with marginal marks ranging between B and C to almost all students, and I may tell you that sometimes, I have doubted whether the "B" I give really goes to deserving candidates! I thus, try to remain at normal to avoid extremes. I reserve more reasons for later discussion..."* (EE#5:16.5.014).

Confirming previous responses about the dissertations marginal grades among the studied M.A candidates in studied faculty at OUT, the EE#5 added further saying;

> *"…But the B (flat) grade is a common one in universities, why should it be an issue for discussion here? I refer you to issues of central tendencies in statistics, go to revise the normal curves for negative, positive, left and right tail or skewed curves. You will find that the B grade is normal at the centre. Hence, it is a normal pass! So, what is your argument all about? In fact for me, when I find many students achieving the "B" I regard that as valid and reliable examination that measured what it was supposed to measure. I expect very few students to achieve "A" although at our university school most of our candidates achieve B+ in their dissertations, we are better here in this compared to OUT students. I will tell you the cause for that trend latter. Are you contented with such an answer…?"* (EE#5:16.5.014).

Other expert supervisor coded SUP, #9 associated the awarding of marks to be a subjective issue emanating from different observation angles for seeing the phenomenon by saying;

> *"…Well, but for me the quality is a subjective issue and it is socially constructed. I mean it depends who awards A, B+, B, C, D, and E. Well, maybe it might be due to political influence as that of massification of education at the higher learning. It seems that the contracted EEs are awarding flat rate marks for my students. Sometimes I wonder how higher achievers are lowly judged in a similar manner as low achievers. Yet, this is not a sole factor there are other reasons to be provided latter I hope…"* (SUP#9: 23.3.2014).

The insights from responses of: EE#5: (16.5.014); SUP#9: (23.3.2014) signified that apart from the clarity of paradigm, there are underlying factors that may be contributing to the increase of dissertations quality passes and low graduation rates.

5.3.2 EEs' Inconsistencies in assuring quality of dissertations

Having obtained researchers' responses on the first probable factor for increase in marginal score grades for dissertations the researcher got evidence that the scenario of marginal scores is not whims but an observable phenomenon among the studied candidates at OUT (Figure 4.1; Table 4.3c; Appendices XI; XII). This follow up for this sub theme was crucial because one of the properties of core category of clarity is coherence (Table 4.3c). In this study, consistency referred to coherence or absence of contradictory scenarios in doing intellectual works. Primary documentary method was a source of data on this sub theme.

The field documentary analysis in this study revealed different practice contrary to the expected, as presented, analysed, and interpreted in subsequent Tables. Table 5.7 shows the scenarios of consistency among external examiners of OUT dissertations in a studied faculty.

Table 5.7: Examiners' Consistent use of Assessment Dissertations Tool

Consistency of Scores	Total	%
1. Consistently assessed dissertations	57	66.28
2. Inconsistently assessed dissertations	29	33.72
Grand Total	86	100

Source: Field Data (2018).

Looking at Table 5.7, one observes that generally, 17 EEs marked simple majority 57 (66.28%) out of 86 dissertations consistently by using OUT EEAFs.

5.3.3 Coherence property of clarity

The rationales for considering external examiners' inconsistencies first, were because coherence surfaced as a property of core category of clarity in this study (Table 4.3b). Secondly, the collected data were from universities studied in natural setting which GT studies encourage. The third rationale was to identify, specific factors apart from clarity of research paradigm, in accelerating marginal score grades due to candidates, to supervisors, and EEs' faults.

5.3.4 Consistently assessed dissertations

As seen in Tables 5.1; 5.2, the analysis had revealed that the Directorate of Research and Publication for higher Studies at OUT, has mandate to revise assessment tool versions from time to time to guide EEs, in allocating the marks for the candidates'

dissertations objectively and uniformly. The analysis of the same assessment tool contents in Figure 4.1; Table 4.1a; Appendices XI ; XII revealed, the manner how the EEAFs tool guides the external examiners to assess the dissertations of OUT in the studied faculty. The tool provides a space for external examiner to indicate candidate's actual scores versus maximum score for each specific sub theme, instead of rounding scores before the grand total for major themes (Figure 4.1, 4.1a; Appendices XI; XII). The analysis shows that the majority of external examiners adhered diligently to ethics by using the official, revised, and valid assessment tool in assessing candidates' dissertations.

5.3.5 Inconsistently assessed dissertations related to the EEs' faults

So far, the documentary contents analysis revealed the inconsistencies, whereby some few external examiners fell short of adhering to ethical standards by either using unofficial, unrevised, or invalid assessment tool for assessing quality of some OUT dissertations in a studied faculty. Consequently, some EEs marked dissertations inconsistently in two ways as illustrated in Table 5.8.

Table 5.8: Emerged Categories of External Examiners' Inconsistencies

Score Range	**70 - 100**	**60-69**	**50-59**	**40-49**	**30-39**	**0-29**	**Total**	**%**
Category of errors	-		-		-	-		
	-	04	-	07	-	-	11	37.93
Rounded off marks								
Use of varied tool	--	--	07	11	--	--	18	62.06
Grand Total	**--**	**04**	**07**	**18**	**--**	**--**	**29**	**100**

Source: Field Data (2018).

In Table 5.8, one observes two types of inconsistencies, which surfaced among the studied EEs. It seems, there was a possibility that some EEs committed such inconsistencies by either rounding off marks, showing only the aggregate marks for the major sub themes without specifying awarded actual score for each sub theme as required by OUT given tool (Figure 4.1). Much more, there is still a possibility that some few examiners either used unofficial or unrevised version of assessment tools quite different from consistent majority EEs as illustrated in (EEAFs 2004-2017;
Tables 5.7; 5.8; Appendices XI; XII).

Table 5.8 too, shows that 29 (33.72 %) out 86 analysed candidates' dissertation reports, their marks were inconsistently allotted in the EEAFs. The categories of the inconsistencies detailed in (Table, 5.8; Appendices VII; VIII). It became evident that 11 (37.93%) out of 29 studied candidates' dissertations report forms, their marks were rounded off instead of being specified as per directives in the assessment tool EEAFs, (2006-2017). The cases of candidates with rounded off marks just to mention a few cases of candidates' dissertations included: (STUDs #05, #06 #59, and #86). Besides that, 18(62.06%) out of 29 dissertations, the EEAFs tool indicated that their marks were placed using varying version with differing content calibration (Figure 4.1; Appendices XI; XII).

Some cases in a category of errors in using varying assessment tool with varying calibration just to mention a few cases of candidates' dissertations such as that of STUDs #09, #16, #20, #39, #45, #76, and #77. Further analysis of Table 5.8 indicates that none of dissertations achieved excellent scores of grade "A" ranging between 70 and 100,

marked inconsistently by either rounding off marks or assessing with different tool. Table 4.8 indicates that the scores ranging between 60 and 69 marks had only 4(13.79%) out of 29 dissertations, whose EEAFs were found with inconsistency of category one, whereby some EEs rounded off the marks instead of specifying such marks for each subtheme as directed by the official assessment tool

(Table 5.8 Appendices XI; XII).

Likewise, the group of scores ranging between 50 and 59 marks had 7(24. 13and) out of 29 dissertations, whose EEAFs forms had a different version with a different content and calibration (Table 4.13; Appendices VII; VIII). Not only that but also, the group of scores ranging between 40 and 49, had 11 (37.93%) out of 29 dissertations were marked inconsistently, because of same inconsistency of differing version of the assessment form of the EEAFs with differing contents and calibration. The reasons for this scenario were out of the focus of this study. This error might have occurred because of some EEs not being up to date with revised versions (Table 5.8; Appendices XI; XII).

Lastly, was grouped score marks with ranges of 39-31 and 30-0. None of external examiner awarded candidates' dissertations with such marks inconsistently (Table 5.8). The analysis show that not all noted increase of dissertations with marginal quality score pass, low dissertation completion, as well as low graduation rates, are genuine due to candidates' faults. Comparatively, the analysis revealed that an increase of marginal quality scores for candidates' dissertations at OUT, not only originates from candidates and their supervisors, but also from external examiners' inconsistencies (Table 5.8; Appendices XI; XII).

The identified candidates, whose EEAFs scores were awarded erroneously due to both categories of inconsistencies, to mention few cases were coded as STUDs #05, #06 #59, and #86; #09, #16, #20, #39, #45, #76, and #77 (Appendices XI; XII). So far, findings in Table 5.8 suggested implication revealing, that in case the external examiners had specified the score marks without rounding them, and in case they used similar assessment tool with same calibration, then several candidates placed on border lines of 45-49, 55-59, and 65-69, could have avoided resubmission by getting a B (Flat) verdict. Meanwhile, some could have scored very good B+ and excellent A grade.

Describing features of evaluation of the candidates and programme, Sigalla (2003) points out three characteristics of what the evaluation should fulfil. It should also fulfil; consistency with objectives, comprehensive in scope, validity and reliability. For Sigalla evaluation needs to be consistent with objectives of the course or programme, with instruments for measuring, which are comprehensive in dimension.

Likewise, it should have valid instruments that measure the intended objectives and reliable in terms of stability to bring the same desired outcomes. The results of the analysis seem to be contrary to these norms among the EEs of FED studied candidates at OUT. The inconsistencies finding at OUT aligns with the study of Starr-Glass and Ali (2012) on double standards reported from Czech Republic universities, whereby the researchers found external examiners with competing and conflicting paradigms, in educational evaluation context (Starr-Glass and Ali, 2012). Barbara study (2005) too found assessment of dissertations in studied universities as a subjective process, with implicit criteria symptoms. Bloxham *et al*. (2011), also report that assessors make

holistic rather than analytical judgement, when judging learners' assignments, with a high proportion of studied assessors, who had no explicit written criteria during the marking process.

CHAPTER SIX

6.0 DATA ANALYSIS AND DISCUSSION

6.1 Introduction

This consists part three of data presentation, analysis, discussion and interpretation for phase three of data collection about the emerged worldview core conceptions correlated with dissertations performance, refining further the emerged crude GT through the statistical lens. The insights from phase one in chapter four and two in chapter five, yielded the unique trend on the substantive or unrefined GT about candidates' clarity of paradigm as worldview from sub theme 6.3 (i), and final quality score grades for entire dissertations. The emerged insights illuminated the researcher on what to do next in phase three. It suggested the kind of analysis since some emerged data with features of statistical measures.

Consequently, chapter six consists partly findings for objectives two research questions 2(v), objective three research question 3(vi) and objective four research question 4(vii). The questionnaire tool sent to 88 research participants dominated the data collection for chapter six. The descriptive statistical analysis methods along the appropriate SPSS packages were opted to analyse data with rationale that the researcher having unobservable latent variables could not know the extent of underlying relationship and direction existing between one's clarity of worldview and dissertations quality performance.

In addition, the purpose of this study was to explore studied respondents' perspectives capable of generating hypotheses as well as GT explaining whether

researchers' clarity for research paradigm conceptions is among the contributory factors for increase in candidates' dissertations marginal quality grades.

6.2 Preliminary Decisions for Suitability of using EFA Multivariate Methods

In Chapter Six there are four major sub themes in precise steps namely:

- ✓ Preliminary decisions SPSS and five EFA strategy protocol outputs.
- ✓ Step one: decision whether collected data were suitable for EFA and PCA strategy.
- ✓ Step two: decisions on how factors were extracted.
- ✓ Step three: decision on criteria that assisted in determining extracted factors/ retained.
- ✓ Step four: decision on kind of rotational method to be selected for retaining factors.
- ✓ Step five: decision on interpreting and labelling results from SPSS factor analysis.

6.2.1 Preliminary SPSS and five EFA strategy protocol outputs

Before addressing objective two, three, and four research questions, the researcher is advised to make decisions by first addressing five questions on the suitability of using multivariate Exploratory Factor Analysis (EFA) by following five steps. The first addressed question is whether the collected data were suitable for factor analysis.

Second, how were the factors to be extracted? Third, what criteria would assist in dealing with the factor analysis in determining the factor extraction? The fourth question is, what

kind of rotational method to select, and run? Fifth, how would interpretation and labelling be? Details of these preliminary steps, and rationales for using EFA rather than Confirmatory Factor Analysis (CFA) were detailed in chapter three.

6.2.1.1 *Decision whether collected data were suitable for EFA and PCA strategy*

In the first step, the researcher not only ensured that a sample size for addressing the three questions was adequate, but also that the collected responses data through Likert's scale questionnaire tool were relevant. To achieve this end several tests preceded, by means of the SPSS software package on EFA as suggested in (William *et al*., 2012). For the sake of this study, three tests of Kaiser-Olkin Measure (KMO) Bartlett's test and Pearson's Chi-square test of associations were used. While the KMO measure tested the sample adequacy, the Bartlett's Test for Sphericity tested significance of the respondents' responses data that were to be collected through the questionnaire tool. As one would note, one of the properties of clarity category is semantic relationship of concepts. Consequently, the researcher commanded the SPSS Pearson's Chisquare test for associations, since it was capable of measuring strengths and direction of relationship between categorical latent variables as outputs later appearing in (Appendices VI; VII). The following Table 6.1 presents results of two tests KMO and Bartlett's tests.

Table 6.1: Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin and Bartlett's Tests for Adequacy Output

Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin Measure of Sampling Adequacy.		.678
Bartlett's Test of Sphericity	**Approx. Chi-Square**	1766.04
	Df.	820
	Sig.	.000

Source: Field Data (2018).

From Table 6.1, the Kaiser-Olkin value read .678 ≈ .68, the Chi-square reached the approximation of 1766.04; degree freedom reached 820, while the Bartlett's Test for Sphericity had a purpose of testing relevance of responses, reached the statistical significance .000 and (Table 6.1). The researcher argues that the KMO index, where $p>0.5$, and Bartlett's test index at $p< .05$ rules were followed to interpret the results in (Table 5.1). Consequently, the KMO test results in Figure 5.1 indicated that the prior theoretically saturated sample size of 88 out of 146 detailed in chapter three was suitable for statistical phase three in this study.

In this study, the .68 value results in Table 6.1 were far above the recommended value of 0.50. It was also interesting to find, that the Bartlett's test Sphericity was .000, far below the recommended value of $p<0.05$ rule. Keen analysis suggested implication that the SPSS results from KMO measuring at .68 and the Bartlett's measuring at 0.000 in this study in Table 6.1, not only the saturated sample size of 88 out of 146 was suitable but also the questionnaire responses were relevant. Much more, the EFA multivariate methods were suitable for addressing objectives three and four, whose sub research questions are 3(vi) 4(vii) for phase three in chapter six (Table 6.1).

Thus, these results warranted the researcher not only to proceed with the study but also to analyse the collected data instantly in the field, to address research question 3 (vi) and four (vii) confidently. The experts have documented the suitability of theoretically saturated sample size in the GT adequately; to suit statistical studies. Quoting Glaser 1992 in Charmaz (2006) argues that in GT studies, the saturated sample logic supersedes sample size, which is normally small (Charmaz, 2006). Coyne adds that the theoretical

sampled size, suits statistical studies in case one follows three conditions: in case a purpose is to build a theory, one should choose deviant cases without bias; and sizes changed in course of study (Coyne, 1997). However, since the KMO and Bartlett's tests alone have their limitations, the researcher triangulated other multivariate methods for factors extraction in later stage as detailed in step two.

6.2.1.2 *Decisions on how factors would be extracted*

In the second stage of EFA, the researcher decided how to extract or reduce the bulky of data. The researcher used the available solutions for extraction, preferring the Principal Component Analysis (PCA). The rationale for the preference was because of its capability for reducing highly redundant correlated data, to separate few uncorrelated ones. The significant loadings condition at value of R ± .30 guided the selection of plausible components as suggested in (Brown, 2009; William *et al*., 2012).

6.2.1.3 Decision on criteria assisting in determining of extracted /retained factors

In the third step of EFA protocol requirement, the experts advise that, a single rule does not suffice to estimate number of plausible factors as per (William *et al*., 2012).

Consequently, the triangulation of statistical multiple strategies is essential to achieve quality results as per EFA. The strategies included, cumulative of extracted variance percent, Kaiser's (K1) initial three components rule of Eigen values greater than 1, and the scree plot. The results of the cumulative percentage variance table yielded the variance with 35.39%, along with its cumulative 35.39 % of three-components. While component 1, contributed 20.04%, component 2 contributed 8.83%, and component 3 contributed 6.52%.

Besides that, the Kaiser's initial (K1) rule (r) values criterion discriminated uncorrelated components from highly redundant and correlated ones. The very rule suggested that, while there was a very weak negative correlation between component 1 and 2 (r =-.19). There were very weak and almost negligible positive correlations between component 1 and 3 (r = .01) and between component 2 and 3 (r = .04) in (Appendices X; XI). Much more, the SPSS provided the scree plot output, which the researcher applied to discriminate plausible paradigm perspective components along with Eigen initial components rule illustrated in Figure 6.1.

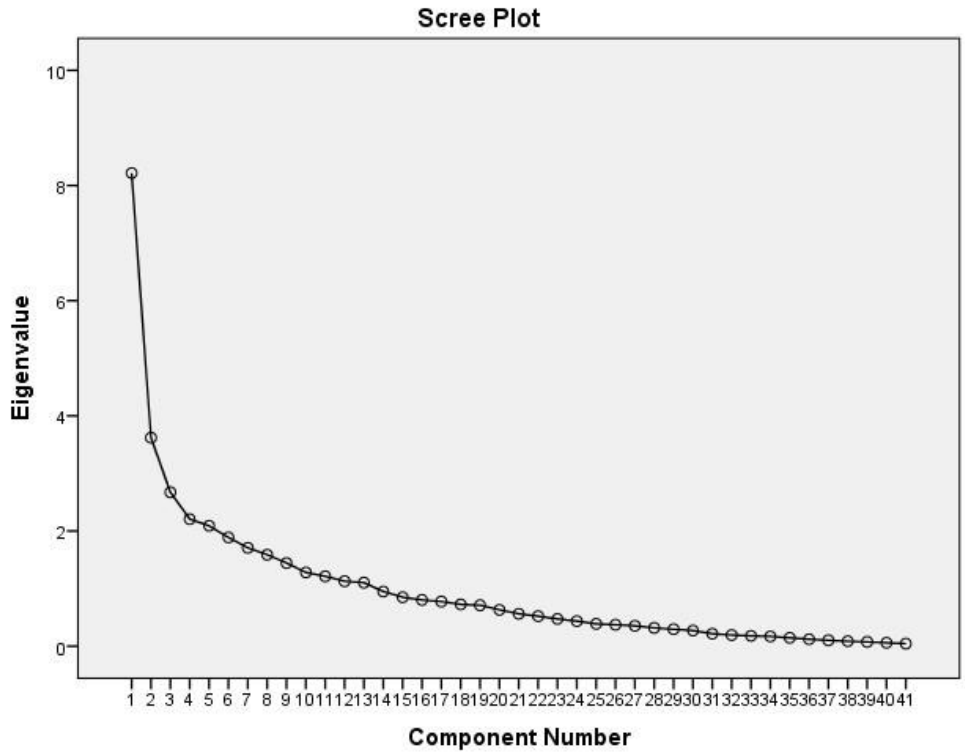

Figure:6.1: Catell's Scree Plot with Eigen's Rule with Components Amount

In Figure 6.1, one observes the scree plot (not Scatter plot) with 41 components from questionnaire tool statements, about the research worldview underpinned conceptions along x-axis versus Eigen values along the y-axis. The inspection of the scree plot

revealed a clear break after the third plausible component as illustrated in Figure, 6.1. The structure revealed that the positive response statements about worldview items loaded strongly on component 1, while negative beliefs items loaded strongly on component 2 and 3 as illustrated in scree plot (Figure 6.1) as well as rotation matrices values detailed in (Appendices X; XI). The researcher labelled three component items as constructivism, interpretivism, and positivism paradigm as worldview perspective conceptions in later Tables.

Using Catell's (1966) scree plot, the researcher decided to retain the three suitable components for further investigation, in addressing some research questions of phase three for objective three roman (vi) and objective four roman (vii). The researcher had to decide on kind of methods and retain plausible factors.

6.2.1.4 Decision on kind of rotational method to be selected for retaining factors

In step four of EFA the researcher decided about the category of rotation that to run for getting a simple structure. The researcher preferred Oblimin rotational method type of oblique rotation to orthogonal. This was because the researcher assumed that the initial analysis revealed early the existence of relationship between candidate's clarity of research paradigm sub theme 6.3 and increase in dissertations quality score grade passes, completion, and low graduation rates (Tables 1.1; 1.2; 4.2a-4d). Through the SPPS the researcher, tried to run the SPSS in Cattel's (1966) and Oblimin' 15 rotational iterations, which yielded matrices detailed in (Appendices VII; VIII).

These matrices indicated that the simple structure of 8 components out of 41 statements were clarity, knowledge, beliefs, constructivism, interpretivism, post positivism, dissertations performance, epistemological components, and quality values above .30, shown in rotation matrices (Appendices VII; VIII). The parsimonious principle suggests having a few components to study. Based on this principle, from multi components the researcher retained only three (3) plausible components. The researcher labelled them as worldview perspectives conceptions namely: constructivism, interpretivism and positivism. The three components suited to address objective three properly, if the principle of parsimony alone were to be adhered to.

In this study, the researcher followed constructivists' GT study, and the pragmatism philosophy, flexibility was versus the fixed rules of positivists' parsimonious principle. Consequently, what works is what the researcher applied in the sense that the abductive allowed the use of constructs that fell outside deductive model. The researcher triangulated not only the SPSS measures of central tendency and variability, but also documentary content analysis methods. The clarity was among eight (8) extracted components next to positivism, but with lower values on table of variance, and outside the three retained components of scree plot namely: constructivism, interpretivism, and positivism (Figure 6.1).

For objective four, all three retained components of: constructivism, interpretivism, and positivism suited. The SPSS matrix outputs in Appendices VI; VII apart from three identified components, yielded still extra three components namely: knowledge, dissertations performance, and epistemological components to be elaborated further in

(Table 6.8). The extra components though were among the identified eight (8) outputs, but those fell outside the break point of scree plot illustrated previously in (Figure 6.1). The abductive logic along with researcher's philosophy of pragmatism underlying this study, allowed some categories outside deductive model to be included.

According to Brown (2009) the practice of abductive logic is a revelation of the simple structure with some components loading near zero (0), which are as equally important for consideration as those that near 1 (Brown, 2009). Charmaz (2006) advises that the constructivists never rely on fixed models, but try flexible emerging models in line with the dynamic world with multiple phenomena (Charmaz, 2006). The following is the manner how interpretation and labelling proceeded.

6.2.1.5 Decision on interpreting and labelling results from SPSS factor analysis

In the fifth stage, the researcher had to decide the manner on how to label, analyse, interpret, and discuss the inputs fed in SPPS as well as its outputs by means of EFA protocol steps. The researcher argues that that decision assisted to know that objective three and four research questions could be addressed, partly by measures of central tendency namely: mean and measures of variability of Standard Deviation in labelled histogram in (Figure 6.1). Likewise, it could be addressed through constant comparison and primary documentary content analysis methods.

Objective three interpretations were in terms of nominal scales score marks; score grades letters, as well as ordinal values percentages. The bar chart and tabulation summed up the information on assessment criteria for performance in particular clarity category.

From analyses, the researcher realised that the constant comparison of ordinal numbers in terms of total percentages variance along frequencies was suitable. The labelling, of Tables as well as scree plot summed up the information for objective three (vi) in (Appendices VI; VII). The interpretation of objective four through constant comparison of measures of relationship or inter correlations assisted to understand existing strength and direction between candidates' articulation of epistemological components and dissertations performance.

The SPSS outcomes on inter correlations matrix assisted the labelling as seen in (Appendices VI; VII). Suffice to say that the initial researcher's decisions on how to go about the EFA protocol, assisted to focus phase three objectives three and four. These results on five stages of EFA, not only suggested that the multivariate methods were suitable to address phase three research questions, but also that questionnaire responses were reasonable. Consequently, these guaranteed the researcher to proceed with further analysis of the study confidently. Objective two follows.

6.3 Prior Assessment Criteria Communication as a Factor for Marginal Grades

Objective two (2) examined the degree, to which candidates' as well as their supervisors' prior communication of the surfaced assessment criteria used by the external examiners in particular clarity for worldview underpinned conceptions, has been a contributory factor for increase of dissertations low completion as well as marginal final pass rates alteration. Its fifth sub research question 2(va) inquired to what extent are external examiners' assessment criteria used by the external examiners to assess studied dissertations worthiness, communicated prior to candidates and their supervisors to

warrant raised or lowered quality performance? The researcher used the Likert's scale questionnaire tool to collect information; where appropriate the researcher used interviews, and primary documents. The constant comparison and SPSS methods analysed the data. The results appear in bar graph in Figure 6.2.

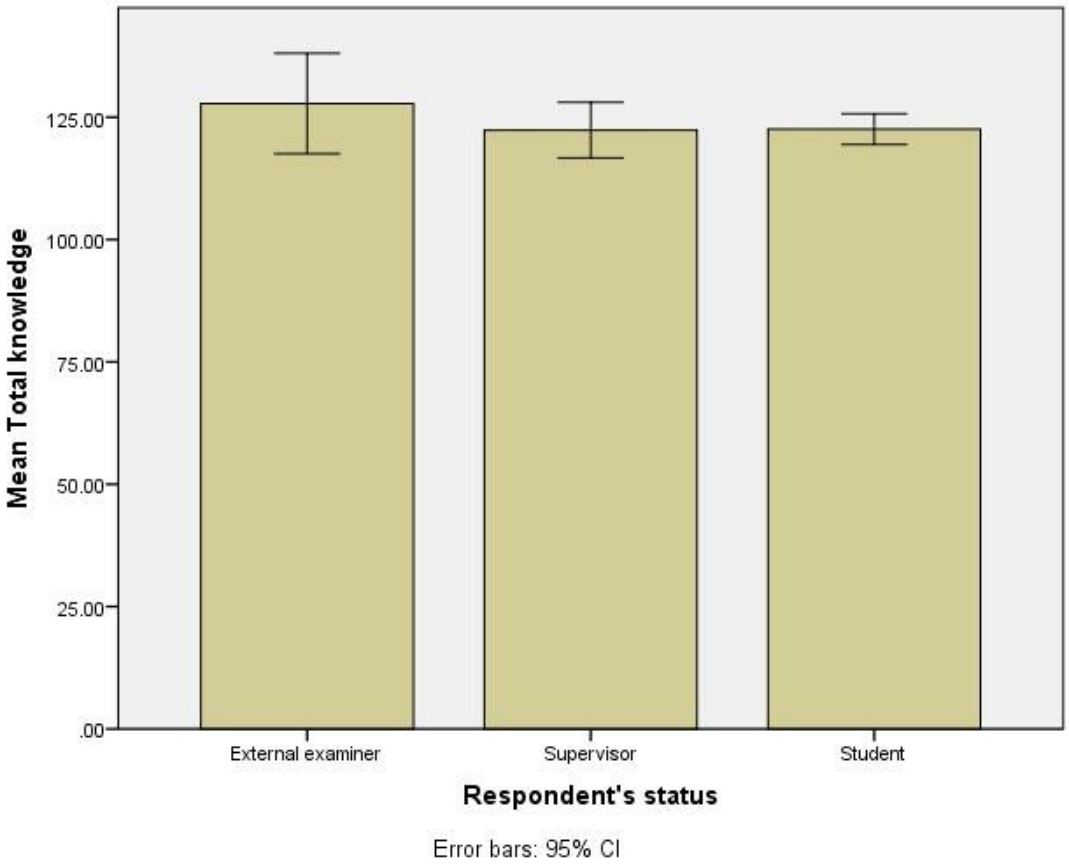

Figure 6.2: Respondents' Dissertations Assessment Criteria Knowledge Quality

Figure 6.2, shows the histogram with X-axis about studied respondents' status juxtaposed against Y-axis. The mean total for respondents' information about assessment criteria used by external examiners to assess dissertations Figure 6.2 shows three bars with different degrees of studied researchers' knowledge as the first outputs of the SPSS analysis (Figure 6.2). Figure 6.2 output appeared along with Table 6.2 as follows:

Table 6.2: Respondents' Types on Assessment Descriptive Statistics Criteria.

	N	Mean	Std. Deviation
External Examiners	5	127.80	8.26
Supervisors	14	122.35	9.84
Candidates	67	122.57	12.89

Source: Field Data (2018).

In Table 6.2, one learns three rows suggesting compared themes and number of sampled respondents. Together from Figure 6.2 bars and Table 6.2, the emerging sub themes in need of further analysis and discussion were.

- ✓ Compared respondents' levels of knowledge status in Standard Deviation (SD)
- ✓ Three categories of studied researchers compared to mean total knowledge
  - External examiners
  - Supervisors and
  - Candidates

6.3.1 Researchers' knowledge for assessment criteria mean compared.

From Figure 6.1, it is evident that one of the SPSS outputs were bars clearly revealing the levels of knowledge, in measure of mean. The gauge indicates that external examiners' bar had the highest level of all the rest about prior communicated knowledge for assessment criteria, followed by the supervisors with higher knowledge on the same, while candidates have high knowledge compared to counterparts (Figure 6.1). Table 6.2 appeared side by side with Figure 6.2 implying that the SPSS bar results appeared in summary in (Table 6.2).

The same Table indicates that the researcher theoretically sampled 86 out of 88, respondents, who responded to the questionnaires for this particular category (Table 6.2). Furthermore, the same Table indicates researchers' levels of understanding about external examiners' assessment criteria portraying that, the EEs' knowledge for the assessment criteria read the highest of all the rest studied researchers' groups, as expected at the mean of 127.80 (Table 6.2). The analysis of the respondents' responses from the questionnaire tool as well revealed generally, that the EEs' knowledge of assessment criteria standard deviating from the mean, was smallest of all the rest reading at 8.26 (Figure 6.2; Table 6.2).

In contrast with the supervisors' responses on the same knowledge for the assessment criteria, it was second in rank with the higher level of understanding at the mean of 122.35, while their standard deviation was smaller compared to the rest, reading at 9.84 (Table 6.2). When the two groups of respondents' responses are contrasted the analysis shows that the candidates' mean ranked the third in understanding the same assessment criteria reading at 122.57, while their standard deviation read the highest of all the rest reading at 12.89 (Table 6.2).

The researcher argues that the standard deviation from the mean of the three studied groups for the prior information of the assessment criteria from the studied universities assessment tool labelled the EEAFs (2004-2016) at OUT, appeared slight one. Another information from observation and interviews methods is that the EEs were the most informed of all the studied respondents' three groups. The first reason for the EEs'

highest variation of all the studied groups on the same was because, the frequency of assessing the dissertations once they secure the contract at OUT until it ends, give them the frequent access of the assessment tool across the year. Therefore, a particular examiner uses the tool whenever assessing the dissertations from OUT across the year, unlike candidates and their supervisors.

Based on Table 6.2, the EEs are compared to the supervisors' responses for knowledge of the same tool; the latter were found to be more informed than the candidates, who were less informed compared to the EEs. The reasons for the supervisors to rank the second in communication of the same criteria could be explained based on observation and interview methods. The observation method revealed that some supervisors normally, get an invitation to attend the dissertations defense panels though not often, the reason for being less informed is indicated in (Table 5.3;5.6). Commenting to the supervisors' low turn up to the dissertations defense panels, the SUPADM#20 representing the DRPS explained;

> *"…The absence of motivating factor for supervisors, has led faculties to send same faculty members, mainly post graduate unit coordinators of research, while the rest of supervisors remain uninformed of the defense panel's verdicts for their clients…"* (SUPADMN#20: 29.3.2014).

In chapter five, the observation method revealed that the Directorate of Research for Post graduate Students (DRPS) hand over the feedback comments from the external examiners (EEs), to the attending unit coordinators, who in turn advise non-attending supervisors to assist the candidates by ensuring incorporation of EEs' comments. That is again the second possibility, when the supervisors access the EEAFs scores with the said criteria for performance. The observation revealed further that there was a

possibility that the supervisors and candidates are overwhelmed with the corrections of the dissertations as per EEs' comments.

As a result, less information for candidates and their supervisors might be resulting from less due attention paid on the contents of the assessment tool. Figure 6.2 and Table 6.2, once more reveal that candidates were the least informed of all the rest, regarding the knowledge of the assessment criteria used by EEs to assure the quality of candidates' dissertations. So far, as explained in chapter five, the assessment document tool for assessing dissertations in studied universities is considered confidential.

Candidates get copies of the EEs' comments to incorporate in the dissertations, but not the EEs' report form with score grade marks. Moreover, candidates, access their dissertations score results coded OED: 699 in their general e mail accounts known as OUT Syndicate Assessment Internal System (SARIS) report sample illustrated in Table 6.3 as follows:

Table:6.3: Candidate's Number HD/E/XXX/T.20xx M.Ed-(APPS) Code

Code	Course Title	Unit	Grade	Point	GPA
OED 626	Research Methodology, Computer Application and Statistics	2	B	6.0	
OED 617	Gender Development and Education	2	A	10.0	
OED 627	Policy Analysis, Implementation and Evaluation	2	B+	8.0	
OED 625	Educational Planning	2	B+	8.0	
OED 699	***Dissertation***	***6***	***B+***	***24.0***	
OED 624	Development of Organization	2	B+	8.0	
OED 632	Economics of Education	2	B	6.0	
		18		**70.0**	**3.9**

Source: OUT ARMIS 5.0.1 (2013/2014).

In Table 6.3, one sees what the researcher observed in the field. One sees one of the encountered candidate's general report coded Candidate No. HD/E/XXX/T.20xx.

The other SARIS report is here for comparison sake in Table, 6.4 as follows.

Table 6.4: Candidate HD/E/yyyy/T.200xx General Report Study Level: III

Code¤	Course·Title¤	Unit¤	Grade¤	Point¤	GPA¤	¤
¤	¤	¤	¤	¤	¤	¤
OED·617¤	Gender·Development·and·Education¤	2¤	B¤	6.0¤	¤	¤
OED·625¤	Educational·Planning¤	2¤	B+¤	8.0¤	¤	¤
OED·624¤	Development·of·Organisation¤	2¤	B¤	6.0¤	¤	¤
OED·626¤	Research·Methodology,·Computer·Application·and·Statistics¤	2¤	B+¤	8.0¤	¤	¤
OED·627¤	Policy·Analysis,·Implementation·and·Evaluation	2¤	B¤	6.0¤	¤	¤
OED·628¤	Organisation·and·Administration·of·Primary·and·Secondary·Education¤	2¤	A¤	10.0¤	¤	¤
OED·632¤	Economics·of·Education¤	2¤	B+¤	8.0¤	¤	¤
OED·699¤	**Dissertation¤**	**6¤**	**B¤**	**18.0¤**	¤	¤
¤	¤	**20¤**	¤	**70.0¤**	**3.5¤**	¤

Source: Field Data (2018).

In Table 6.4, one is able to see another report of the candidate coded HD/E/yyyy/T.200xx for more clarity. The SARIS has same contents as the former.

From the two Tables, one sees the emerged sub themes to be:

- ✓ Course codes
- ✓ Course titles
- ✓ Course Units
- ✓ Course grade points and
- ✓ Attained Course GPA

6.3.1.1 Course codes, units, grades points and GPAs

The report sums up, by beginning with course codes, the names of the covered courses, with their weights in terms of units. Again, one observes the grades and points per each course. A score in the dissertations worthies 10 points which is regarded the highest, followed by the B+ with 8 points then B(Flat) with 6 points (OUT ARMIS, 2014). From that trend, the researcher rationalised the values of the rest grades, which are; C, with 4 points, D with 2 points, and E with zero (0) points the lowest of all (Table 6.3).

The last column shows the General Point Average (GPA), whereby, the candidate HD/E/XXX/T.20xx, had the higher-class placement with award of 3.9 as per OUT standards. The researcher of this study labelled B (flat) score grade of the dissertation as a marginal grade, which affects the entire course work in a negative way, no matter how outstanding it might have been. Consequently, the reasons for the majority of candidates achieving lower GPAs, in the studied university context are further explained. In comparison, candidate HD/E/XXX/T.20xx and

HD/E/yyyy/T.200xx, as shown in Table 6.3 had almost similar outstanding results in their course works.

However, the difference between the candidates is the score for their entire dissertations. While the first had a B+ dissertation grade with 24 points, the second had B (flat) with 18 points (Table 5.4). This being the case, B+ influences the entire course in a positive way by raising it, leading a candidate to get the higher GPAs, compared to a B (flat) that influences the entire coursework negatively lowering the candidates' GPAs (OUT ARMIS, 2014).

The findings on the second core category of objective two 2 (a) about the researchers' knowledge of the assessment standards revealed that the performance assessment criteria for assessing dissertations is not normally communicated in advance to candidates or supervisors transparently. However, through interviews with supervisors it was revealed that majority of supervisors follow the guidelines given in the OUT prospectus. How prospectus guidelines align with the EEAFs assessment criteria was a theme beyond the focus of this study. Consequently, the assessment criteria are much known to the EEs, when compared to the candidates and their supervisors.

These findings prompted the conclusion that the studied groups of researchers had slight deviation of communicated external examiners' assessment criteria prior to assess dissertations quality in the studied context. While the EEs were the most knowledgeable, candidates and their supervisors, had inadequate information about the detailed type of criteria, used to assess the dissertations quality. This finding suggested that there seemed

to lack transparency on assessment criteria among the studied groups at OUT in this study. Studies about relevance of communicating criteria for performance in universities exist. Reporting on the same, Ecclestone (2001) conducted a study among franchised university programmes on understanding criteria for degree classification.

The researcher found that assessment criteria alone could not yield usual understanding of the needed levels and quality work. It is revealed that clear learning outcomes and set standards make assessment more open. The universities are obliged to communicate expectations of set criteria to learners and their facilitators (Ecclestone, 2001). The manner how the communication of criteria for performance is used by the EEs to assess the dissertations, contributes in influencing the increase of dissertations low quality passes, low completion and low graduation rates, was the task for the next sub theme. In other words, does the communication of criteria for performance has any association with increase of underperformance scenarios of the dissertations or not. The documentary method provided levels of scores, grades, as well as GPAs, as previously seen in (Tables 4.2a-d).

6.3.2 Whether assessment criteria communication adds value to theses quality

Objective 2 (v b) sub research question inquired if the assessment criteria were prior communicated uniformly to the studied groups of researchers, what difference could the prior communication contribute to an increase of dissertation quality completion and score grades among studied M.A candidates at OUT? The researcher used the same Likert's scale questionnaire method along with other appropriate strategies, which worked to obtain the answers for sub item two of objective 2 v (b). By means of SPSS

software on the EFA multivariate protocol methods, continued to provide out puts like table of variance in percentages, which provided binned results between candidates' knowledge on criteria levels and dissertations performance verdicts. The SPSS analysis outputs, yielded results appearing in subsequent two related Tables. Table 6.5 begins as follows.

Table 6. 5: Compared Performance in the Dissertation or Thesis (Binned)

Verdict		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Rejection	1	1.66	1.66	1.66
	Resubmission	4	6.66	6.66	8.32
	Marginal Pass	31	51.66	51.66	59.98
	Pass	24	40.00	40.00	99.98
	Total	**60**	**100.00**	**100.0**	**≈100.00**

Source: Field Data (2018).

Table 6.5 shows more SPSS outputs in rows and columns, suggesting a binned constant comparison of dissertations. Still, the other comparative SPSS output with the Chi square standards in Table 6.6 compliment analysed data in the previous Table as follows.

Table 6.6: Candidates' Knowledge of Dissertations Assessment Criteria

Performance in the dissertations Verdicts									**Chi-square test**		
Knowledge criteria levels	Rejected		Resumission	%	Marginal Pass		Pass				
	f	%	*f*		*f*	%	*f*	%	x^2	**df.**	**p.**
Low	1	1.67	4	6.67	16	26.66	11	18.33	5.027	3	0.170
High	0	0.00	0	0.00	15	25.00	13	21.67			
Total	**1**	**1.67**	**4**	**6.67**	**31**	**51.66**	**24**	**40.00**			

Source: Field Data (2018).

In Table 6.6, one observes another SPSS output with measures of variability trend among candidates constantly compared between the first two rows versus five columns. One may sum up insights from Tables 6.5 and 6.6 to portray the emerged sub themes namely:

Four levels of valid verdict categories namely:

- ✓ Rejection verdict
- ✓ Resubmission verdict
- ✓ Marginal passes, and
- ✓ Pass verdict
- ✓ Knowledge criteria (low and high) levels in frequencies, percentages, percent and cumulative percent.

- ✓ Criteria of performance knowledge seen in measure of Chi-square statistical lens

6.3.3 Criteria of performance factor for categories of rejection verdict

Table 6.5the data about the external examiners' verdicts for dissertations performance in rows versus valid frequency, cumulative percentage outputs in columns determining fitness of data. Through theoretical sampling, the researcher obtained a saturated sample of 60 candidate's reports from the external examiners, for this subcategory (Table 6.5). It should be borne in mind that in the GT studies, the sample varies depending on the number of responded questionnaires (Charmaz, 2006).

6.3.3.1 Criteria of performance factor for categories of rejection verdict

As Table 6.5 shows, the researcher began the analysis with rejection performance verdict, whereby the data analysis results indicated a very few 1 (1.66%) out of EEs' 60 studied candidates' dissertation reports achieving the lowest score grade D and E previously seen in Figure 4.1 and Tables 4.1a; 6.5. Further analysis indicates that category one had lowest achievers in overall dissertations with either "D" or "E" grade in Figure 4.1; Table 4.1a, whose dissertations were rejected outright by the external examiners. This category had frequency of 1, implying that very few 1(1.67%) out of 60 studied candidates on this sub item, had low knowledge of assessment criteria, and none 0(0%) had high knowledge of such criteria.

6.3.3.2 Criteria of performance as factor for rise of resubmission verdict

The second emerged category of performance was resubmission of which the analysis results indicate that very few 4 (6.66%) out of EEs' reports for 60 studied candidates' dissertations, similarly underperformed by achieving poorer verdict determined by letter grade "C" (Table 5.5). One notes, that the verdict of grade C, D and E renders a candidate to either resubmit or rewrite the entire dissertation, which is a bitter experience (Figure 4.1; Tables 4.1a; 6.5; Appendices XI; XII).

Not only that but also, the content analysis indicated that the relative majority 31(51.66%) out of 60 sampled candidates' reports, had marginal pass score grades normally denoted by letter grade B (flat). The B grade implies that the attainment of it in dissertations not only lowers the entire candidate's course work results no matter how outstanding it is, but also it lowers the candidate's GPA (Figure 4.1; Tables 4.1a; 6.3; 6.4; 6.5; Appendices XI; XII). In comparison with category two of resubmission, it had frequency of 4, implying that 4 (6.67%) out of 60 studied candidates were required to resubmit their dissertations.

The reason for resubmission was because; they scored a lower grade of C score grade from the external examiners (EEs) in Table 6.6. Further analysis indicates that the group of resubmission group had low knowledge of the criteria for performance though none 0(0%) out of 60 studied candidates had high knowledge of criteria for performance.

6.3.3.3 Criteria of performance as a factor for rise of marginal verdict.

Much more, the third category of achievers was that of candidates of dissertations with verdict of either excellent grades or very good grades. This group had higher frequency of 24 implying that few 24(40.00%) out of 60 candidates passed either out right, or subject to minor typographical errors due to achieving either A or B+ grades with excellent or very good pass verdict by the EEs (Figure 4.1; Tables 4.1a; 6.6). Further analysis indicated that this group had few 11 (18.33%) out of 60 candidates with low knowledge of criteria for performance compared to still few 13(21.67%) out of 60 studied candidates with high knowledge of criteria for performance (Table 5.6).

6.3.3.4 Criteria of performance as a factor for rise of verdicts: passing verdict

Above all, Table 6.5 indicates the fourth category of performance with a good number among few 24(40.00) out of 60 candidates' reports achieving a pass verdict with either Excellent, Very good score grade letters of A or B+ for dissertations (Figure 4.1; Appendices XI; XII). Conclusively, in this study, these results implied that there was no significant or relevant difference between the candidates' knowledge level of EEs' assessment criteria for performance, hence had little contribution in increase of either high or low dissertations quality score grade passes, completion, or low graduation rates in the studied universities in particular OUT. In other words, whether candidates and their supervisors were aware just as EEs' were informed of assessment criteria Figure 6.2 and Table 6.2 on dissertations performance could not have any significant influence at all.

6.3.3.5 Criteria of performance knowledge seen via Chi-square statistical lens

Part two of objective 3 (vi) was explored further through another lens of the Chi-square test to understand the existing dependency or association of the emerged attributes. Consequently, the emerged SPSS analysed Likert's scale questionnaire results on the same issue revealed presence or absence of association between candidates' dissertations quality performance and their prior knowledge of assessment criteria in Table 6.5. In Table 6.6, the researcher through statistical analysis obtained preceding columns compared to the last column revealing the Chi-square output, which tested independence of attributes reported in values namely: X^2, df-degree of freedom, and p-value (Table 6.6).

The column of Chi-square that appears in Table 6.6 illuminates homogeneity, variability, or independency of attributes for the studied candidates. Further analysis indicates that the Chi-square statistical test yielded the statistical standards including x^2reading at 5.027≈5.03, degree of freedom (df) reading at 3, while the p-value read at 0.170≈0.17 (Table 6.6). Normally the accepted relevancy level of p-value reads at 0.05. From the results in Table 6.6, 'p' value read at 0.170 above the popular recommended relevancy.

In other words, the Chi-square test too, assisted the researcher to understand the dependency levels, on whether the degree of effects between low achievers with low clarity of assessment criteria and higher achiever candidates with high clarity of the assessment criteria in the dissertation performance had similar effects or the opposite on their dissertation results (Table 6.5). It was rationalised that if the dependency or

association were to exist, then at what category of performance verdict of: rejection, resubmission, marginal, or pass level.

The relevancy level of p-value results that read at 0.05, in Table 6.6. The researcher argues further that since the 'p' value read at 0.170 above the popular recommended relevancy results, then that implied the absence of significant or relevant difference between the candidates' level of their knowledge criteria for performance, used by the EEs, and the increase in candidates' dissertations low score , completion, or low graduation rates. In other words, whether candidates and their supervisors, new the used criteria for assessment just as EEs,' were found to be the most informed in Figure 5.2 and Table 5.1 or not, the dissertations performance would not be improved in anyway significantly (Figure 6.2; Tables 6.1; 6.2; 6.3; 6.4; 6.5; 6.6).

The findings on the second core category of objective two about the researchers' knowledge of the assessment standards revealed that the assessment criteria for assessing dissertations are not normally communicated in advance to candidates or supervisors. However, through interviews with supervisors it was revealed that majority of supervisors follow the guidelines given in the OUT prospectus. However, prospectus guidelines align with the EEAFs assessment criteria was a theme beyond the focus of this study. Consequently, the analysis revealed that in the studied university of OUT, the assessment criteria are the most known to the EEs, when compared to the candidates and their supervisors (Figure 6.2).

These findings prompted the researcher to conclude that the studied groups of researchers had slight deviation in being informed the assessment criteria used by the EEs prior to assess dissertations quality in the studied context. While the EEs were the adequately knowledgeable, the candidates and their supervisors, were inadequately informed of the type of criteria for performance. These study findings suggested that there is no transparency on assessment criteria among the studied groups of researchers at OUT.

Studies about relevance of communicating criteria for performance in universities exist. Reporting on the same, Ecclestone (2001) conducted a study among franchised university programmes on understanding criteria for degree classification. The researcher found that assessment criteria alone could not yield usual understanding of the needed levels and quality work. The author contends that clear learning outcomes and set standards make assessment more open to learners and empower facilitators to make credible grading decisions. As per the findings, universities are obliged to communicate expectations of set criteria to learners and their facilitators (Ecclestone, 2001).

These findings reflect Ecclestone's observation that (2001), communication of clear learning outcomes, and criteria lead to transparent assessment of learners while simplifying teachers' assessment of tests and examinations process. The study conducted by Denicolo (2013) revealed too that, variations of dissertations whereby the expectations of candidates and their supervisors vary from judgments of dissertations by the external examiners (Denicolo, 2013). The author recommends universities to

communicate criteria to their teaching staff. However, it is not certain whether communicating criteria for performance alone may raise candidates' performance (Ecclestone, 2001). Other related literature on issue of assessment criteria includes Nightingale (1984), Denicolo (2003), Mullins and Kiley (2010) also Bloxham *et al*. (2011). Next, find the compared assessment criteria used by the EEs influence on dissertations performance.

6.4 Researchers' held Implicit Perspectives Dictating Dissertations Processes

Objective three had two sub research questions 3(vi). Its sixth sub research question 3(vi) inquired, at what degree were candidates, supervisors, and external examiners held varying perceptions of research "worldview" underpinned conceptions found to affect processes of writing, supervising, defending, and assuring quality dissertations in studied university environment at OUT? The findings from objectives in chapter four and five guided the researcher, what to do next in phase three of data collection and analysis. Theoretical criterion sampling selected saturated sample of 88 respondents, who responded to the Likert's scale questionnaire.

The researcher-subjected the responses to the same SPSS software package through EFA five protocol multivariate methods (Figure 6.1). The analysis revealed three retained core components about researchers' implicit held paradigm as worldviews underpinned conceptions labelled constructivism, interpretivism, and positivism. These held views emerged as dominant perspectives among the studied groups of candidates, supervisors and external examiners (Figure 6.2). Another SPSS output through EFA

multivariate methods with varying values of frequencies and percentages appeared in Table 6.7.

Table 6. 7: Dominant Held Philosophical Worldviews of Studied Researchers

Perspectives	**External**		**Examiners**			**Supervisors**					**Candidates**					
	Yes			No		Yes			No		Yes			No		**Tot.**
	N	*f*	%	*f*	%	N	*f*	%	*f*	%	N	*f*	%	*f*	%	**%**
Constructi*vism*	6	5	83.33	1	16.67	14	4	28.57	10	71.43	68	32	47.06	36	52.94	**100**
Interpretivism	6	1	16.67	5	83.33	14	10	71.43	4	28.57	68	28	41.17	40	58.83	**100**
Positivism	6	0	0	6	100	14	2	14.29	12	85.71	68	37	54.41	31	45.59	**100**

Source: Field Data (2018).

In Table 6.7, one observes continuation of objective three from the SPSS output. It is about emerged dominant held philosophical worldviews (paradigm perspectives) among the studied groups. The analysis reflects the results in Figure 6.2, revealing three plausible components structure of loadings. In Table 6.7, the first column shows three emerged views: constructivism, interpretivism,

and positivism. Table 6.7 shows the N-number, frequencies of responses, percentage, and total. From the same Table the following sub themes appear:

- ✓ External examiners' 'worldview' constructivism perception affecting quality dissertations writing, supervising, defending, assuring quality dissertation

- ✓ Supervisors' 'worldview' interpretivism perception affecting quality dissertations writing, supervising, defending, assuring quality dissertations.
- ✓ Candidates' 'worldview' positivism perception affecting quality dissertations writing, supervising, defending, assuring quality dissertations.

6.4.1 EEs' constructivism conception affecting study quality

In this study, constructivism referred to one of the worldview perspectives under the post positivism groups with its independent underpinned conceptions namely: philosophical, ontological, epistemological, methodological, axiological, logical and rhetorical language abbreviated as POEMALOR (Figure 2.1; Tables 6.1; 6.2). Table 6.7 shows the first column that the greatest majority 5(83.33%) out of studied 6 EEs, responded positively to be following constructivists' claims for quality, when assessing candidates' dissertations. However, a very few 1 (16.67%) EEs responded negatively not following the constructivists' claims for quality dissertations in assessment process.

For the supervisors, a very few 4(28.57%) out of 14 supervisors agreed casually to the constructivists' paradigm perspective of what the best dissertation quality is, but the greater majority 10(71.43%) supervisors strongly disagreed to the constructivists' paradigm claims criteria of the best dissertation quality in (Table 6.7). Besides that, the analysis revealed a good number 32 (47.06%) out of theoretically sampled 68 candidates, agreed casually to follow constructivism perspective claims, when conducting and writing the quality dissertations. Nevertheless, the simple majority

35(52.94%) out of 68 candidates responded negatively by opting for a constructivists' paradigm perspective claims on what the quality dissertation refers to. Compared groups' worldview of interpretivists' perspective as a factor effecting dissertations quality performance follows.

6.4.2 Supervisors' interpretivism conception affecting dissertations quality

In this study, the interpretivism refers to one of the groups under the major post positivists' paradigm perspective. Looking at Table 6.7, one also observes how a very few 1(16.67%) out of 6 EEs, responded positively to be following the interpretivism, when assessing candidates' dissertations quality. As per interpretivism paradigm perspective the greatest majority 5 (83.33%) of the EE responded strongly disagreeing to rely on the interpretivists' claims when assessing the dissertations quality. For supervisors, when compared to the EEs, Table 6.7 indicates that the greater majority 10 (71.43%) out of 14 supervisors strongly agreed to be following the interpretivists' paradigm perspective claims in supervising candidates to write quality dissertations (Table 6.7).

Besides that, a very few 4 (28.57%) of the studied supervisors, responded disagreeing to follow interpretivists' claims, in supervising candidates to write quality dissertations. For the studied candidates the analysis revealed that a good number 28 (41.17%) out of 68 studied candidates were in consensus with interpretivists' paradigm perspective claims for writing the quality dissertations. All in all, the majority 40 (58.83%) out of 68 sampled candidates did not opt for the claims of the interpretivists' paradigm perspective for quality research, when conducting and attempting to write

the quality dissertations (Table 6.7). Next is a presentation and analysis of effects for positivism paradigm perspective compared to groups on the dissertation performance.

6.4.3 Candidates' positivism conception influencing dissertations quality

Figure 6.2, in line with later Table 6.8, some candidates' questionnaire responses revealed to hold positivists' worldview perspective. The analysis of that Table indicates that none (0%) out of 6 EEs affirmed positivists' claims approach positively that is fond of the objectivism as well as quantification and manipulation, as well as hypotheses testing in assessing the quality research (Table 6.7). 6 (100%) out of all six studied

EEs responded negatively to hold positivists' criteria for what the quality inquiry refers, when assuring candidates' dissertations quality. In comparison to the EEs, very few 2 (14.29%) out of 14 supervisors affirmed to hold positivists' perspective claims of what quality research product in terms of report refers to (Tables 6.7). Also, 12 (85.71%) out of 14 supervisors, responded negatively to the positivists' claims for writing, when supervising the dissertations quality for their clients (Table 6.7). The analysis also reveals a relative majority 37 (54.41%) of the candidates out of 68, strongly were in consensus with positivists' research perspective criteria for writing quality dissertations.

This was contrary to none EEs and majority supervisors, who affirmed the positivists' criteria for quality research. The analysis too, indicates that a good number 31 (45.59%) out of 68 candidates responded negatively to the positivists' research criteria for writing quality dissertations (Table 6.7). In row one, three groups of respondents,

from which the researcher sought information were external examiners (EEs), supervisors, and candidates are given. The analysis of Table 6.7 reveals the trend on the way the relative majority of candidates' responses, agreed to hold to positivists' worldview perspective.

By so doing, candidates followed the positivists' standards implicitly, in the processes of conducting and attempting to write quality dissertations. In contrast, none of the EEs supported the pure use of positivists' criteria, when assuring dissertations quality. Similarly, the greatest majority of supervisors disagreed strongly to hold the positivists' criteria purely, when supervising candidates to conduct educational research and write quality dissertations at all (Table 6.7). This implies that the positivists' perspective, who are fond of numbers, criteria of validity, reliability research, and objectivity is no longer dominant among the practitioners in educational research field.

However, the studied researchers' responses revealed that studied candidates just professed to be using the quantitative positivists' paradigm perspective theoretically. So far, the analysis of the candidates' dissertations revealed that the majority of the dissertations had used mixed methods approach. This finding was a sign that not only the EEs and supervisors had paradigm shift from only relying to purism of the positivism perspective to the post positivism perspectives like constructivism, and interpretivism, but also candidates practically in their dissertations followed the pragmatism of flexibility, knowingly or unknowingly (Table 6.7).

The analysis of candidates' dissertations through schedule Appendix (IX), revealed that majority of candidates opt mixed design. Critically speaking, the mixed methods do not belong to the pure positivism worldview, but to the post positivists, whose research employ pragmatic flexible models, follow the principle of what works better rather than rigid research designs, and in conducting social research is viable. Rather than clinging on the dominant traditional positivists' rigour, researchers are encouraged to have flexible appropriate informed choices (Appendix IX).

The finding on the influence of the positivism perspective on the processes of writing, supervising, and assessing dissertations quality, suggested the inference that the candidates' responses professed to follow positivists' perspective criteria theoretically. Conversely, the primary documentary analysis revealed that practically the greatest majority of candidates' dissertations had mixed research design (Appendix IX). In contrast, the supervisors' responses exhibited that they were not in support of the positivism perspective, just as none of the EEs was in support of pure positivism criteria. The fact that majority of the candidates' dissertations opted mixed methods contrary to their professed positivism paradigm implied the possibility that the supervisors advise candidates to abandon the purism of positivism criteria (Appendix IX).

Suffice to say that this finding suggested that the simple majority of candidates had divergent held perspective from their supervisor's interpretivism perspective and from the external examiners' constructivism perspective. This divergence in studied researchers' held perspective positions among the studied researchers implied one of

the potential probable contributory factors for increase of dissertations final marginal quality score passes, low completion, and graduation rates. Some conceptual literature and empirical studies reflecting this finding exist including Barbara (2005), who observes that university faculties have their implicit standards for judgment of the dissertations and theses.

The latter author concludes that some university faculties leave the task to students to make quality standards explicit (Barbara, 2005). The same author concludes that judgment depends on kind of won lens, which may carry the positivists' or post positivists' standards in terms of either subjective or objective set criteria for performance (Barbara, 2005). For Cohen and Crabtree (2006) positivists' criteria pertain to objective phenomenon that requires an investigator to follow acceptable positivists' parsimonious rigor of arriving at true knowledge. Much more, Patton (1990) blames university lecturers, who are blind to paradigm, by holding rigid perspectives they cherished during their days of schooling, instead of appropriate choices.

Patton (1990) advocates the paradigm of choice and the use of appropriate research methods instead of clinging on traditional methods, which may not fit every investigated problem. Onwugubzie (2007) thinks that the mixed paradigm is timely. The divergent and convergent worldview perspectives finding, tally with a study among Malaysia universities (Kuhn, 1962; Daniel and Yusoff, 2005; Roschelle, 1998). The presentation and analysis of the emerged objective four about the existing association between clear articulation of paradigm as worldview perspective,

authoritative source of knowledge conceptions, and the dissertation quality performance follows.

6.5 Alliance between Researchers' Quality Research Perceptions and Grades

Recall that the initial analysis of objective one in Chapter Four part one, addressed exploratory questions to obtain on-going core pressing issue, categories, processes, and main respondents in studied universities context. The initial analysis had revealed prior the substantive theory about emerged trend suggesting the existing close association between one's clear explanation for theme 6.3(i) about paradigm as worldview and increase of dissertations final quality score grades alteration.

However, despite the emerged trend in the emerged substantive theory in Chapter Four Tables 4.2a-d, the researcher did not initially know the extent of existing association strength as well as direction between candidates' clarification of subtheme 6.3(i) with paradigm conceptions likewise design and the quality dissertations score grades.

The findings of objective one and two in Chapter Four and Five suggested what to do next. That was why objective four (4) assessed the studied researchers' articulation of research paradigm as worldview perspectives related to authoritative source of knowledge conceptions, and alteration of quality score grades for dissertations. The purpose of objective four was to refine the emerged substantive theory more. Objective four seventh research question 4(vii) inquired, what category of correlation strength and direction exist between candidates' clear explanation of worldview conceptions

articulation of authoritative source of knowledge and increase of dissertations marginal score grades?

The Likert's scale questionnaire tool collected data on this core theme from 88 respondents namely: 68 candidates, 14 supervisors, and 6 external examiners. The SPSS analysis outputs are summarised in Table 6.8. From Table 6.8, one sees 36 squared cells with rows and columns. Several association coefficient values emerged in a repeating trend. The researcher decided to reduce the repeating coefficient values and decided to consider on those values bellow diagonal boarder line within only 20 squared cells illustrated in Table 6.9.

Table 6.8: Inter-Correlations Comparison among Underlying Variables

	Constructivism	**Positivism**	**Interpretivism**	**Knowledge**	**Passes**	**Authoritative sources Conceptions**
Total Constructivism	1****	.567***	.044	.191	.072	-.115
Total Positivism	.567***	1****	-.064	.107	-.144	.038
Total Interpretivism	.044	-.064	1****	-.18	.240*	.188
Total Knowledge	.191	.107	-.180	1****	-.023	-.026
Total Dissertations Passes	.072	-.144	.240*	-.023	1****	.458**
Total Epistemology Components	-.115	.035	.188	-.026	.458**	1****

Source: Field Data (2018).

Table 6.9: Reduction of Repeating Coefficients

	Constructivism	**Positivism**	**Interpretivism**	**Knowledge**	**Dissertations Passes**	**Authoritative source Conceptions**
Constructivism	1****					
Positivism	**0.567*** **	1****				
Interpretivism	0.044	-0.064	1****			
Knowledge	0.191	0.107	-0.180	1*** *		
Dissertations passes	0.072	-0.144	**0.240 ***	-0.023	1****	
Authoritative source conceptions	-0.115	0.035	0.188	-0.026	**0.458** *	1****

Source: Field Data (2018).

Interpretive Key:

Pearson's correlation coefficient or measure of association

Coefficient values -1 or +1 indicated perfect or total association, and 0 or near to it meant no association

****Very strong- association if value lies between .8 and 1

***Substantial (strong)-- if the value lies between .6 and .79

**Moderate- (average or fair) if values are between 0.4 and .59

Slight (low)- if the value is between 0.2 and .39

Negligible- (by chance) if it is between 0 and .19, this show that there is no correlation (Enon, 1998:73).

From Table 6.8 and 6.9, one sees obvious matrix output with 36 squared cells from the SPSS by means of the multivariate Exploratory Factors Analysis (EFA) protocol methods with six rows compared to six columns. The analysis also reveals categories

of inputs, from the studied researcher groups' responses about agreeing or disagreeing, which the researcher entered and subjected to the SPSS analysis. The first category of inputs from the Likert's questionnaire 41 statements, whose analysis by the SPSS yielded several outputs, was a group of three relevant components labelled: constructivism, interpretivism, and positivism.

These components had emerged previously from several other components in Figure 6.2, where the Eigen values scree plot determined few relevant ones (Figure 6.2). The second category of input from 41 designed statements was in relation to popular core worldview perspectives of positivism and post positivism groups (Table 6.8).

The second category of input was studied researchers' knowledge row and column about the manner how each studied researcher conceived or knew criteria for quality educational research. The third category of input seen in Tables 6.8 and 6.9 was candidates' dissertations final score grades row and column obtained from EEs' quality assurance reports (Table 6.8).

The fourth category of input was about researchers'10 designed statements from authoritative source of knowledge in particular from candidates' analysed dissertations. Besides those inputs, one also sees SPSS outputs of six rows versus six columns yielding 36 squared cells. One also, sees the diagonal borderline output with several converging coefficients values of +1, revealing extent degree of varying strength as well as, diverging coefficient values. The researcher begs the reader to read the analysis of the SPSS outputs in Tables 6.8 and 6.9 along previous (Tables 4.2 a-d; 6.7).

One also should read the analysis of the SPSS outputs along with two-dimensional plot loadings output basing on two instead of three components. When looked from three components dimension the results appeared in discarded complex six dimensions figure, because of being very difficult to interpret, when compared to two dimensions, which is clear (Figure 6.3).

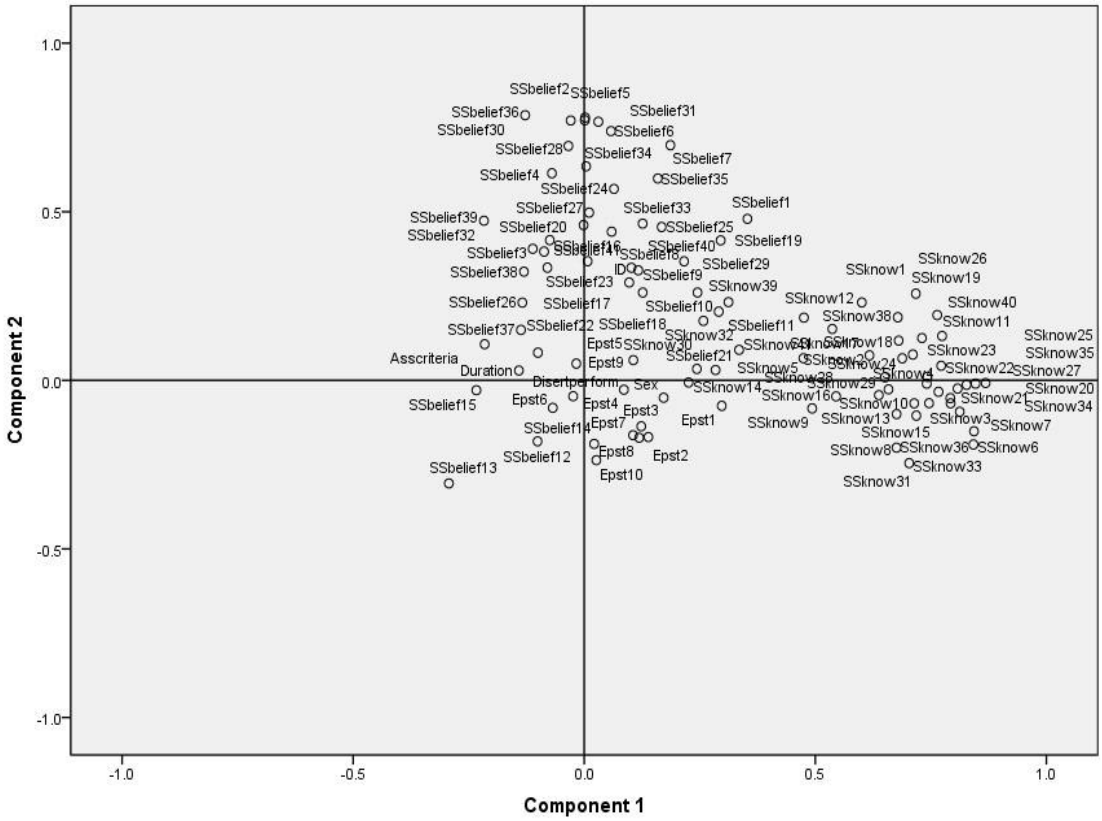

Figure 6.3: Two-Dimensional Plot Loadings Output

In Figure 6.3, one may read keenly all inputs as they appear in Table 6.8 and 6.9. One sees how one of the SPSS outputs are scattered along x and y-axis. One sees that all four categories of inputs converge in the midst of the x and y axes, but still keen analysis of Figure 6.3 reveals numbered inputs from 1-41 statements from the Likert's scale questionnaire. The scattered components suggest the divergent trend of studied researchers' responses. The researcher still designed another constant comparison

Table 6.10 for clarity sake suiting GT, which encourages the researcher to ensure the constant comparison analysis.

Table 6.10: Constant Comparison Table

S/N	Compared Inputs in Rows	Compared inputs in columns	Value
1.	Constructivism vs	Constructivism	**+1 ******
2.	Positivism vs	Constructivism	**0.567**
3.	Interpretivism vs	Constructivism	0.044
4.	Knowledge vs	Constructivism	0.191
5.	Dissertations passes vs	Constructivism	0.072
6.	Authoritative source conceptions vs	Constructivism	-0.115
7	Positivism vs	Positivism	+1
8.	Interpretivism vs	Positivism	-0.064
9.	Knowledge vs	Positivism	0.107
10.	Dissertations scores vs	Positivism	-0.144
11.	Authoritative source of knowledge conceptions vs	Positivism	0.035
12.	Interpretivism vs	Interpretivism	+1
13.	Knowledge vs	Interpretivism	-0.180
14.	Dissertations vs	Interpretivism	**0.240***
15.	Authoritative source of knowledge conceptions vs	Interpretivism	0.188
16.	Researchers' Knowledge for quality criteria vs	Researchers' Knowledge about quality criteria	+1
17.	Dissertations passes vs	Researchers' Knowledge about quality criteria	-0.023
18.	Authoritative knowledge vs	Researchers' Knowledge about quality criteria	-0.026
19.	Dissertations vs	Dissertations passes	+1
20.	Authoritative source conceptions vs	Dissertations passes	**0.458 ****
21.	**Authoritative source conceptions vs**	**Authoritative source conceptions**	**+1**

Source: Field Data (2018).

The researcher's further reduction obtained plausible or rather sound hypothetical proposition major groups providing four succinct themes and sub themes from Figure 6.3; Tables 6.7; 6.8; 6.9; 6.10 as follows.

6.5.1 Emerged themes and sub themes

- ✓ Converging rows and columns comparison suggesting very strong association with values between +.8 and +1
- ✓ Substantial (strong)- if the value lies between .6 and .79
- ✓ Moderate- (average or fair) if values are between 0.4 and .59
- ✓ Slight (low) or negligible- if the value is between 0.2 and .39

6.5.1. Converging rows and columns with +1 with very strong association.

The first category of comparison from Table 6.8 was where the researcher compared some inputs in rows versus similar inputs in columns resulting into repeated convergence to themselves, which yielded coefficients appearing diagonally across Table 6.8;6.9. The constant comparison of such converging squared cells suggested the existing probable very strong perfect association of coefficient value +1, with positive direction (Table 6.8). From the probable strong perfect association, the researcher formulated the plausible proposition in relation to substantive trend theory in chapter four Table 4.2a-d hypothesising that;

The more the studied researchers' consensus about held worldview perspectives converged, and in particular the more candidates clarified research paradigm and design theme 6.3 (i) adequately, the more candidates' entire dissertations were/are likely to achieve either excellent quality score grades of A or very good B+ letters from the external examiners (EEs) with a positive direction.

The researcher argues impliedly, that such probable association resulted, when the researcher compared row with constructivism versus column of constructivism, which yielded +1 suggesting probable strong perfect association with positive direction (Tables 6.8; 6.9). In other words, the more the supervisors and candidates were/are in agreement converging with the constructivism worldview perspective conception held by the greatest majority of the studied EEs, the more candidates' dissertations are/were likely to achieve an Excellent A score grade letter, increasingly in a positive direction.

The researcher argues further that the more the supervisors and candidates were in consensus with constructivism worldview perspective conception held by the greatest majority of the studied External Examiners (EEs), the more candidates' dissertations were likely to achieve final probable excellent quality score grades lettered A rarely and B+ often (Table 6.8;6.9). The researcher adds argument that if these results were translated into two studied universities of OUT and UDSM practical standards, the dissertations with "Excellent quality" scores with "A" grade ranging between 70 and 100 marks with +1 and +.70 implying very strong association in (Figure 4.1; Tables

4.1a; 4.1b; 4.1; Table 6.8). The other coefficient in the same group of hypotheses had value of + .458 in Tables 6.8; 6.9 and 6.10 occurred, when the cell with dissertations score performance from EEs was compared with candidates' articulation of consistently articulated epistemological authoritative sources of knowledge, suggesting hypothesis that. Likewise, the dissertations with Very good grade (B+) range between 69 and 60 marks related to the matrix substantial association coefficient results ranging between +.69 and +.60 (Figure 4.1; Tables 4.2a-e; 6.8). Commenting on the association coefficient with perfect value of +1, Brown (2009 a) contends that variables that load close to +1 are clearly very crucial in interpretation of factors. According to Enon (1998), the coefficient association ranging between +.6 and +1 imply a perfect or substantial association.

The consensus about held research world view perspectives among the studied researchers leading to category one of hypothesis echoes the convergence theory propounded by Barwise and Perry (1983) in Koschmann (1996); Rochelle (1996), confirming that the convergence theory falls under relation theory of meanings. Similar authors are in view that even variables that load near 0 on Eigen vector or factor Figure 6.2, are as well important in interpretation (Brown, 2009a). The probable perfect association finding is one of the features of the study done through GT design in line with all versions of the GT in (Glasser and Strauss, 1967; Strauss and Corbin, 1990; Charmaz, 2006).

This theory contends that; the adequate data for building knowledge is not found in actions, but rather when actions are taken in relation to existing adequate data"

(Rochelle, 1996). This finding seems to call for attention of university faculty and schools research directorate and bureaus for the post graduate to understand the power of EEs' external examiners' unnoticed worldview perspectives prior to allocating assessors of candidates' dissertations. Likewise, the convergence finding calls for attention to faculties to understand that the excellent performance in dissertation is also a function of supervisor's believes in consensus with candidates' held paradigm perspectives be considered, before supervisors' allocation for better improvement. Next, find the emerged coefficients revealing the second category of hypothesis signifying the moderate association.

6.5.2 Divergent cells compared with varying strengths/directions

The researcher divided the second category into three sub groups namely: sub category of coefficient strength suggesting substantial association with coefficient values between.567 ≈.57 and .458 ≈ .46; weak or by chance association with values between .39 and .2.9 and negligible or null with values ranging between.19 and .09 (Enon, 1998). The probable substantial relationship in this study emerged when the researcher compared the row of positivism as worldview perspective versus column with constructivism, which yielded coefficient value of .567 (Table 6.8; 6.9). This category suggested the second probable plausible proposition hypothesising that;

The more the relative majority studied candidates deviated from their held implicit positivism worldview perspective, not practised by none of the EEs, while opting the interpretivism perspective practised by their greatest majority of supervisors, but inadequately clarifying the paradigm and design sub theme 6.3 (i). That is, the more such candidates' dissertations were likely to achieve the marginal quality B (Flat) score grades from the EEs increasingly, with a positive direction (Tables 4.2 a-e; 6.8; 6.9).

In other words, the more the studied researchers: candidates, supervisors, and EEs were not in consensus, diverging from each other in their unnoticed held research paradigm as worldview perspectives, the more likely the candidates' dissertations achieved category of moderate marginal scores from the EEs increasingly in a positive direction. By so doing, such trend accelerated an increase of the marginal score categories of low, lower, and lowest strength with low GPAs and grades lettered C, D, and E in a positive direction.

The researcher begs the reader to refer to previous Table 6.7, where the analysis revealed that the relative majority 37(54.41%) out of 68 candidates, agreed strongly to be following positivism perspective in conducting and writing their dissertations processes. The analysis had revealed that none of the studied EEs and a very few supervisors supported pure positivism criteria for quality research (Table 6.7). The analysis as well had revealed that the greatest majority 10(71.43%) out of 14 supervisors supported interpretivists' criteria for quality research, when supervising

candidates to write quality dissertations, unlike very few candidates, followed the positivism criteria.

Furthermore, the researcher argues further in relation to previous results of Table 6.7, where the analysis revealed that the greatest majority 5(83.33%) out of six EEs agreed strongly that indeed they follow constructivists' criteria, when assuring quality of candidates' dissertations, knowingly or unknowingly (Table 6.7). The EEs were unlike good number of few supervisors and very few candidates, who agreed that they knowingly or unknowingly follow constructivists' worldview perspective criteria for quality research, when supervising and writing dissertations (Table 6.7). This finding seemed to imply that majority of EEs and supervisors had experienced a paradigm shift from following purely the positivists' perspective to constructivists' or interpretivists' paradigm perspective, unlike simple majority of candidates clung on pure positivism perspective.

These results too, indicated the extent to which the studied researchers diverged from each other in holding varying worldview perspective conceptions, during on-going processes of writing, supervising, defending, and assessing research for dissertations. Such findings suggested the probable obvious divergence on the side of positivism worldview followers. It was clear that none (0%) out of six external examiners (EEs) supported the positivism perspective, when assessing candidates' dissertations. In comparison with the supervisors, the greatest majority 12 (85.71%) out of 14 supervisors disagreed not to be adhering to the positivism perspective, when supervising their simple majority candidates agreeing to hold positivism perspective (Table 6.7).

So, one may see how divergent the studied researchers' worldview perspective conceptions were. The researcher argues further that candidates are potentially on losers' side, in case they do not follow unnoticed EEs', and supervisors' implicit held worldview perspective (Table 6.8). When interpreted to the studied universities actual candidates' dissertations interpretation key of score grades in Figure 4.1 and Tables 4.1a-b such dissertations fall under practical marginal or moderate results range between 50 and 59 lettered B. With Enon (1998) interpretation key, it seemed that those dissertations ranging between 40 and 49 falls under such interpretation key, unlike the two studied universities of OUT and UDSM score grades keys, placing such score grades lettered C as low pass (Figure 4.1; Tables 4.1a; 4.1b; 6.8; Appendices XI; XII).

It also became apparent that unlike the studied candidates, the EEs and supervisors experienced the 'paradigm shift' because of ceasing to rely on dominant pure positivists' worldview instead they opted the post positivist groups' perspective of either constructivism or interpretivism perspectives in Table 6.7. The researcher argues that the analysis revealed that the greatest majority 5(83.33%) out of 6 studied EEs and supervisors 10(71.42%) out of 14 experienced the paradigm shift unlike candidates. In other words, the relative majority 37(54.41%) out of 68 studied candidates strongly affirmed that in their writing of dissertations, they clung on traditional dominant positivists' worldview perspective supported by neither none 0(0%) out of 6 studied EEs, nor by their greater majority of the studied supervisors (Table 6.7).

Such association emerged when the researcher compared total dissertations row versus candidates' articulated knowledge conceptions columns strength of +.458 ≈ + .46 with positive direction without repeating as revealed in Table 6.8. The researcher argues further that such researchers' response results reflected the actual candidates' dissertations practically, where the analysis of such dissertations revealed moderate or marginal score grades ranging between 50 and 59, with letter quality grade of B (flat) as per (Figure 4.1, Table 4.1a; 4.1b; Appendix X).

Similarly, these results suggested the probability that sometimes, the relative majority of candidates attempt to abandon their implicit held positivism worldview perspective of choice, by opting constructivism supported by majority EEs, while diverging their majority supervisors' interpretivism perspective (Table 6.8). By so doing, there was/is likeliness that the majority of the dissertations would achieve moderate scores leading to increase of the marginal B (flat) grades among studied majority candidates (Table 6.8). Suffice to say that the divergent trend found among the studied researchers held implicit world view perspective conceptions too, appeared to be one of the potential contributory factors for the increase of marginal quality score grades in particular among the studied candidates' dissertations at OUT.

The divergent perspective echoes some literature and study findings revealing that the external examiners awards are normally contrary to higher expectations of candidates and their supervisors (Denicolo, 2003). The author contends that there is a greater possibility of variation between what supervisors and students expect with what external examiners tend to award (Denicolo, 2003). This finding too, tallies with the

study of Lee (2008), who studied how the doctoral supervisors supervise students. The researcher found three worldview perspectives about supervision. One, are those research projects, where students are nurtured to become experts of intellectual field.

The second worldview perspective about supervision is where students are encouraged to become critical thinkers, freely allowed to critique. The third worldview perspective about supervision is where students are nurtured to grow with emancipation worldview conception. Lee recommends to the supervisors to pay attention to variations of both unnoticed worldviews accompanied with positive and negative conception features between supervisors and their supervisees (Lee, 2008:267). Therefore, this finding seemed to imply that unless the candidates realise unnoticed implicit supervisors' and EEs' worldview perspectives, they would often be disadvantaged in the entire process of evaluating the dissertations. Next, find the third emerged coefficients signifying the slight association.

6.5.3 Third emerged group of coefficients with hypothetical slight association

The third category of comparison was where the researcher compared certain inputs of rows and columns yielding varying repeated diverging coefficient values. These suggested varying strength and mixed positive and negative directions, implying divergent weak coefficient strength of association, with mixed positive and negative directions of value 0.240 (Table, 6.8). The third category of outputs from Table 6.8 was that of correlation coefficients results of $r = .240 \approx +.24$ with positive direction in Table 6.8 suggesting existence of slight association with several repeating values

ranging between .2 and 39. Such association emerged, when the researcher compared cells with total interpretivism perspective responses row versus dissertation performance column with strength appearing repeatedly. The third category of several coefficients suggesting slight association strength but with mixed positive and negative direction implied yet another proposition hypothesising that;

The more researchers are not in consensus diverging from each other on the implicit held paradigm as worldview perspectives, the more likeliness of candidates created authoritative knowledge in dissertations are likely to achieve strength of slight scores either accelerating low, lower, or lowest final quality score grades from external examiners, in positive or negative directions.

In other words, the more the studied researchers: candidates, supervisors, and EEs were not in consensus, diverging from each other in their unnoticed held research paradigm as worldview perspectives, the more likely the candidates' dissertations achieved category of slight (low, lower, or lowest) marginal scores from the EEs increasingly in a positive direction. By so doing, such trend accelerated an increase of the marginal score categories of low, lower, and lowest strength with low GPAs and grades C, D, and E in a positive direction.

The researcher argues implying that the more the studied researchers namely: candidates, supervisors, and EEs were/ not in consensus, diverging from each other on their implicit held worldview perspectives, the more the candidates' dissertations were/are likely to achieve slight (low), lower, or lowest or marginal score grades

lettered C,D, and E increasingly, positively or negatively. According to Enon (1998), +.240 finding of this study reflected Pearson's coefficient correlations with value of slight, which in this study referred to groups of low, lower, and lowest scores as well as grades as reflected in Figures 4.1; 6.3 and Tables 4.2a-d; 6.8; 6.9. Next, find the fourth emerged coefficients with null hypotheses. Next, find the emerged group of assumptions signifying absence of relationship.

In reference with two studied universities interpretation score assessment keys in Figure 4.1 ; Table 4.2a, the SPSS outputs in Tables 6.8; 6.9; 6.10 reflect practical phenomenon with actual dissertations awarded marginal category of low and lower score grades ranging between 49 and 40 lettered C. These coefficients also reflected dissertations score grades between 30 and 39 lettered D (Figure 4.1; Tables 4.1a; 41b; Appendices XI; XII). One should recall too, that the previous analysis in Table 6.7 revealed how the greater majority of studied supervisors responded strongly agreeing that indeed interpretivists' criteria for quality dissertations often dominate their supervision of studied candidates in attempt to write quality dissertations.

Similarly, in same previous analysis few candidates and EEs responded in support of interpretivism perspectives against their supervisors. From this finding another plausible alternative hypothesis resulted that; supervisors (Table 6.7). To the researcher, this finding as well implied divergence in perspectives among candidates, their supervisors and external examiners. The finding of slight association in this study implied that some studied supervisors might be conformists to emphasise their sole unnoticed held implicit interpretivism worldview perspective conceptions. By so

doing, candidates and EEs too seemed to disregard their unnoticed implicit diverging worldview perspective conceptions, in this case positivism and constructivism diverging from interpretivism (Table 6.8).

If divergence rather than convergence scenario occurs, the findings in the analysis suggested that the divergence of the worldview perspectives among the studied researchers was among potential contributory factor for increase of dissertations slight quality score grade passes.

6.5.4 Fourth group suggested by chance or null hypothetical association

Finally, the fourth sub category from constant comparison was that in which the researcher compared some inputs in rows and columns, which yielded yet another varying repeating diverging coefficient values. The keen analysis of Table 6.8and6.9; 6.10 reveals that category four emerged with several inter correlated outputs coefficients, suggesting probable negligible, by chance or null association with several values summarised in another Table for more clarity. From Table 4.10, one is able to observe how the constant comparison yielded several informative insights, that generated 13 unsound probable propositions leading to the fourth category of hypothetical proposition, revealing that there exists negligible or by chance (null) association (Tables 6.8; 6.9).

Group four of the generated coefficient correlations revealed the probable existing negligible or by chance coefficients association with several values: .144, .188, .044, 038, .191, .107, -.115, -.180; .035, .044, -.064, -.072, -.023, -.026, .098 (Table 6.10).

The researcher argues that, such probable association output occurred, in Tables 4.2a-d; 6.8; 6.9; 6.10, when the researcher compared some inputs rows and columns.
For instance, probable association coefficient with value of .191 occurred, when the researcher compared row with researchers' knowledge of criteria for research quality versus column with constructivism perspective conception, while that of .115 occurred when the researcher compared row with authoritative perspective conception versus column with constructivism worldview perspective conception.

Much more, that association with value of .118 occurred when the researcher compared row with authoritative source of knowledge conceptions versus interpretivism column with interpretivism perspective conception (Table 6.8; 6.9; 6.10). Besides that, coefficient value -.180 occurred when the researcher compared row with knowledge versus column with interpretivism. Not only those but also, coefficient with value of.107 occurred when the researcher compared row with knowledge versus column with positivism worldview perspective. That coefficient value of .035 occurred when the researcher compared row with authoritative source of knowledge conceptions versus column with positivism worldview perspective.

Not only that but also, coefficient value of .044 occurred, when the researcher compared the row with interpretivism versus column with constructivism perspective conception. Nevertheless, coefficient value .072 occurred when the researcher compared the row with candidates' dissertations score grade passes versus column with constructivism perspective conception. Moreover, coefficient value .064 occurred when the researcher compared the row with interpretivism versus column

with positivism perspective. The coefficient value of .023 occurred, when the researcher compared the row with candidates' dissertations passes versus column with researchers' knowledge, about criteria for quality educational research.

The coefficient value of .026 occurred, when the researcher compared the row with authoritative knowledge versus column with researchers' knowledge about quality criteria of criteria for quality educational research. Last but not less important, coefficient value of -.026 occurred when the researcher compared the row with candidates' dissertations score grade passes versus column with positivism worldview perspective (Table 6.8; 6.9; 6.10). What all these coefficients implied was that not all compared generated rows and columns had sound or plausible
association. The resulted propositions hypothesised that;

The more researchers were/are not in consensus diverging from each other about their unnoticed held explicit worldview and its underpinned philosophical conceptions, the more the studied candidates' dissertations were likely to achieve slight marginal low, lower, or lowest final score grades quality from the external examiners resulting into probable negligible or by chance association with positive direction.

The negligible finding reflects the studied universities of OUT and UDSM assessment standardised keys in Figure 4.1; Table 4.1a) as they were encountered in the primary field documentary labelled (EEAFs 2006-2017). In those keys, the dissertations awarded with low score grade quality lettered C, ranged between 49-40 marks; while

D ranged between 39 and 31 marks, and E (lowest) ranged between 300 (Figure 4.1; Tables 4.1a; 4.1b). This finding implied that in case it happened that each group of studied respondents' worldview perspective diverged from each other by conforming on their held worldview perspectives of either, then the possibility of dissertations with negligible, by chance or null association results from the EEs was likely.

These coefficients values in this chapter of this study implied, that when some worldview perspective properties are compared to each respondents' responses from the questionnaire statements, they yielded output values with positive and negative direction implying various probabilities of either the negligible, by chance, or null hypothetical relationship propositions. Such values suggested several unsound assumptions signalling null hypotheses that might be summed up as follows: either there exists some probable association but which implies: negligible, by chance, or sometimes no (null) association at all among compared inputs in some cells and the increase or decrease of the dissertations quality performance among the studied researchers.

Accordingly, 13 generated incredible hypothetical propositions, suggesting the probable association of the either negligible or null hypotheses, which the researcher reduced into three plausible hypotheses. Basically, Pearson's coefficient correlation values, which range between 0 and .19 imply negligible, by chance, or null assumptions (Figure 4.1; Tables 4.2a-d; 6.8; 6.9; 6.10) and Enon (1998:73). Next, find chapter seven about the summary of findings of the entire study.

CHAPTER SEVEN

7.0 SUMMARY OF FINDINGS AND RECOMENDATIONS

7.1 Introduction

This chapter covers the synthesis of the entire study. The chapter summarises the main findings of the study as per the set objectives of this study. Based on the findings and discussion of the findings, the chapter concludes the study and offers some recommendations to relevant parties.

7.2 Summary of the Findings

This is a Grounded Theory (GT) study thesis both in method and product. It was about the manner how "Researchers' Clarity of Research Paradigm Conceptions Influences Dissertations Quality Performance in two studied universities of Tanzania. Its aim was to explore researchers' perspectives capable of generating the underlying Grounded Theory (GT) and fresh hypotheses about the title performance in two studied universities. The researcher expected to come up with interventional way forward proposals of improving the observed situation. In order to achieve the identified purpose, the following specific objectives guided the study. The four objectives guided study with eight sub research questions.

Triangulated multivariate methods including: primary documents, interviews, live observation, and Likert's scaled questionnaire tool collected data. Content analysis, memoing, and coding of categories analysed data in phases one and two, while the SPSS by Exploratory Factors Analysis (EFA) methods analysed statistical data in phase three. Inductively, the initial analysis of a single external examiners' assessment

field documented form suggested to the researcher to analyse the rest 68. ✓ Objective one (1) examined if the studied universities context teaches “world view” conceptions to Masters Candidates in the course of educational research for dissertations. Its first sub research question 1(i) inquired, what on-going core pressing issue, categories of conceptions, processes, and main respondents were found relating to the ‘world view’ conceptions because of teaching educational research course for dissertations to Masters Degree candidates in studied universities environment?

The analysis of four initial exploratory questions findings revealed the core on-going pressing issue as lack of consensus of what constitutes explicit research paradigm and what particular implicit philosophical underpinnings content is not taught uniformly, as foundations of educational research for dissertations course in two studied universities. The initial analysis of the field documents revealed further that as the universities teach the educational research for dissertations course, they are surrounded not only by core explicit research paradigm as worldview construct, but also by its implicit underpinned philosophical conceptions.

Besides that, the initial analysis revealed that the researcher studied three categories of researchers namely: students of research both prospective candidates and graduates (STUDs), second group was of supervisors (SUPs), and the third group was that of the external examiners (EEs). The initial analysis of the field data for phase one revealed furthermore, that the core on-going processes in the studied context of two universities include planning, actual teaching, learning of educational research for dissertations course. Others included policy provisions, dissertations oral defending, and summative

evaluation of dissertations as well as quality assurance of created knowledge. Generally, the initial analysis suggested the inference that resulted into unrefined unique substantive theory trend, revealing closer association between analysed scores of candidates' clarification of the research paradigm and design subtheme 6.3 (i), and compared scores of the entire dissertations.

Finally, the content analysis of assessment tool revealed that the more candidates clarified the sub theme of research paradigm along the research design, the more their dissertations achieved the either excellent scores lettered A, or very good scores lettered B+. The same analysis also revealed the opposite for those candidates who failed to clarify the sub theme of research paradigm along design, their dissertations either achieved the marginal high scores lettered B (Flat), marginal low scores lettered C, marginal lower lettered D, or the marginal lowest scores lettered E.

- ✓ Objective one, second sub research question 1(ii) inquired, to what extent were: university teaching/learning course outlines, policy process provisional statements of: vision, mission, , study resources, and assessment tools contents, found covering wider scope of research "world view" construct conceptions, in studied environment?

The analysis of field documents revealed that both universities are in consensus that paradigm and its philosophical conceptions namely: ontology, epistemology, methodology, and interpretivism (POEMI) are basic to educational research for dissertations course. May be it is for this reason that they appear in their course

outlines. However, the studied universities differ on levels of including those conceptions. While, OUT includes explicit paradigm at the summative level, it includes philosophy, and methodology at course outline level. Unlike OUT, the UDSM does not mention the explicit research paradigm at any levels in educational research course process but it includes ontology, epistemology, methodology, and interpretivism conceptions at course outline level.

Core processes of teaching, learning, supervising, oral defending of dissertations in both universities, are rarely emphasising the explicit research paradigm. Analyses revealed that both universities commit reductionism fallacy by emphasising only few conceptions of POEMI in course outlines, but neglect to include ethical values, logic, and rhetoric language (ALOR) conceptions, despite candidates' dissertations to reveal to be the case. The further analysis findings revealed that the combination of two abbreviations of POEMI found in two universities tallied with expert writers' abbreviations of OEM, POEM, except ALOR. Together the abbreviations suggested that the holistic paradigm is made of (POEMALOR).

Much more, the analysis revealed that while the supervisors and candidates may neglect the explicit research paradigm subtheme, the EEs continue to examine it rigorously, though not uniformly. The interviews analysis too revealed that there is a lack of adequate attention to unnoticed wide scope of the explicit research paradigm accompanied with implicit underpinned philosophical conceptions, the theme which is not assessed uniformly by the studied external examiners in particular at OUT.

Further analysis revealed that the two universities are not in consensus of including the explicit research paradigm.

The findings suggested that failure to agree on the scope of what constitutes the holistic research paradigm renders external examiners to assess the sub theme 6.3 (i) on clear explanation of research paradigm as they wish, this emerged as one of the factors accelerating the marginal low final scores for studied dissertations.

- ✓ Objective one third sub research question 1(iii) inquired, in what ways were studied candidates, their supervisors, as well as external examiners practically observed emphasising, clarifying, and making their own sense of research "world view" definition, scope, semantic relationship, as well as coherence.

Finally, the analysis suggested that the practicality of the emerged core processes of summative examination in particular at OUT, unlike the UDSM include and emphasise to candidates to clarify the explicit research paradigm as worldview construct. However, the same lacks in the process of planning for teaching in the course outline of OUT.

In particular, the OUT process of writing study materials of educational research for dissertations neither articulates the research paradigm construct nor its detailed philosophical conceptions across the existing study research guide for post graduates. However, the analysed dissertations of 68 candidates revealed they use several philosophical conceptions, which are not prior in their course outlines. The case is ethical values, logical frame works, and rhetorical language rigor of positivism and

post positivism major paradigm (ALOR). Researchers' live observation method done eight times among 29 candidates, who did an oral defense for their dissertations, revealed too that there is lack of emphasis of explicit research paradigm during the process of defending dissertations.

The negligence of the subtheme reigns despite the assessment tool sub theme 6.3 (i) to oblige candidates to explain clearly the research paradigm. Consequently, while candidates and their supervisors neglect to pay attention to clarify the research paradigm sub theme 6.3 (i), the external examiners assess it rigorously. The analysis revealed that neither candidates who were defending nor the panelists, who were assuring quality of dissertations internally, ever mentioned leave away explaining the sub theme on research paradigm. The oral defense panelist's observations and 68 candidates' analysed dissertations, revealed that the focus of the panellists and candidates alike focus mainly on asking and answering questions about sub topics of the research methodology chapter namely: on research approach, design, sample, and research methods.

However, the observation revealed that the studied candidates and panellists alike, escaped its first subtheme obliging the candidates to begin the sub section by clearly explaining the research paradigm in all eight times of live observations.

- ✓ Objective one, fourth sub research question 1(iv) inquired what extra probable factors emerged as accelerators of altering dissertations to marginal final score grades apart from research paradigm factor in the studied universities

environment. The analysis of field's documentary assessment tool revealed that the external examiners' inconsistencies of rounding marks and using unofficial and unrevised assessment tools contrary to common practice emerged as extra factor accelerating the increase of dissertations final marginal low scores.

- ✓ Objective two (2) examined the manner, in which candidates as well as their supervisor's prior communication of assessment criteria used by the external examiners has been a contributory factor for increase of dissertations low completion and marginal final pass rates. Its fifth sub research question 2(va) inquired to what extent has prior communication of assessment criteria used by the external examiners to assess studied dissertations worthiness, been uniformly served to the studied researchers in relation to an increase of low dissertations completion and marginal final pass rates?

The analysis of the studied researchers' questionnaire responses about whether the assessment criteria for performance like 'clarity' were uniformly communicated to the studied researchers or not, revealed first that the assessment tool used to assess the candidates dissertations in Figure 4.1, had seven criteria used by the external examiners, to assess the dissertations of OUT. The emerged assessment criteria were seven namely as clarity, appropriateness, wellness, systematic, validity, reliability, and cleanliness of the candidates' dissertation. Figure 4.2 revealed further that 'clarity' criterion dominates the assessment tool by 52% , repeating eight times in the studied dissertations at OUT.

Secondly, the analysis of the studied researchers' questionnaire responses through the SPSS revealed that central tendency measures showing that the levels of knowledge for assessment criteria in the studied dissertations differed slightly as per Figure 6.1. While the external examiners were the most informed, the supervisors were more informed, when compared to candidates who were least informed of all studied researchers on the same assessment criteria.

- ✓ Objective two, sixth sub research question 2(vb) inquired, what difference did prior communication of assessment criteria make in increasing the dissertation marginal quality performance among the M.A candidates of the studied faculty at OUT?

The SPSS analysis for measures of central tendencies and standard deviations revealed insignificant p-value and deviations, implying that that the prior uniform communication of assessment criteria to either researcher does not have any significant contribution to the increase of or decrease for dissertation final scores.

- ✓ Objective three (3) assessed the degree at which the studied candidates, supervisors, and external examiners, were observed referring to their implicit, held conceptions of the research paradigm construct as world view, in emerged processes of writing, supervising, and assuring quality dissertations. Its seventh sub research question 3 (vi) inquired, to what degree were candidates', supervisors', and external examiners' varying perceptions of held research

'worldview' construct implicit conceptions found to influence processes of writing, supervising, and assuring quality dissertations?

Further analysis of the questionnaire responses revealed that explicit worldview of positivism, and implicit philosophical conceptions of constructivism and interpretivism emerged as dominant among the studied researchers. Findings revealed further that the studied candidates, supervisors, and EEs were not aware that their unnoticed held explicit and implicit worldview conceptions, dictate their processes of writing, supervising, and assessing quality dissertations. Nevertheless, the analysis of the studied researchers' agreement and disagreement responses in Likert's scale about the kinds of worldview perspectives held by studied researchers, revealed the case to be so.

- ✓ Objective four (4) assessed the relationship between candidates' articulation of research "world view" conceptions from authoritative source of knowledge and variation of dissertations quality final grades. Its eighth sub research question 4 (vii) inquired, what category of correlation strength and direction exists between candidates' articulation of authoritative source of knowledge conceptions and dissertations final score grades alteration?

The emerged final products of this study were fresh hypotheses and refined GT. There emerged several Pearson's coefficient correlations with varying values of strengths and directions as seen in Tables 6.8; 6.9; 6.10. These coefficients were categorised into four groups capable of generating 36 potential hypothetical

propositions, which the researcher reduced into four potential propositions, about varying association of strengths and directions as follows: The first category of generated hypotheses was that of probable perfect relationship with coefficient value of +1 in a diagonal line. This coefficient value implied that there exists probable strong perfect relationship, when one compares some rows and columns to themselves.

To statisticians this category of comparison might sound irrelevant, hence to ignore the diagonal results, but not in this GT study. The rationale of considering such probable relationship was because the value of +1 result, were compared to three different groups of studied researchers and categories of dissertations grades rather than to themselves. Consequently, the coefficient values ranging between +1 and 0.60 related to dissertations with score grades lettered A and B+ as per two universities assessment standards. These findings from the first probable group of plausible assumption proposition resulted into hypothesis stating that;

The more the studied researchers converged in consensus on their unnoticed explicit held worldview with its underpinned philosophical conceptions in found in candidates' dissertations with similar paradigm perspectives, the more those dissertations are/were likely to achieve excellent final score grades lettered A or B+ from the external examiners (EEs), in a positive direction.

The second category of hypotheses was that of probable moderate relationship. Group two of emerged coefficient correlations was the one that revealed the existing moderate relationship of values between +.567 and +.458 with positive direction. The coefficient value of +.57 occurred, when a cell with positivism perspective was compared to a cell

with constructivism (EEs). This finding implied divergence, the opposite of convergence in paradigm perspectives among the studied candidates and EEs, in the ongoing processes of writing and assessing the quality of dissertations. This finding suggested the probable plausible alternative hypothesising that;

The more the dissertations were written adhering to studied candidates' held positivism worldview perspective, in which none of the studied external examiners (EEs) supported, likewise greater majority of supervisors not in consensus with it, diverging from constructivism conception supported by the majority EEs; the more those dissertations, were likely to achieve marginal (moderate) strength with low score grades increasingly in a positive direction.

Or

The more candidates were not consistent in articulating worldview authoritative source conceptions in terms of consistent references and bibliographies in their dissertations, the more their dissertations were likely to achieve the average marginal high strength of (B) score grades from the external examiners, moreover in a positive direction.

The third category of emerged hypothesis was that of probable slight relationship. The third emerged group of the emerged correlation coefficients revealed the existing slight relationship, with value of +.240≈ 24 in a positive direction. This finding implied that in case it occurred that each studied group of researchers was diverging from each other's worldview perspective because of clinging on the held paradigm perspective of either, then the possibility of the dissertations results was likely to achieve slight verdict

with C (low) score grades from the EEs. The finding on this group of the coefficient correlations suggested the third plausible alternative proposition hypothesising that;

The more researchers are not in consensus, diverging from each other on the unnoticed held explicit paradigm with its implicit underpinned philosophical conceptions, the more the candidates' dissertations are//were likely to achieve slight low, lower and score grades leading to either low (C), lower (D), or lowest (E) dissertations quality performance.

The fourth category of hypothesis was that which signalled the null hypothetical relationship. The group four of the generated coefficient correlations, revealed the existing negligible or by chance coefficients relationship with several values of: 0.044, 0.191, 0.107, 0.188, -0.115, -0.144, -0.180, 0.035, 0.038, 0.044, - 0.064, 0.072, -0.023, -0.026, 0.098 in (Table 6.10). Such values suggested several unsound assumptions signalling null hypotheses summed up as refined

Grounded Theory (GT). Conclusively, the emerged refined Grounded Theory (GT) from this study. From the initial unrefined substantive theory, there emerged general refined Grounded Theory (GT) propounding that;

Though neglected, the more the candidates clarify explicit research paradigm as worldview subtheme underpinned with less noticed implicit philosophical conceptions namely: Philosophy, Ontology, Epistemology, Methodology, Axiology, Logic, and Rhetoric (POEMALOR), in consensus with their supervisors converging with EEs' perspectives, the more the candidates dissertations are/were likely to achieve excellent and very good scores lettered A or B+ increasingly in a positive direction.

Conversely, the opposite is/was true. That is if the candidates fail to clarify the explicit subtheme of paradigm, while their held perspective in this case positivism, diverges with greater majority of supervisors, and greatest majority of EEs, their dissertations are likely to achieve marginal high lettered B (Flat), marginal low lettered C, marginal lower lettered D, and marginal lowest lettered E, increasingly in positive direction.

7.3 Recommendations for Immediate Action

Since this study revealed that some of the studied universities like OUT is a symbol of paradigm shift from conversional to non-formal mode, and since the paradigm construct links to universities policy strategic objectives about quality assurance for internal and external construction of knowledge through research, and since the directorates of research in the studied universities are empowered to design tools of assessment of research for dissertations, it is recommended that the explicit research paradigm construct conceptions be regarded by faculties and schools of education as

an imperative not optional, hence this will be a solution for filling a missing link in the post graduate social sciences research course.

Since the findings revealed that paradigm is missing in course outlines, teaching, learning, writing and supervising except in assessing processes, whereby the EEs continue to assess the content of EEAFs including theme 6.3.1 containing paradigm rigorously, it is recommended that the studied universities should include it in the candidates' course outlines, study learning resources, OUT research course study materials, compendiums, and text books. Furthermore, since this study findings revealed that studied candidates, supervisors, are aware with the construct paradigm in research process, but not conversant with its standard definition, wider scope, its semantic relationship, and how it should coherently be articulated prior to inform a researcher and dissertations or theses. It is recommended that orientation seminars/ through regional face to face centres for educational research, be conducted to clarify its scope in unison to have consensus on paradigm underpinnings perspectives.

Since this study findings, revealed that constructivism, interpretivism, and positivism are dominant among the studied researchers knowingly or unknowingly, it is recommended that the DRPS include paradigm holistic scope (POEMALOR) framework not only as a central criterion for assessing social research created knowledge, but also as a criterion to understand EEs' unknown paradigm perspectives before receiving candidates' dissertations that might not fall in their perspectives and fields of supervisors and if possible let the EEs' declare their held paradigm perspectives to tally with candidates' held perspectives in dissertations.

Since one of the findings revealed that clarity criteria has high frequency compared to other four criteria in the assessment form, and since clarity of paradigm theme emerged ranking as the third in having difficult level, hence as one of the contributory factors for the studied underperformance scenarios, it is recommended that five marks for paradigm be a bonus till, when the content will be included in teaching, learning processes in terms of candidates' course outlines and study resources. Since this study findings revealed that one of the factors for increase of underperformance partly are responsible with candidates, supervisors as well as EEs, who were identified with inconsistencies of rounding marks (Tables 4.5; 4.6, Appendix XIV) instead of specifying marks as required, and since some examiners' reports revealed that some were using varying assessment tools with deferring calibration (Appendix XIV; Tables 4.5, 4.6). Therefore, it is recommended to emphasise to the EEs to use official revised assessment tools versions, in line with OUT guidelines (EEAFs, 2004-2016).

Since the format of studied external examiners' assessment format was found to follow deductive model that forces every candidate to follow positivistic format top down model of conducting research, it is recommended to let candidate researchers to attempt Grounded Theory GT, which begin inductively and end up deductively to enable inexperienced researchers to generate fresh hypotheses and grounded theories for other researchers to falsify instead of the traditional practise of falsifying or confirming the existing ones.

Since some candidates respondents pointed out the lack of emphasis on the philosophical conceptions in teaching of the research for dissertations course as a

potential factor among other factors, the intervention is recommended to design the degree programmes at levels of BA and M.A, to produce experts grounded in philosophy of research capable of grounding others on the same. Likewise, since the findings revealed further that shared knowledge and consensus in held paradigm emerged with strong perfect relationship with dissertations quality performance capable of leading to perfect or excellent results in a positive direction lacks; it is recommended that each paradigm with wider scope of (POEMALOR) be thoroughly taught to candidates by blending modes of conventional face to face, open and distance, modes of learning the social (educational) research during face to face separately not generally as it is currently.

Since POEMALOR emerged as a conceptual model in the emerged GT, it is recommended that the DRPS or FED revise the EEs' assessment tool and let it guide thorough teaching, learning, assessing process of the entire dissertation in particular the methodology sub themes.

7.4 Study Implications on Reductionist Paradigm Models at Large

The findings of this study have wide implications to the studied researchers, educational research practitioners in of social (educational) research at higher learning institutions whether using conversional or ODeL modes of learning. Likewise, it has implications to policy developers of research national wide, faculties of education and social science research, post graduate directorates and bureaus in universities be public or private at large. It advocates the paradigm in the ways of the emerged teaching, learning, writing, supervising, defending, and assessing research for dissertations

processes by beginning with clarifying the explicit research paradigm with its implicit underpinned philosophical conceptions, in a holistic using emerged POE**M**ALOR model.

This should be done before one proceeds to conduct the research practically. The emerged models of OEM Guba and Lincoln (2005); POEM Creswell (1994; 2012); OEMI of UDSM (2017); PM of OUT (2014) in this study, are not holistic but reductionist models in clarifying holist research paradigms. The study finding for this study cautions lecturers of research to be ware with and avoid the reductionism fallacy of only emphasising one component of methodology (M) in teaching the course of research for higher learning institutions as if alone makes up the holistic research paradigm. Thus, the implications of these study findings are as follows.

Findings from objective one on context call for the FED to include the explicit construct of paradigm philosophical underpinnings in the course outlines of M.A degree programmes, with rationale that it is continuously being examined by the EEs, instead of removing it from the assessment tool. It calls for the need for the faculties of social (educational) postgraduate directorates and bureaus to begin grounding the candidates in the philosophical foundations of social (educational) research during face to face. The rationale is as this study finding revealed that the philosophical underpinned conceptions are inseparable from the entire emerged core universities processes of teaching, learning, writing, supervising, defending, and assessing the quality research for dissertations course in the studied universities.

It calls for the need for faculties of social (education) for the postgraduates' directorates and bureaus, to think of intervention by establishing the degrees programme on philosophical foundations preferably to start right from the undergraduate level and latter at M.A and PhD, levels with rationales. First rationale, this study finding of refined GT has revealed that there is closer relationship between candidate's clarity in explain the explicit paradigm sub theme and increase in excellent scores, short of that the opposite is true (Figure 4.1). The second rationale is to prepare informed experts in philosophical foundations of educational research capable of inducing others on how to inform dissertations with philosophical foundations.

The third rationale is that, the research paradigm has the widest holistic scope covering broad fields of: philosophy, ontology, epistemology, methodology, axiology, logic, and rhetoric language of social (educational) research (POEMALOR). The fourth rationale is that the existing degree course on the research emphasizes only one property of methodology for holistic research paradigm, by so doing, researchers perpetuate the reductionism fallacy of viewing research as a single property of methodological (approaches) as pointed earlier, while neglecting the rest implicit properties of paradigm in the model of POEMALOR.

Consequently, the reductionism fallacy leads educators to think educational research only belongs to the department of psychology as the current practice in many universities that alone teaches a single property of paradigm on methodology. This study finding advocates the paradigm shift in teaching, learning, supervising, defending, and assessing dissertations to make paradigm implicit conceptions explicit,

particularly in the research books to inexperienced researchers in the universities. Place the clarification of wider scope of paradigm in the educational foundations department to fill the gap made by psychology department of not clarifying philosophical underpinnings to inexperienced researchers.

This study findings, suggested further that failure of grounding inexperienced researchers in the holistic philosophical foundations translates into candidates, who are incapable of becoming independent competent critical researchers. As a result, the cut and pasting in writing dissertations cannot be dealt with, devoid philosophical foundations of research. Consequently, there is a need to establish the research foundations degree programme to cover the neglected philosophical conceptions of paradigm using the emerged wider scope framework of POEMALOR in this study,

- ✓ Objective two findings dealt with researchers' knowledge of criteria for dissertations performance more known to the external examiners, but less known to the studied candidates and their supervisors. This finding calls for the need for the faculties of education/schools to make assessment criteria for performance to be uniformly transparent to the studied supervisors and candidates, by infusing them in the course outlines unlike the current practice, when they only known to the EEs. Nevertheless, this study finding too, revealed that they have negligible effect on the dissertations quality performance.

Likewise, since the criterion of clarity dominated 51% in the studied assessment tool, there is need of making it explicit, since it is hallmark of all sciences. Make explicit

what do examiners and university expect from candidates by “clarity.” The rationale is because the clarity construct as well has wider scope having four properties of: definition, scope, semantic relationship, and coherence. Does the DRPS expect candidates to clearly explain paradigm research paradigm along clarity properties or paradigm properties or both?

- ✓ Objective three findings advocates the studied researchers to be aware of their held implicit perspectives, in the processes surrounding the research for dissertations course during writing, supervising, and assessing dissertations quality, whether they are aware of them or not. The rationale is that this study revealed that there are dominant held perspectives dictating the studied researchers in the said ongoing processes. This finding calls for to ensure the EEs’ held research paradigm perspectives are known before sending them candidates’ dissertations for assessment. It also calls for faculties to know supervisors’ held paradigm perspectives before allocating supervisors to candidates. Above all, it calls candidates to be aware of their held perspectives before choice of the supervisor.

Finally, objective four findings implied that there are some relationships between epistemological components in particular sources of knowledge like authoritative. The findings of this study call for the need of social sciences such as educational research practitioners to pay attention on epistemological components too. The rationale is because this study revealed that the more the candidates and supervisors are convergent with a certain held paradigm perspective held by EEs’ and their

supervisors, the more likely the candidates' dissertations, were awarded the excellent scores in a positive direction.

Likewise, this study findings revealed further that the more candidates' paradigm held perspectives diverge from the EEs' and supervisors' paradigm held perspectives, the more the candidates' dissertation were awarded marginal and low scores increasingly in a positive direction.

Recommendations for further inquiry follow (Table, 6.7; 6.8, 6.9; Figure 6.3).

7.5 Recommendations for Further Research

This study followed constructivists' GT abductive logic that began inductively and ended deductively, let same study be conducted using pure deductive logic. Some hypotheses were generated in this study, let the educational researchers conduct further studies related to the GT on the role of research explicit paradigm and its conception in relation to its influence on dissertations and theses performance in other universities. The researcher conducted this study in two universities context of OUT and the UDSM mainly at the faculty and school of education among the Master's degree programme research, by course work either through distance or conversion modes of learning.

Let the comparative study be conducted in other conventional public and private universities with similar contexts in Tanzania at large, East Africa, and elsewhere globally, using the constructivists' GT.

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APPENDIX IA: RESEARCH CLEARANCES

THE OPEN UNIVERSITY OF TANZANIA

DIRECTORATE OF RESEARCH, PUBLICATIONS, AND POSTGRADUATE STUDIES

P.O. Box 23409 Fax: 255-22-2668759Dar es Salaam, Tanzania,
http://www.out.ac.tz

Tel: 255-22-2666752/2668445 ext.2101
Fax: 255-22-2668759,
E-mail: drpc@out.ac.tz

21/06/2012

TO WHOM IT MAY CONCERN

RE: RESEARCH CLEARANCE

The Open University of Tanzania was established by an act of Parliament no. 17 of 1992. The act became operational on the 1st March 1993 by public notes No. 55 in the official Gazette. Act number 7 of 1992 has now been replaced by the Open University of Tanzania charter which is in line the university act of 2005. The charter became operational on 1st January 2007. One of the mission objectives of the university is to generate and apply knowledge through research. For this reason the staffs and students undertake research activities from time to time.

To facilitate the research function, the vice chancellor of the Open University of Tanzania was empowered to issue research clearance to both staffs and students of the university on behalf of the government of Tanzania and the Tanzania Commission of Science and Technology.

The purpose of this letter is to introduce to you **Mr Kairembo Romwald J.** is a PhD student at the Open University of Tanzania with **Reg. No. HD/E/221/T.09**. By this letter Mr Kairembo Romwald J has been granted clearance to conduct research in the country. The title of his research is **"Research Dilemma Perceptions on Relevance for Philosophical Underpinnings Underplaying Inquiry Process towards Developing Quality Educational Dissertations in Tanzania at Three Selected Universities.** The research will be conducted in Tanzania Main land.

The period which this permission has been granted is from 01/07/2012 to 30/10/2012.

In case you need any further information, please contact:
The Deputy Vice Chancellor (Academic)
The Open University of Tanzania
P.O. Box 23409
Dar es Salaam
Tel: 022-2-2668820

We thank you in advance for your cooperation and facilitation of this research activity.
Yours sincerely,

Prof S. Mbogo

For: VICE CHANCELLOR

THE OPEN UNIVERSITY OF TANZANIA

APPENDIX IB: THE OPEN UNIVERSITY CLEARANCE

THE OPEN UNIVERSITY OF TANZANIA

DIRECTORATE OF RESEARCH, PUBLICATIONS, AND POSTGRADUATE STUDIES

P.O. Box 23409 Fax: 255-22-2668759Dar es Salaam, Tanzania,
http://www.out.ac.tz

Tel: 255-22-2666752/2668445 ext.2101
Fax: 255-22-2668759,
E-mail: drpc@out.ac.tz

DIRECTOR OF RESEARCH
RECEIVED
27 AUG 2014
UNIVERSITY OF DAR ES SALAAM

26/08/2014

Municipal Director,
P.O. Box 23409,
Kinondoni,
Dar es Salaam.

RE: RESEARCH CLEARANCE

The Open University of Tanzania was established by an act of Parliament no. 17 of 1992. The act became operational on the 1st March 1993 by public notes No. 55 in the official Gazette. Act number 7 of 1992 has now been replaced by the Open University of Tanzania charter which is in line the university act of 2005. The charter became operational on 1st January 2007. One of the mission objectives of the university is to generate and apply knowledge through research. For this reason staff and students undertake research activities from time to time.

To facilitate the research function, the vice chancellor of the Open University of Tanzania was empowered to issue a research clearance to both staff and students of the university on behalf of the government of Tanzania and the Tanzania Commission of Science and Technology.

The purpose of this letter is to introduce to you **Mr. Romwald Joseph Kairembo HD.**/E/223/T. 09, who is a Ph.D. student at the Open University of Tanzania. By this letter, **Mr.** Kairembo R.J. has been granted clearance to conduct research in the country. The title of his research is "***Researchers' Clarity of Educational Inquiry of Paradigm Components Influencing Dissertation Quality Performance among Distance Learners in Tanzania: Pragmatic Perspective.***" The research will be conducted in **Tanzania Universities**.

The period which this permission for an extension has been granted to collect data will be from 26/08/ 2014 to 26/09/2014.

In case you need any further information, please contact:
The Deputy Vice Chancellor (Academic); The Open University of Tanzania; P.O. Box 23409; Dar es Salaam. Tel: 022-2-2668820

We thank you in advance for your cooperation and facilitation of this research activity.
Yours sincerely,

Prof Shaban Mbogo

For: VICE CHANCELLOR

THE OPEN UNIVERSITY OF TANZANIA

0752487599

APPENDIX I C: UNIVERSITY OF DAR ES SALAAM CLEARANCE

UNIVERSITY OF DAR ES SALAAM

DIRECTORATE OF RESEARCH

P.O. Box 35091 ■ DAR ES SALAAM ■ TANZANIA

General Line: 2410500-8 Ext. 2084
Direct Line: 2410727
Website: *www.udsm.ac.tz*

Fax: 255 022 2410743
255 022 2410023
E-mail: *research@udsm.ac.tz*

Our Ref. AB3/31

05th September 2014

Dean, School of Education
University of Dar es Salaam

RE: RESEARCH CLEARANCE

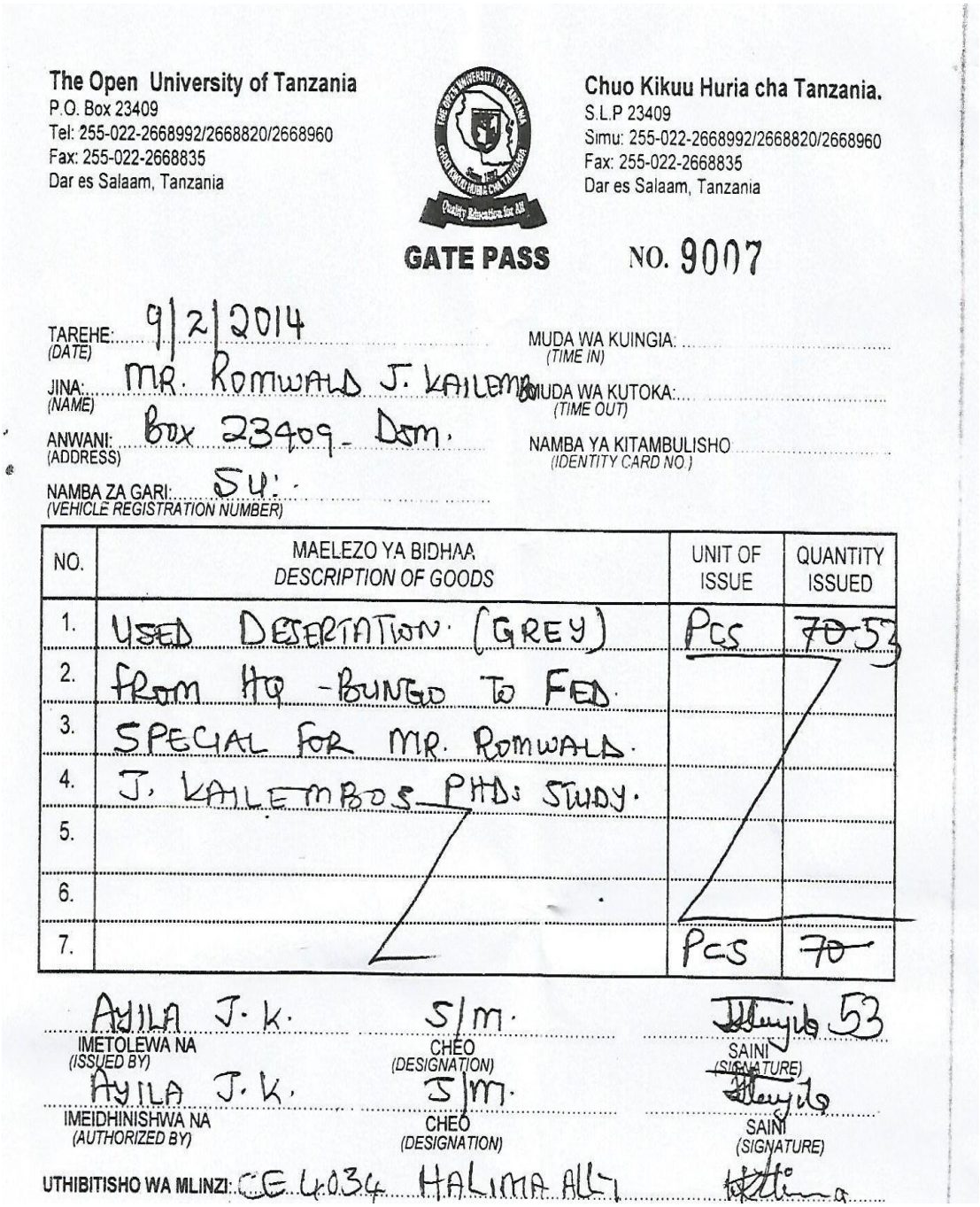
This is to introduce **Mr. Romwald J. Kairembo** who is a Ph.D. student at the Open University of Tanzanian. Mr. Kairembo is at the moment conducting research titled **"Researchers Clarity of Educational Inquiry of Paradigm Components Influencing dissertation Quality Performance among Distance Learners in Tanzania: Pragmatic Perspective"**.

This is to request you to grant the above-mentioned student any help that may enable him to achieve his research objectives. The period for which this permission has been granted is September 2014 and will cover the following area: **School of Education.**

Prof. R.Y.M. Kangalawe
DIRECTOR, RESEARCH

cc: Vice Chancellor
cc: DVC- Academic
cc: DVC- Administration
cc: DVC – Research and Knowledge Exchange

APPENDIX II: GATE PASS



The Open University of Tanzania
P.O. Box 23409
Tel: 255-022-2668992/2668820/2668960
Fax: 255-022-2668835
Dar es Salaam, Tanzania

Chuo Kikuu Huria cha Tanzania.
S.L.P 23409
Simu: 255-022-2668992/2668820/2668960
Fax: 255-022-2668835
Dar es Salaam, Tanzania

GATE PASS NO. 9007

TAREHE: 9/2/2014 (DATE)
MUDA WA KUINGIA: (TIME IN)
JINA: MR. ROMWALD J. KAILEMBO (NAME)
MUDA WA KUTOKA: (TIME OUT)
ANWANI: Box 23409 - Dsm. (ADDRESS)
NAMBA YA KITAMBULISHO (IDENTITY CARD NO.)
NAMBA ZA GARI: SU: (VEHICLE REGISTRATION NUMBER)

NO.	MAELEZO YA BIDHAA DESCRIPTION OF GOODS	UNIT OF ISSUE	QUANTITY ISSUED
1.	USED DESERTATION. (GREY)	PCS	~~70~~ 53
2.	FROM HQ - BUNGO TO FED.		
3.	SPECIAL FOR MR. ROMWALD.		
4.	J. KAILEMBOS PHD: STUDY.		
5.			
6.			
7.		PCS	~~70~~

AYILA J. K. — IMETOLEWA NA (ISSUED BY) — S/M. — CHEO (DESIGNATION) — SAINI (SIGNATURE) 53
AYILA J. K. — IMEIDHINISHWA NA (AUTHORIZED BY) — S/M. — CHEO (DESIGNATION) — SAINI (SIGNATURE)
UTHIBITISHO WA MLINZI: CE 4034 HALIMA ALLY

APPENDIX IIIA: COURSE OUTLINE FOR RESEARCH COURSE AT OUT

THE OPEN UNIVERSITY OF TANZANIA STUDIED FACULTY RESEARCH

COURSE OUTLINE (BOTH PGDEandM.A) OED 626: RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

Aims of this Course include:

- ✓ To provide the necessary knowledge, skills and confidence to interpret, evaluate and carry out research in any education-related setting.
- ✓ To enable you to effectively work with, and perform research in, a variety of sectors, including industry, the public sector, academia, or your own workplace.
- ✓ To acts as valuable preparation if you wish to undertake doctoral studies.
- ✓ To explores a wide range of disciplinary approaches to educational research and the relevance of disciplines such as Sociology, Psychology, History and **Philosophy** for undertaking research in educational settings.
- ✓ To allow you to gain expertise in research procedures such as interviewing, literature reviewing, data analysis, and writing.
- ✓

COURSE OUTLINE CONTENTS Approaches to Educational Research

This topic provides an overview of the ways in which different academic perspectives (such as sociology, psychology and history) have addressed and formulated topics of enquiry in educational research. You will be trained in how to formulate research questions, design research strategies, and to carry out rigorous literature searches. Studying through this topic, you will begin to develop a portfolio of research ideas that they will develop throughout the course.

Research and the Theoretical Field

This topic focuses on the 'theoretical space' of research, and explores the relationship between theoretical and **epistemological** claims or assumptions or debates and research practices. This will entail a close interrogation of both published research and students' own research ideas.

Research Methods

This involves looking at a broad range of methods of data collection, including questionnaires, interviews, focus groups, observations, and document analysis. The module provides a detailed consideration of the procedures involved in using these various research strategies, and looks at how to match methods appropriately to

research questions through reflecting on the advantages and disadvantages of the methods.

Qualitative Data Analysis

This is about the process of analytically orientating to qualitative data. You will be required to look at a range of analytic approaches, including Grounded Theory, Discourse Analysis, Conversation Analysis, as well as a broad variety of data formats such as video, audio, written transcripts and historical documents.

Quantitative Data Analysis

This covers a wide range of methods of quantitative data analysis and deals with both conceptual and practical aspects. The module introduces exploratory analysis, including descriptive statistics for summarising univariate data and measures of association for bivariate data, hypothesis testing, and modeling data by regression analysis.

Writing and Presenting Educational Research

Provides you with a detailed understanding on the different ways in which educational research can be communicated. By focusing on a variety of publication forums, such as peer reviewed journals, newspapers, and policy documents, the module enables students to develop an awareness of the importance of writing style for the effective communication of ideas.

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APPENDIX IIIB: UDSM COURSE OUTLINE FOR RESEARCH COURSE

UNIVERSITY OF DAR ES SALAAM

SCHOOL OF EDUCATION

FE 600a: Research Methods in Education - I

12 Credits
Core Course
Offered in Semester I

Course Description

This course is meant to help researchers and practitioners to be able to acquire knowledge and skills to describe an education event or situation accurately and vividly so that it can be thoroughly understood. Similarly, it is supposed to help gather information and data for predicting what teaching or learning strategies work in fostering learning. In addition, it strives to improve their knowledge about education in general and the practice of education, e.g. teaching, supervision, and management decisions. Finally, it is expected to enrich their knowledge and skills to explain why the situation is as it is in the education enterprise.

Aims and Objectives

This course introduces students to research methods in education with a view to equipping them with the knowledge, understanding, and skills to undertake their postgraduate research. More specifically, the objectives of the course are to:

i) Develop an understanding of the role of research in making arguments and decisions
ii) Acquire skills of conceptualising a research project and writing up a research proposal and report.
iii) Acquire basic knowledge of theoretical frameworks for undertaking educational research
iv) Develop ability to search for appropriate literature and make sense of its practical educational value or implications and use
v) Acquire basic knowledge and skills for research designs and implementation
vi) Develop ability to critically evaluate research reports and use them for decision making

vii). Develop professional report writing skills

urse Content

Module 1: The nature of scientific enquiry and educational research
- 1.1 Sources of knowledge
- 1.2 The nature and purpose of educational research
- 1.3 Ontological and epistemological assumptions
- 1.4 Research approaches/strategies in educational research

Module 2: Research background
- 2.1 The research problem/title
  - 2.1.1 Sources of research problems
  - 2.1.2 Evaluating the problem
  - 2.1.3 Stating the research problem
- 2.2 Research objectives
- 2.3 Research questions and Hypothesis
  - 2.3.1 Constructs and variables
  - 2.3.2 Purposes of research questions and hypothesis in research
  - 2.3.3 Characteristics of good research questions/hypotheses
  - 2.3.4 Types of hypotheses
- 2.4 Reviewing the literature, conceptual/theoretical framework

Module 3: Data collection methods and instruments
- 3.1 Questionnaires
- 3.2 Interviews
- 3.3 Documentary reviews
- 3.4 Focus/nominal group discussion
- 3.5 Constructing item questions

Module 4: Quantitative Research Methods: Introduction
- 4.1 Characteristics of quantitative research
- 4.2 Quantitative research designs
  - 4.2.1 Experimental research design
  - 4.2.2 Quasi experimental research design
  - 4.2.3 Non-experimental
  - 4.2.4 Survey research: types and techniques
- 4.3 Correlational research

Iodule 5: Quantitative research methods: Statistical analysis in educational researcl
- 5.1 Descriptive statistics
  - 5.1.1 Scales of measurement
  - 5.1.2 Organising research data
  - 5.1.3 Measures of central tendency (the mean, the median, the mode)
  - 5.1.4 Measures of variability (variance and standard deviation)
  - 5.1.5 Measures of relative position (z score, percentile rank, etc)
  - 5.1.6 Correlation
  - 5.1.7 Effect size
  - 5.1.8 Meta-analysis
- 5.2 Sampling and inferential statistics
  - 5.2.1 Sampling (rationale, steps, size, sampling error)
  - 5.2.2 Inferential statistics
    - Null hypothesis,
    - Type I and II errors,
    - Level of significance, tests,

- Determining appropriate sample size
- Power

5.2.3 Statistical tests

- The t test
- The t distribution
- Degrees of freedom
- Analysis of variance
- The Chi-Square tests of significance

5.3 Quality assurance in quantitative studies: Validity and reliability

Course Duration

The course will take 45 hours of lectures and seminars (30 and 15 hours respectively).

Course Delivery Mode

This course will be delivered through a variety of course delivery and teaching methods, including interactive presentations and students working together in groups. The emphasis is primarily on student collaboration and participation.

Course Assessment

The assessment for this course involves three main stages as follows:

i) In-class assignments and/or exercises: 20%
ii) Tests and/or article reviews/critiques: 30%
iii) University Examination (UE): 50%

References

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APENDIX IV: ONLINE RESPONDENTS' CONSENT FORM

<kidama75@yahoo.com> 2/14/14

<mavoa.elias@yahoo.co.uk> 2/13/14

Dear Mr Kairembo.

I am very sorry that my responses to your questionnaires did not open. First I agree to participate. Please inform me very soon if it has opened or not so that can work I on it. I wish you all the best.

APPENDIX: V: QUESTIONNAIRE

QUESTIONNAIRE FOR CANDIDATES/SUPERVISORS/EXTERNAL EXAMINERS
ON DISSERTATIONS/THESES AT THE OPEN UNIVERSITY OF TANZANIA

Questionnaire Number: 01

A: Introduction

Dear research participant, I am Romwald Joseph Kairembo, a Ph.D. student at the Open University of Tanzania seeking to understand how "*Researchers' Clarity of Research Paradigm Conceptions Influencing Dissertations Quality Performance in Tanzania Universities: Grounded Theory.* to improve the observed scenarios. The information you provide will help me not only to accomplish my PhD program, but also to help the universities academic members of staff to improve how to assess masters' dissertations/theses. I am kindly requesting you to provide me with your precious time to fill in this questionnaire to help me accomplish the purpose of this study.

B: Personal Information

Please put (V) where you think it is appropriate. The (V) may be typed outside the box provided not necessarily inside the Boxes.

\Age ……. years

- ✓ Sex: Male ☐ Female ☐
- ✓ For how long did you study your Master degree? …years.
- ✓ Were the assessment criteria of the dissertations/theses communicated to you by your supervisor? Yes ☐ No

C: Your beliefs in some Research Principles and Experiences

In the scale below, please indicate your level of agreement with the belief statement by putting a tick against the statement under the relevant option. There is no wrong or right answer, but I am interested in what you really believe in. so, try as much as you can be honest in indicating your belief. The responses mean: SA = strongly agree, A = Agree, D = Disagree, SD = Strongly Disagree.

1	I believe that the aim of research is to understand the general principles that govern specific events or experiences;	SD	D	NS	SA	A
2	I believe that the aim of research is to understand peoples' feelings and thinking in a given context;					
3	I believe that the aim of research is to use human reasoning, perceptions and acts to describe and understand human experience;					
4	I believe that the aim of research is to understand and explain the subject's behavior, and social reality rather than prediction;					
5	I believe that the aim of research is to construct knowledge					
6	I believe that the aim of research is to understand the problems from their natural settings;					
7	I believe that the aim of research is to discover what works so as to improve practice;					
8	I believe that the aim of research is to understand and describe human nature.					
9	I believe that there is one truth and reality about a phenomenon;					
10	Truth or reality is relatively constant across time and settings;					
11	Reality about a phenomenon should be tangible and measurable;					
12	I believe that there are multiple truths and realities about a phenomenon;					
13	I believe that objective reality about a phenomenon does not exist;					
14	I believe that hypotheses, constructs and measurements hinder the researcher to get information from the respondent's point of view;					
15	I believe that the real world and its objects are not related to researcher's consciousness;					
16	I believe that truth is "constructed" by humans;					
17	I believe that truth is situated within a historical moment and social context;					
18	I believe that there are multiple meanings the same data;					
19	I am more interested in what works instead of the believed realities;					
20	I believe that the valid knowledge is based on observation;					
21	I believe that the researcher's views should be separate from the reality searched;					

22	I believe that the researcher's views should be close to the reality searched;					
23	I believe that human's ability to know the real world is not perfect;					
24	I believe that knowledge is multiple and context bound;					
25	I believes that knowledge is socially constructed;					
26	I believe that we can only know reality from our own view of it;					
27	I believe that researcher and respondents are linked, in constructing knowledge together;					
28	I do accept many different viewpoints and work to reconcile them to see what works the best;					
29	I believe that truth is the one that is informed by a theory;					
30	I believe that knowledge is subjective and truth is contextual;					
31	I believe that scientific and systematic methods should be used to establish truth;					
32	I believe that the best means to arrive at truth is to formulate testable hypotheses;					
33	I believe that the effective method for searching truth is to quantify and verify the speculations;					
34	I believe that researchers require valid and reliable tools for gathering data to produce knowledge;					
35	I believe that truth should be measured empirically by being quantified through surveys, experiments and statistical analysis;					
36	I believe that a researcher has to understand the meanings and interpret people's social realities from their world point of view;					
37	I believe that data should best be collected in dialogical discussions;					
38	I believe that data should best be collected by combining observation and interviews ;					
39	I believe that the best research is the one which is done within natural settings not artificial ones;					
40	I tend to focus on a real world problem, by whatever methods I consider being most appropriate to bring changes in practice;					
41	In most researches I conduct, I tend to use interviews, participant observations, visuals, diaries, even documents as methods of gathering data.					

D: Your experience about the Assessment Criteria for Masters' dissertations/theses In the scale below, please indicate your level of agreement with the statements as to whether they are the criteria used to assess masters' dissertations/theses by internal and external examiners at the Open University of Tanzania or not. Put a tick (V) against the statement under the relevant option. There is no wrong or right answer. However, I am interested in what you are really clear with. So, please try as much as you can, to be honest in indicating your clarity. The responses mean: SA = strongly agree, A = Agree, D = Disagree, SD = Strongly Disagree, NS=Not Sure.

	Statements	SD	D	NS	SA	A
1.	Clear identification of and statement of the Problem;					
2.	Clear synthesis of sources of the research problem;					
3.	Clear statement of research propositions, hypotheses and or questions;					
4.	Clear of statements of research propositions, hypotheses, and questions;					
5.	Clear statements of objectives;					
6.	Clear critical discussion of hypotheses and objectives;					
7.	Clear critical discussion of hypotheses and objectives;					
8.	Well defined significance of a study;					
9.	Well stated scope of the study;					
10.	Historical background of theoretical literature and empirical literature reviews;					
11.	Background knowledge of the researched problem and literature review;					
12.	Analytical and evaluation skills of the past researchers' research objectives or hypotheses;					
13.	I understand that defined relevant significance and scope are among the criteria assessors use to judge quality of the dissertation					
14.	Analytical and evaluation skills of the past researchers' research objectives or hypotheses;					
15.	Students' clarity of explanation for the research paradigms;					
16.	The delineation between paradigm components clarity;					

17.	If students clarify the philosophical paradigm component as a rationale to justify the choice of approach for a study;					
18.	Detailed research philosophers' proposals;					
19.	Whether students mention and clarify, and articulate the philosophical paradigm component to justify their decisions of choice of methodology components in dissertation;					
20.	Detailed ontological statements about researched reality					
21.	Whether students' clarification of ontological paradigm component justify decision for choice of methodology in dissertations;					
22.	Detailed statements on knowledge theories;					
23.	Whether students' clarity of epistemological paradigm component related statements justify decision for choice of methodological elements in the dissertation;					
24.	Detailed qualitative, quantitative or mixed approach statements;					
25.	Whether students clarify methodological paradigm component related statements to justify decision to include or exclude any elements in dissertations;					
26.	Whether students' clarify research design for the study;					
27.	Clarify of the formulation of research instruments;					
28.	Detailed statement on formulas for sampling;					
29.	Full description of sampling procedures;					
30.	Full Sampling procedure/methods appropriate clarification;					
31.	Clear explanation of unit of inquiry , measurement for the dissertation;					
32.	Clear description of data collection procedures/methods;					
33.	Whether students explain data cleaning;					
34.	Research students' adherence to validity and reliability as a sole criterion for quality conducted study;					
35.	Students' clarification on how to test reliability and validity;					
36.	Presentation of mathematical formula used to analyze data;					

37.	Appropriate analysis and use of presentation of results;					

38.	Presentation of mathematical formula used to analyze data					
39.	Validation of hypotheses;					
40.	Systematic analysis and interpretation of results;					
41.	Citing the source of data in the tables presented in the findings chapter;					

Thank you for participating in this study!

APPENDIX VI: INTERVIEW SCHEDULE

QUESTIONNAIRE FOR SUPERVISORS AND EXTERNAL EXAMINERS' SEMI STRUCTURED INTERVIEW SCHEDULE

(*For both on line and face to face)

Number 02 Introduction

All given information will be highly kept confidentially.

Please elaborate your responses freely? Do you allow me to use a cell phone tape recorder/?

- ✓ I what way are/were you informed that one of the criteria considered by external examiners to grade dissertations at the Open University is clarity of concepts in dissertations, such as paradigms?
2. If YES you as a researcher/supervisor/examiner of research report (dissertations) do you understand the term paradigm in your own words as it is applied in scientific research? Elaborate your response please.
3. If NO what are possible reasons per why you are/were not informed with the term paradigm while you were supposed to be informed of it at entry of conducting/supervising/assessing research process leading to a dissertation……
4. If YES in item (2) please clarify what it refers to in research, in your own words ……
5. In what way do you view relationship between research paradigm/ perspectives and the educational research process?

6. Please elaborate how it is related to the educational inquiry process…….....

7. If NO in item (5) what are factors you think might be hindering you as student/supervisor/examiner not to comprehend the relationship between the paradigm and the research process for dissertations……

8. In what way are you informed that the scope of paradigm should be clearly comprehended since it is the first entry point, before starting research field, whose scope is wide covering components outlined to you as follows:

Philosophical perspectives (positivists and post positivists) Ontological (personal beliefs of reality on whether it is one and objective; relative and subjective or (both) multiple); Epistemological (knowledge theories); Methodological (approaches of quantitative, qualitative or Mixed and Methodology (as tools/means for collecting data); Axiological (values held by the researcher in terms of beauties and ethics) and

finally; Logical strategies/framework of drawing conclusions (Deductively, Inductively, Reproductively or Abductively); Rhetorical language (formal, informal as per perspective).

9. If you do in item (8) do you think the elaborated scope of paradigm is clearly clarified in uniformly to the distance candidates?

YES ☐ NO

10. The preliminary documentary review revealed that most of educational distance student researchers' dissertations at M.A level have increasingly been awarded low marginal passes of "B" by external examiners something that lowers the entire coursework, instead of excellent grades of B+ or "A that could boost the same coursework".

In view of that review in item (10), do you think clarity of paradigms might be one of the contributory factors leading to the increase of marginal grades among distance learners?

YES ☐ NO ☐

12. How?.....

13. Please elaborate your response I detail……

14. In what way do you communicate to students on how achieving low grade of "B" instead of "A" or B+ lowers his/her entire coursework leading to lower GPAs?

Elaborate……

15. What other factors would you attribute for an increase to the majority of students to be graded such marginal grades apart from clarity of paradigm components? Please mention them.

……
……

14. Any other comments to improve the situation? Please mention?
……
……
……

Thank you for taking time to respond

APPENDIX: VII: SPSS ROTATION MATRIX 1

SPSS Pattern Matrix (a)*Resultant pattern matrix from Likert's Emerged 41 Knowledge Statements*

Pattern Matrix (a)			
Structure Matrix on Knowledge	Components		
	1	2	3
The aim of research is to construct knowledge	.790		
The aim of research is to understand people's feelings and thinking in a given context	.748		
The aim of research is to understand the problems from their natural settings	.705		
The aim of research is to discover what works to improve practice	.637		
Researcher has to understand the meanings and interpret peoples' social realities from their world point of view	.608		
Knowledge is socially constructed	.592		
Knowledge is multiple and context based	.584		
The aim of research is to understand the general principles that govern specific events or experiences	.573		
There are multiple meanings for the same data	.547	.309	
The researcher and respondents are linked in constructing knowledge together	.533		
The aim of research is to understand and explain the subjects' behaviour and social reality rather than prediction	.503		
Intend to focus on the real world problem, by whatever method I consider being most appropriate to bring changes in practice	.492		
Knowledge is subjective and truth is contextual	.480	-.363	

I do accept many different viewpoints and work to reconcile them to see what works the best	.466	-.386	
The aim of research is to use human reasoning, perceptions and acts to describe and understand human experiences	.463		
I am more interested in what works instead of the believed realities	.426		
The aim of research is to understand and describe human nature	.409		
Truth is 'constructed' by humans	.381		
Human's ability to know the real world is not perfect	.380		
The best research is the one which is done within natural settings, not artificial ones	.360		.346
We can only know reality from our own view of it	.350		
The researcher's views should be separate from the reality searched			
The best means to arrive at truth is to formulate testable hypotheses		-.778	
The effective method for searching truth is to quantify and verify the speculations		-.763	
Truth should be measured empirically by being quantified through surveys, experiments and statistical analysis		-.681	
There is one truth and reality about a phenomenon		-.612	
Data should be best collected by combining observation and interviews		-.566	
I most research I conduct, I tend to employ participant observation in line with interviews and sometimes with the aid of visuals, diaries, even documents as methods of gathering data		-.500	
Scientific and systematic methods should be used to establish truth	.455	-.494	

Truth or reality is relatively constant across time and settings			-.488	
Reality about a phenomenon should be tangible and measurable			-.469	
The researcher's views should be close to the reality searched			-.453	
Researchers require valid and reliable tools for data to produce knowledge	.367	gathering	-.439	
Data should be best collected in dialogical discussions			-.408	.372
Truth is the one that is informed by a theory			-.405	
Objective reality about a phenomenon does not exist				.640
There are multiple truths and realities about a phenomenon				.492
Hypotheses, constructs and measurements hinder the researcher to get information from the respondent's point of view				.466
The real world and its objects are not related to researcher's consciousness				.461
Truth is situated within a historical moment and social context				.410
The valid knowledge is based on observation				

Extraction Method: Principal Component Analysis. Rotation Method: Oblimin with Kaiser Normalization.

a. Rotation converged in 15 iterations.

APPENDIX: VIII: SPSS ROTATION MATRIX 2

SPSS Matrix of Emerged Perspective Components among Three Respondents'

Structure Matrix b on Beliefs

	Components		
	1	2	3
I am certain that the aim of research is to construct knowledge;	.795		
To me aim of research is to understand people's feelings and thinking in a given context;	.744		
To me aim of research is to understand the problems from their natural settings;	.727		
To me aim of research is to discover what works to improve practice;	.660		
Researcher has to understand the meanings and interpret peoples' social realities from their world point of view;	.640	-.376	
To me knowledge is multiple and context based;	.619		
To me knowledge is socially constructed;	.605		
To me the researcher and respondents are linked in constructing knowledge together;	.570		
I do accept many different viewpoints and work to reconcile them to see what works the best;	.567	-.482	
The aim of research is to understand and explain the subjects' behaviour likewise social reality rather than prediction;	.563	-.354	
To me knowledge is subjective and truth is contextual;	.557	-.464	
The aim of research is to understand the general principles that govern specific events or experiences;	.530		

I tend to focus on the real world problem, by whatever method I consider being most appropriate to bring changes in practice;	.497

To me there are multiple meanings for the same data;	.491		
The aim of research is to use human reasoning, perception, acts to describe,	.446		
To me inquiry purpose is to understand human experiences			
I concur that knowledge is 'constructed' by humans;	.423		.330
I am more interested in what works instead of fixed rules likewise realities;	.421		
To me human's ability to know the real world is not perfect;	.406		.331
I concur that the aim of research is to understand and describe human nature;	.402		
I concur that we can only know reality from our own view of it;	.343		
To me researcher's views should be separate from the reality searched;			
To me the best means to arrive at truth is to formulate testable hypotheses;		-.759	
To me effective method for searching truth have to quantify and verify the speculations;		-.753	
To me truth should be measured empirically by being quantified through surveys, experiments likewise statistical analysis;		-.691	
To me there is one truth and reality about a phenomenon;		-.617	
I concur that scientific and systematic methods should be used to establish truth;	.533	-.592	
To me data should be best collected by combining observation and interviews		-.591	
In most research I conduct, I tend to employ participant observation in line with interviews and sometimes with the aid of visuals, diaries, even documents as methods of	.316	-.539	

gathering data;			
To me researchers require valid and reliable tools for gathering data to produce knowledge;	.449	-.517	
To me truth or reality is relatively constant across time and settings;		-.504	
To me reality about a phenomenon should be tangible and measurable;		-.483	
To me researcher's views should be close to the reality searched;		-.444	
To me truth is the one that is informed by a theory;		-.407	
To me data should be best collected in dialogical discussions;		-.403	.367
I concur that valid knowledge is based on observation;		-.304	
To me objective reality about a phenomenon does not exist;			.629
I concur that there are multiple truths and realities about a phenomenon;			.512
To me the real world and its objects are not related to researcher’s consciousness;			.463
I am certain Hypotheses, constructs and measurements hinder the researcher to get information from the respondent's point of view;			.448
To me truth is situated within a historical moment and social context.			.427

Extraction Method: Principal Component Analysis. Rotation Method: Oblimin with Kaiser Normalization Rotationns-15 Iterations.

APPENDIX IX: CHECKLIST FOR LIVE OBSERVATION

PANELISTS' TOOL FOR DISSERTATION ORAL DEFENSE

Panellists' list	Theoretical background	Literature	Methodology	Methods	Data analysis	Data Presentation	Given Verdict	Comments
Panelist 1								
Panelist 2								
Panelist 3								
Panelist 4								

Emerged Issues from Observation Process

Researchers' observed schedule with modalities on the manner how the panel is organised.

Timetable for candidate
Members constituting the column
Objectives of meeting
Assessment forms (App. V)
Insurance students explain research paradigm and design (NOT).
Issues panellists paid attention to (clarity, ownership of dissertation chapters) Any mention of explicit paradigm underpinnings to rationalise the research design.
(NO SINGLE PANELIST NOR STUDENT DID)
Mandate to change the EEs scores (NOT)
Observed Panellists' Verdict award (PAS/FAIL/RESUBMITION)

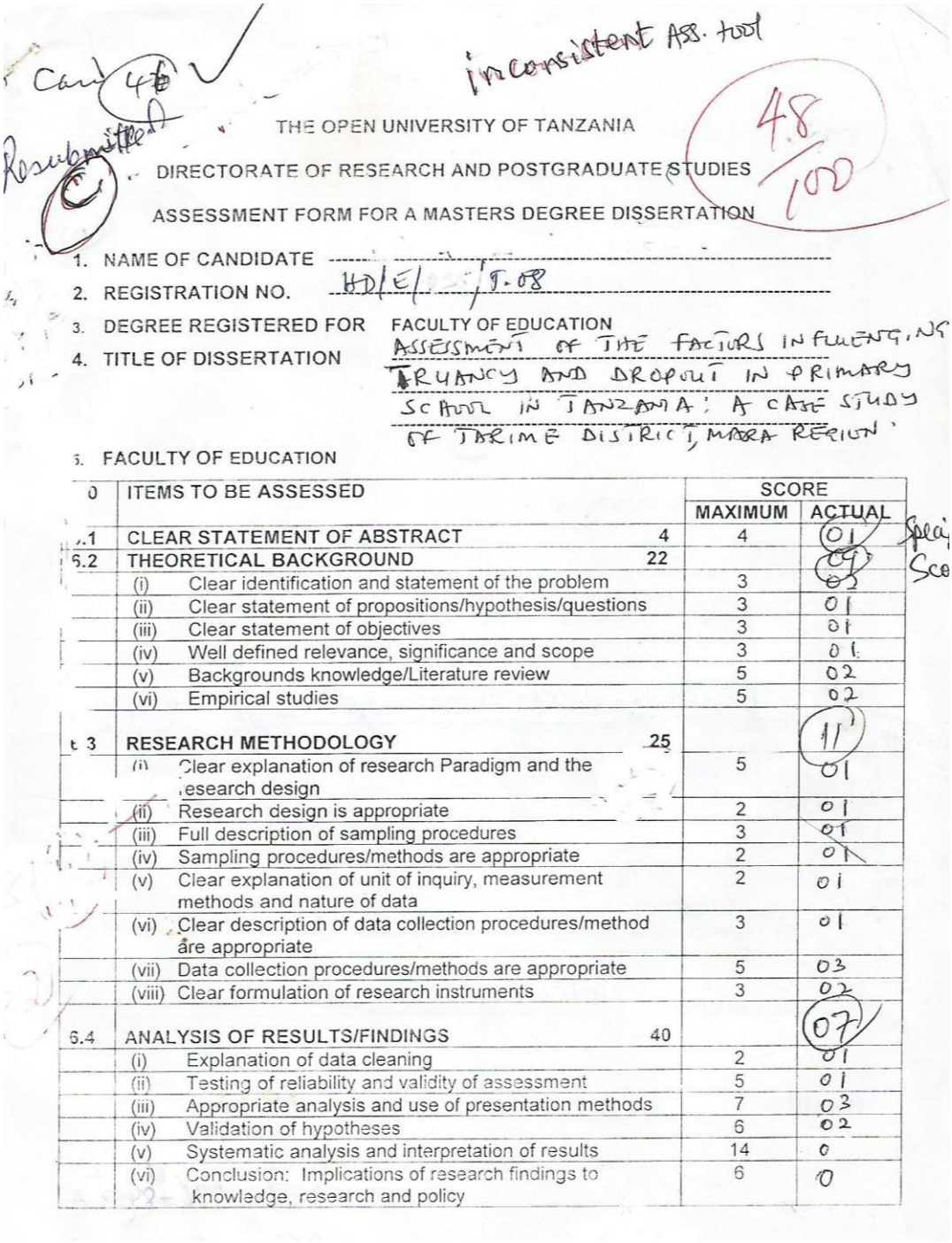
APPENDIX X: RESEARCHER'S ASSESSMENT CHECKLIST

RESEARCHER'S EXAMINED DISSERTATIONS THEMES RELATED TO AUTHORITATIVE SOURCES OF KNOWLEDGE SCHEDULE

S/N	Issues	Scores						
1.	Has adequate conceptual literature	**6=A**	**5 =B+**	**4= B**	**3= C**	**2= D**	**1= E**	**General Comments**
2.	Has empirical literature							
3.	Coherent AP references and Citation							

4.	Used observation as evidence method							
5.	Type of used observation participant/non participant?	-						
6.	Explained one guiding philosophical paradigm							
7.	Has Knowledge gap							
8.	Has rationalised choices							
9.	Has constructed/modified theory							
10.	Has theoretical/conceptual model							

APPENDIX XI: INCONSISTENT ASSESSMENT TOOL



Inconsistent Ass. tool

Resubmitted

48/100

THE OPEN UNIVERSITY OF TANZANIA

DIRECTORATE OF RESEARCH AND POSTGRADUATE STUDIES

ASSESSMENT FORM FOR A MASTERS DEGREE DISSERTATION

1. NAME OF CANDIDATE .....
2. REGISTRATION NO. HDE/..../T.08
3. DEGREE REGISTERED FOR FACULTY OF EDUCATION
4. TITLE OF DISSERTATION ASSESSMENT OF THE FACTORS INFLUENCING TRUANCY AND DROPOUT IN PRIMARY SCHOOL IN TANZANIA; A CASE STUDY OF TARIME DISTRICT, MARA REGION.

5. FACULTY OF EDUCATION

0	ITEMS TO BE ASSESSED		SCORE	
			MAXIMUM	ACTUAL
6.1	CLEAR STATEMENT OF ABSTRACT	4	4	01
6.2	THEORETICAL BACKGROUND	22		09
	(i) Clear identification and statement of the problem		3	03
	(ii) Clear statement of propositions/hypothesis/questions		3	01
	(iii) Clear statement of objectives		3	01
	(iv) Well defined relevance, significance and scope		3	01
	(v) Backgrounds knowledge/Literature review		5	02
	(vi) Empirical studies		5	02
6.3	RESEARCH METHODOLOGY	25		11
	(i) Clear explanation of research Paradigm and the research design		5	01
	(ii) Research design is appropriate		2	01
	(iii) Full description of sampling procedures		3	01
	(iv) Sampling procedures/methods are appropriate		2	01
	(v) Clear explanation of unit of inquiry, measurement methods and nature of data		2	01
	(vi) Clear description of data collection procedures/method are appropriate		3	01
	(vii) Data collection procedures/methods are appropriate		5	03
	(viii) Clear formulation of research instruments		3	02
6.4	ANALYSIS OF RESULTS/FINDINGS	40		07
	(i) Explanation of data cleaning		2	01
	(ii) Testing of reliability and validity of assessment		5	01
	(iii) Appropriate analysis and use of presentation methods		7	03
	(iv) Validation of hypotheses		6	02
	(v) Systematic analysis and interpretation of results		14	0
	(vi) Conclusion: Implications of research findings to knowledge, research and policy		6	0

6.5	PRESENTATION 9		05
	(i) Well presented, Text and exhibits well organized	4	02
	(ii) Notes, bibliography and appendices well presented	3	01
	(iii) Overall presentation of the dissertation well done	2	02
	TOTAL	100	48
	Letter Grade*	A	

* Letter grade

A = 70 – 100, B+ = 60 – 69, B = 50 59, C = 40 – 49, D = 35 – 39, E = 0 – 34

7.0 EXAMINER'S RECOMMENDATION

			Tick Appropriate Verdict
7.1	PASSES		
	7.1.1	Dissertation PASSES AS IT IS (no revision or typographical corrections required)	
	7.1.2	Dissertation PASSES SUBJECT TO correction of typographical corrections and other minor changes* as detailed on separate sheet(s) or and/or in the dissertation.	
	?	Dissertation PASSES SUBJECT TO MAJOR Changes ? ??	
7.2	NOT ACCEPTED AS IT IS BUT MAY BE RESUBMITTED after one or more of the following items (specify) is (are) done:		
	a)	Additional data collection	
	b)	Additional analysis	✓
	c)	Additional literature review	
	d)	Re-writing	
	e)	Others (specify on separate sheet)	✓
7.3	REJECTED OUTRIGHT		
	7.3.1	Dissertation is rejected outright (specify reasons on separate sheet).	

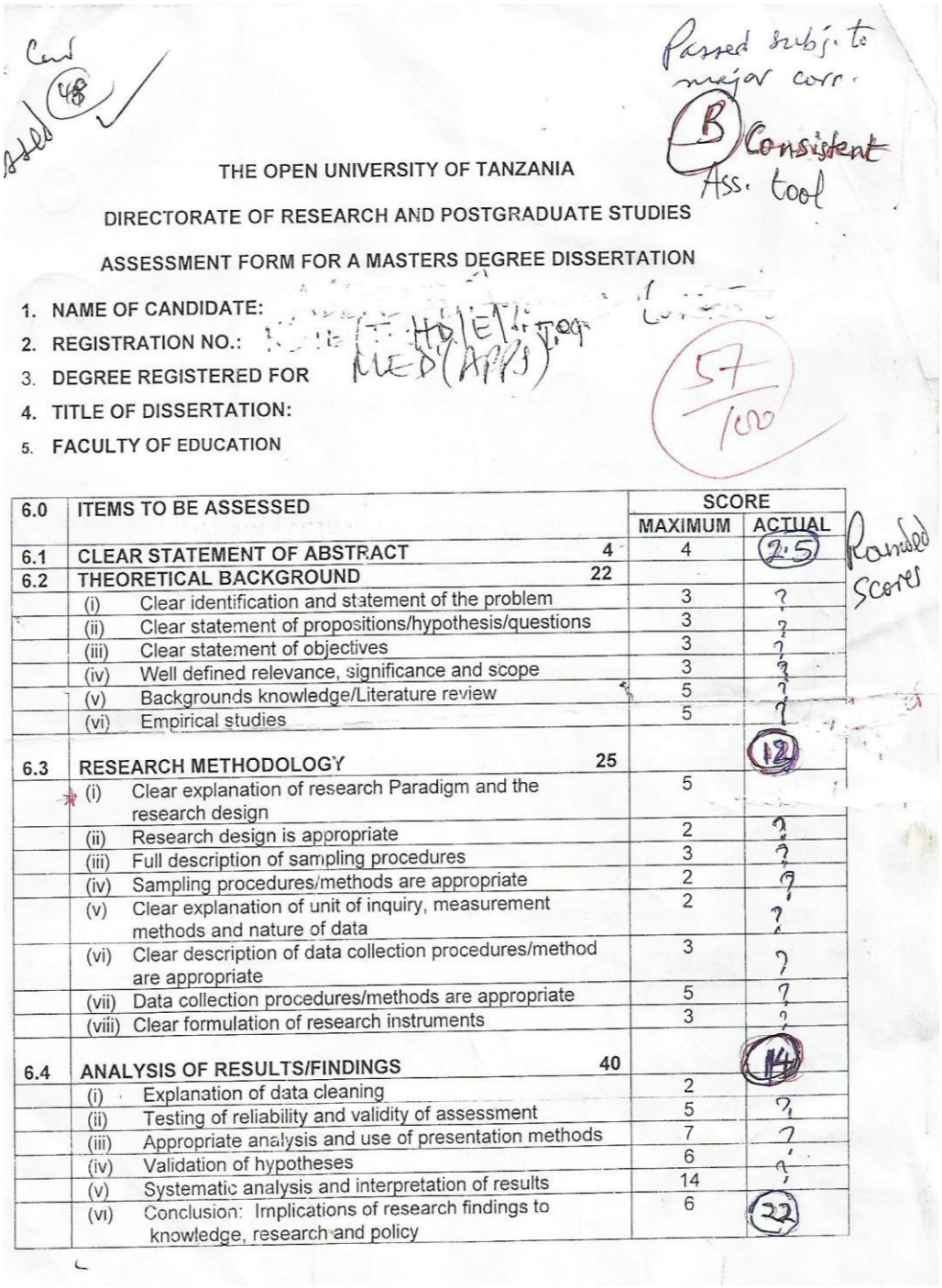
Missing

EXTERNAL EXAMINER: - ----------

-

SIGNATURE: _____ DATE: 2012

APPENDIX XII: CONSISTENT ASSESSMENT TOOL



THE OPEN UNIVERSITY OF TANZANIA

DIRECTORATE OF RESEARCH AND POSTGRADUATE STUDIES

ASSESSMENT FORM FOR A MASTERS DEGREE DISSERTATION

1. NAME OF CANDIDATE:
2. REGISTRATION NO.:
3. DEGREE REGISTERED FOR
4. TITLE OF DISSERTATION:
5. FACULTY OF EDUCATION

6.0	ITEMS TO BE ASSESSED	SCORE	
		MAXIMUM	ACTUAL
6.1	CLEAR STATEMENT OF ABSTRACT 4	4	
6.2	THEORETICAL BACKGROUND 22		
	(i) Clear identification and statement of the problem	3	
	(ii) Clear statement of propositions/hypothesis/questions	3	
	(iii) Clear statement of objectives	3	
	(iv) Well defined relevance, significance and scope	3	
	(v) Backgrounds knowledge/Literature review	5	
	(vi) Empirical studies	5	
6.3	RESEARCH METHODOLOGY 25		
	(i) Clear explanation of research Paradigm and the research design	5	
	(ii) Research design is appropriate	2	
	(iii) Full description of sampling procedures	3	
	(iv) Sampling procedures/methods are appropriate	2	
	(v) Clear explanation of unit of inquiry, measurement methods and nature of data	2	
	(vi) Clear description of data collection procedures/method are appropriate	3	
	(vii) Data collection procedures/methods are appropriate	5	
	(viii) Clear formulation of research instruments	3	
6.4	ANALYSIS OF RESULTS/FINDINGS 40		
	(i) Explanation of data cleaning	2	
	(ii) Testing of reliability and validity of assessment	5	
	(iii) Appropriate analysis and use of presentation methods	7	
	(iv) Validation of hypotheses	6	
	(v) Systematic analysis and interpretation of results	14	
	(vi) Conclusion: Implications of research findings to knowledge, research and policy	6	

6.5	PRESENTATION	9		6
	(i)	Well presented, Text and exhibits well organized	4	
	(ii)	Notes, bibliography and appendices well presented	3	
	(iii)	Overall presentation of the dissertation well done	2	
		TOTAL	100	
		Letter Grade*	A	56.5

* Letter grade

A = 70 – 100, B+ = 60 – 69, B = 50 59, C = 40 – 49, D = 35 – 39, E = 0 – 34

7.0 EXAMINER'S RECOMMENDATION

			Tick Appropriate Verdict
7.1	PASSES		
	7.1.1	Dissertation PASSES AS IT IS (no revision or typographical corrections required)	
	7.1.2	Dissertation PASSES SUBJECT TO correction of typographical corrections and other minor changes* as detailed on separate sheet(s) or and/or in the dissertation.	
		Dissertation PASSES SUBJECT TO subject to major changes as detailed on separate sheet(s) or in the dissertation	✓
7.2	NOT ACCEPTED AS TI IS BUT MAY BE RESUBMITTED after one or more of the following items (specify) is (are) done:		
	a)	Additional data collection	
	b)	Additional analysis	√
	c)	Additional literature review	√
	d)	Re-writing	√
	e)	Others (specify on separate sheet)	
7.3	REJECTED OUTRIGHT		
	7.3.1	Dissertation is rejected outright (specify reasons on separate sheet).	

EXTERNAL EXAMINER: .....

SIGNATURE: ..... DATE: Sept, 2012

APPENDIX XIII

AUTHORS' SYNTHESIS OF PARADIGM CONCEPTIONS

Components	Paradigm	Assumptions	Summary
	Positivist paradigm (quantitative approach)	Post-positivism paradigm (qualitative approach-Interpretivism).	Critical post positivistic (mixed approaches)

A source of paradigms is the question, what constitutes reality?	Nature is constituted by real, concrete, observable phenomenon.	Nature is consists of personal ideas perceived existing entities.	Nature is constituted by both partly things that are expressed in personal ideas.
Philosophical held perspective	Positivistic realism	Relative, idealism (phenomenology)	Pragmatism, merge of both philosophies of positivism, and relativism.
Ontological position	Reality is objective and independent	Reality is relative and subjective	Reality is both subjective and objective
Epistemological theory	True knowledge about reality is what is objective and it can be known with certainty.	True knowledge about reality is relative and subjectively known.	Reality is about reality is what has been constructively agreed, may be known but not with certainty.
Methodological rigor and Approach	The accurate methods to attain objective knowledge about reality: verifying hypotheses by quantitative approach. Some strategies are: surveys, observation, and experiments.	The accurate methods to attain relative knowledge about reality are: naturalistic observation of the context, interviews, discussion, documentary review and focused groups; reporting by qualitative approaches.	The accurate methods to attain probable knowledge about reality: is by eclectic combination of some positivists' and interpretivists' methods: as mix of case study, observation and surveys, interviews, approaches to avoid weakness of a single method. Reporting probable mixed statements.
Axiological values position	Values free investigation to biasness.	Value laden investigation impossible to avoid.	Social values influence investigation explicitly or implicitly difficult to avoid.

Logical reasoning at work	Mainly deductive logic stating with general theory to conclude specifically on findings.	Mainly inductive logic beginning with observation to conclude generally on the findings.	Eclectic of either abductive, retroductive with traditional deductive or inductive to generalise probably on findings. Sometimes, mixing abductive and retroductive.