

Motivational Discourses and Disposition of Hope in Masters Students Supervision 2013-2018: Case study Faculty of Education, University of Eswatini

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Abstract: This is a study of Masters Research students' and a supervisor's reflection on motivational discourses and dispositions of hope in the supervision processes at the Faculty of Education, University of ESwatini. It has been triggered by the author's awareness of uncomfortable of research feelings about the supervision process in some departments in the Faculty of Education. The research objective was to describe how motivational discourses or institutional contexts (professional practices and policies) influenced research students' hope during their research journey/ process at University of ESwatini, Faculty of Education 2013-2018. These data collections tools were used: interviews, observation and documentary evidence. 15 research students were sampled through convenient sampling procedure and criterion purposive sampling. Majority of students were referred to the researcher after they had complexities with previous supervisors and had experiences to reflect on. Discourses analysis was used to analyse the institutional contexts and their influences on supervision and the understanding of the production and reproduction of prejudice and racism in students' supervision and the nature of institutional policies. The findings indicated that institutional contexts facilitated the state of hopelessness among students. The observed participants implicitly and explicitly demonstrated behaviour which destabilised the sense of efficacy among the students; inappropriate professionals' comments or remarks increased the research students search for negative evidence on his or her part or supervisors' part. The study concluded that Professionals' unprofessional behaviours and practices, Students' obsession with supervisors' behaviours and practices made them to lose hope to themselves, worry far too much about their ability and not enough about strategies that must be employed to succeed in their research thesis. Recommendations: more reflective study on institutional contexts as motivating discourses could be encouraged in higher institutions of learning.

Key words: Disposition, Hope, Masters' supervision, Motivational discourse, Reflection, Self-efficacy

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I. Introduction

Reflection starts with the individual's feeling of discomfort and unease (Yip 2006, p 784)

The essence of teaching and learning and students' supervision require hope. As long as there are teachers and students, there will be hope: hope in students and teachers' hope in themselves to meet the challenges of their work (Birmingham, 2009, p 38).

This is a study of Masters Research students' and a supervisor's reflection and narratives on motivational discourses and dispositions of hope in the supervision processes at the Faculty of Education, University of Swaziland. Boyod and Falses (1983) noted that reflection is a process of clarifying and creating the meaning of experiences and observations, (current and past experiences) in relation to self. In this study the research students and the supervisor reflect on the construct of hope and other motivational discourses in a research process. This paper explores how motivational discourses such as hope are influencing Masters students' research activities and learning at the Faculty of Education, University of ESwatini.

This reflective study has been triggered by the author's awareness of uncomfortable of research feelings about the supervision process in some departments in the Faculty of Education. Artkins and Murphy (1993) noted that reflection may be triggered by an awareness of uncomfortable feelings and thoughts about an educational project, practices or event. Yip, (2006) also noted that reflection starts with the professionals' or students' own uncomfortable feelings in his or her practice or place of work.

Under appropriate conditions self-reflection in reflective practice can help professionals and students to resolve conflicts, handle difficulties, search for new solutions, feel more open and at ease in working through research related matters and problems. Yip, (2006) also argued that professional hope and identity could be enhanced through reflection because it is founded on the ability to handle difficult situations and clients (students) constructively and smoothly. Failure to handle challenging situations and inappropriate conditions which may include an oppressive working or supervision relationship environment and unresolved matters, an unbalanced of power in a professional's working or research environment could affect research student's professional identity (Yip, 2006; Miehl and Moffat, 2000). Inappropriate conditions may also consist of a highly no constructive critical supervisors, apathetic colleagues, a working team full of oppressive and distractive politics and other social dynamics (Miehl and Moffat, 2000).

The University of e Swatini and other faculties through their professionals have an obligation and responsibility to ensure that the students have hope in themselves and acquire the required skills and knowledge and remain focused on seeking and finding better ways of learning and be supported through different motivational discourses. These include monitoring the quality of students supervision, learning and the institutional broader contexts which may constrain students learning and supervision. This notes that students learning and research activities should be viewed from a broader perspective because there is no single educational project or strategy that can be understood and implemented in isolation from broader institutional contexts and practices. For the past years, policymakers and educators have been concerned with the institutional practices that overlooked the analysis of institutional structures and classroom educational practices that often result in students' dissatisfaction and disengagement in the education system or research projects (Gillborn and Mirza, 2000). Birmingham, (2009) also noted that institutions do not operate in a vacuum, but influenced or affected by institutional requirements and policies which are expected to reflect the social dynamics of professionals', students' needs and of the wider society.

II. Construct of disposition

The National Council For Accreditation Teacher Education (NCATE, 2001) had challenged professionals to pay attention to the construct of disposition or professional values, beliefs, attitudes, practices that are demonstrated through verbal and non-verbal behaviours (NCATE, 2008, PP 89-90), or a tendency to act in a certain way (Richert, 2007), regarding research supervision process. NCATE, 2001, P 53 defined disposition as caring, fairness, honesty, responsibility, social justice, committed to supportive learning environment and belief that all students can learn and succeed.

It could be unethical to sit on knowledge of bad process without documenting it and only venting about it after a bad outcome had been made (Herzog, 2004 p 229).

This Herzog, (2004) argument relates to this study which questioned the nature of the current supervision, disposition of hope, its value in promoting research students supervision and academic success at the faculty of education, University of e Swatini. The issues noted by Herzog should be looked at, particularly its implicit and explicit professional values, beliefs, attitudes, practices and other motivational discourses that are demonstrated through their verbal and non-verbal behaviours. The construct of disposition has an effect on students' hopeful thinking and this has a direct effect on students' success (Levi, 2014). Students' hopeful thinking and other motivational discourses are influenced by broader social contexts (policies, professionals' behaviours, leadership practices) (Idan and Mrgalit, 2013).

III. Broader contexts of research students and motivational discourses

The broader contexts of research students learning in institutions may include professional practices within their professional context, relationships among professionals and relevance of policies to research students' needs. Rahman, (2011) claimed that in an institution which emphasis the culture of integrity, accountability, transparency, members of the public expects institutions to have ethical committee guided by ethical codes specifying the guiding principles and standards of behaviour required of their relevant members. There is growing use of ethics in educational and non-educational organisations because of the fact that educational and capitalistic endeavour cannot succeed without ethics. The subject of institutional ethics is under scrutiny and pressures are on professionals to demonstrate their commitment to improve and maintain their ethical conduct (Rahman, 2011).

Relationships among professionals are a motivational discourse and it could move from vigorously, healthy to dangerously competitive or toxic one. Professional practices shape and reshape the institutions' contexts, professional and students' values, hope and students' performance (Hallinger et al. (2010). Jacobson, (2010) further argued that research in effective institutions revealed that climate in academic institutions, is a product of both professional practices and institutional contexts, and more often than not it contributes to students' performance. This notes that professional practices forms part of the motivational discourses and it is broader than the principal leadership practices. Jacobson, (2010), further claimed that if professional practices

are carefully monitored could help in building and strengthening professional relationships, and foster shared responsibilities and culture of transparency and accountability. Marsh and Craven, (2006) also emphasised that motivation in institutions are mediated by institutional practices and professional capacity to build and maintain hope among the students and professionals.

Education, through professionals' practices such as maintaining students' hope has the power to change the world in a positive way (Hope King and Waston, 2010). They further, suggested that professionals in America and elsewhere should embrace the hope which was embodied in former President of America Barak Obama, to truly transform the educational experience of students and research students. Freire, (1996) study emphasized the need to use hope as a lever for improving practice in education and in society. He viewed hope as a fundamental human need which cannot be separated from the societal struggle to change societies. Professionals (supervisors of research students) are expected to maintain hopefulness while executing their professional duties (Hope King and Waston, 2010).

IV. Hope and self-efficacy

Hope enhances the sense of determination and the ability to develop successful plans to reach goals (Du and King, 2013). Hope inculcates the culture of self-efficacy to both professionals and students as it influences their beliefs regarding their capabilities to produce given educational tasks and also motivates them to persevere in the face of obstacles and failures, and be resilient to adversity (Salanova et al. 2011). Bandura, (2012) claimed that people with self-efficacy beliefs (who believe in their ability to learn and achieve their goals) approach challenging tasks with positive feelings of conviction and hopeful thinking mind set. They reflect on their capability and other contexts to meet the demands and then be motivated to set expectations and work towards their achievement (Gadbois and Sturgeon, 2011). This suggests that individual self-efficacy is contextual oriented because one's level of self-efficacy and hope depend on both the task (educational project) and the context in which the task or educational project is undertaken (Bandura, 2012). O'Sullivan, (2011) studies also demonstrated that hope and self-efficacy were related to students' academic success and interpersonal wellbeing. Phan, (2009) study noted that hope was influenced by self-efficacy and Phan, (2013) study claimed that there was a significant positive impact of self-efficacy beliefs on the development of hope. Through hope, individuals or students can facilitate positive outcomes through their own planning and initiative actions regarding their educational projects (Synder, 2002). Students who exhibit visible behaviour and feelings of hope are likely to achieve academically by studying and investing time on research activities or school activities (Levi et al. 2014).

V. Working relationships context and hope

Change in professional working relationships, change in students' performance more often than not are influenced by the existence of hope in students and teachers hope in themselves (Birmingham, 2009). Hope motivates change in professional capacity to maintain students' improvement and institutions' capacity to initiate further institutional changes for improving students' learning (Marsh and Craven, 2006). Hope helps professionals and students to seek new ways and possibilities to challenge the mistaken belief that the existing institutional practices, policies and conditions are out of touch, unchallengeable or unchangeable. Hallinger et al. (2010) study further noted that hope makes a difference in motivating key educational related stakeholders and in influencing the quality of students learning, schooling process, quality of education and the larger society. Birmingham, (2009) also noted that hope is a motivating factor because it can orient professionals towards moral goodness. This relates to education because education is public good which aims at promoting moral values in society.

If there is hope for the flourishing of students which orients professionals towards students' flourishing or academic success, that could help them to organize their thinking and actions towards students' flourishing or academic success (Birmingham, 2009). This notes that hope and other institutional practices are expected to be directed towards the improvement of students learning by creating the necessary institutional conditions that cultivate hope, which supports effective teaching and learning which further urge and sustain continuous professional learning (Copeland, 2005).

Institutional contexts are taken into account because institutional failures or success are usually caused by individuals in the institutions and other institutional contexts (Copeland, 2005), for example, policies, could provide ethical boundaries of the institutions or professionals in their professional work. Policies and code of ethics are enabling documents which aimed at offering consistent guidance to professionals when they encounter confusing situations in their working places or professional work, means of enhancing public confidence and a source of support for all against any threat (Adams, et al. 2001).

More often, than not, supervision and other educational activities are practiced or done in an institutional contexts or environments that are filled with hope, psychological threat, uncertainties (exogenous

and endogenous factors), complexities and volatility (Rahman, 2011), their survivals or success depends on professionals' effort to change the environment.

VI. Hope and research activities

Hope as a key aspect of any educational activity and it is perceived as a delicate and complex educational process. Hope plays different major roles in students' and supervisors' supervision and in managing the complexities of the supervision process. One of the complexities is the management of hope for the students' success in research, which helps in motivating or orienting the supervisors towards research students' success. Hope also motivates both the students and supervisors to organise their thinking, in relation to anticipated research-related challenges (Birmingham, 2009).

The role of hope in teaching in higher education institutions and in students' research thesis has not drawn much attention among academics (Birmingham, 2009), yet it is important for students' success. Hope for a successful future is a fundamental motivation for students' academic success and it works with other motivational discourses, such as institutional policies. Birmingham, (2009) further noted that hope has the power to sustain, and bring comfort in hardships (emotional related stress, poor professional working relationship between supervisor and students), hope allows the reasoning mind (cognitive power) to operate properly for meaningful research activities and learning. Hope is subjected to different influences and it has some influences itself. For example, hope has the potential to intersect with research students' work, professional judgement, thinking and practices. On the other hand, hope could also be impacted by institutional related policies and institutional leadership practices (Birmingham, 2009).

VII. Hope and Defiance of adversity in educational research

Hope cultivates optimism, spirit of defiance of adversity, distress, comfort in loss, and students and supervisors persistence in hardship (Birmingham, 2009), supervisors motivated by hope for their research students success tend to be courageous in the face of challenges and in challenging situations and risks of their careers, reputations.

In his study of hope, Birmingham, (2009) emphasised that hope is an engine for students success but a delicate educational asset, which needs to be treated with care, because it could be diminished. Further, it needs to be handled with sensitivity because of its influence on the supervision process itself, supervisors' career, students' future career and in broader society. Today's societies are expected to be characterised by the culture of care and compassion, and these are products of educational institutions, Rynes, (2012) stated that care and compassion have much to contribute to today's interconnected world. Birmingham, (2009) further noted that though hope, care and compassion can diminish but they could be cultivated, maintained and sustained by supervisors and research students, if they have hope in themselves to meet challenges related to supervision. Research students' supervision, as the supervision itself is so challenging, thus requires both the students and supervisor to have a sheer determination that keep them hopeful for the research student's progress despite their frequent setbacks (Richert, 2007). Supervisors and students without the command of hope are more often subjected to frustrations, burnout, attritions and despair. When there is absence of hope or it diminishes, other key dispositions diminish. For example, the supervisors may not have the courage to be caring, being fair, honest, responsible, committed to a safe and supportive learning environment for the research students. These dispositions rest on a foundation of hope, when hope is disturbed, other dispositions (positive attitudes, passion, professional values) will not remain (Birmingham, 2009), and this may lead to students' despair, hopelessness in a research process. This usually happens when a research student encounters an overwhelmingly frustrating or very challenging supervision situations, denial of the difficulty situation of the research students' situation and wrongly judging students educational capabilities.

VIII. Institutional leaderships institutional contexts, motivational discourse and hope in research

Institutional leadership involves multilayers of professionals' practices and contexts which influence students' hope and success. The supervisor's passion for the socially just treatment for research students and the desire to make a difference in the educational lives of research students form part of institutional leadership practices. In many ways the supervisor find himself or herself unknowingly assuming leadership practices and inculcating the culture of hope and care among the research students (Jacobson, 2010). For example, professionals' practices which form part of institutional leadership are the key in creating and recreating hope and the research environment for research students. Research students' learning environment may bring hope where there is no hope. For example, supervisors' desire to make a difference in research students' academic lives could bring hope and shape students' motivation and success.

Motivational leadership takes into account the diversity of contexts that influence research students' professional activities. These contexts may include the nature of the professional relationship which

exists between the research students and supervisors. The nature of the relationship tends to have an influence on the character of the research students and the research process itself. Good professional relationships among and between the students and the supervisor could breed hope, trust, cooperation and a culture of discussing non-discussable matters (management of the research programme, related policies and supervisors practices). Management of the any educational programme, including students' supervision has significant effects on students' academic success (Grant, 2003). Management of students' supervision depends on collective leadership. Both supervisor and research students' practices remains the key in creating, improving and sustaining the supervision and learning environment. These are necessary ingredients and prerequisites for every student's motivational stimulus and facilitators of hope and catalysts for students' educational success. Research students' hope and motivation could be viewed as a conceptual lens or diagnostic tool for analysing their academic practices, other professionals and research students' supervisors' practices. Students' hope and motivation allow practitioners to dialogue about their practices and micro politics in relation to students' research and learning (Leithwood et al. (2009).

Supervisors and other related professionals practices are expected to be characterised by collective leadership, multidepartment practices, where professional activities are stretched across different departments and where students' research work remain greater than the individual positions (Spillane, 2006). Students' supervision as an aspect of teaching and learning is collective activity that works through and within professional relationships rather than an individual action (Leithwood et al. (2009), it is a collective organisational activity because it is hard to find any individual who is responsible for the achievement of students' supervision. Research students' supervision is perceived as a collective obligation and responsibility to be achieved through and within professional relationship with multiple benefits. It is of multiple benefits because it enhances opportunities for both the students and professionals to benefit from the capacities of each other. Leithwood et al. (2009) claimed that any educational activity, be research or teaching and learning permit those involved to capitalize on the range of their individual and collective strengths, appreciation of interdependence and an understanding on how one's behaviour affect the educational project or research as a whole.

IX. Passion for research students' success breeds hope

Students' intellectual understanding is necessary for research students' success, but not sufficient. Research students' success requires among other factors, supervisor's passion for research, and emotional engagement to students' success. Students' performance has an emotions and passion elements (Strivastava, 2010), both the supervisor and students should display zeal, ardour, enthusiasm and passion for the research work. Passion allows professionals including research supervisors to have a singular focus and dedication to their professional tasks at hand (Strivastava, 2010), it has a sustaining motivational effect on both students and professionals in relation to their work. Albion, (2000) claimed that passion helps professional to view students and their academic work as factors of central concerns and their institutions as of instrumental value to facilitates students' success. Within, the research context, research activity is often viewed as knowledge production educational process central to the existence of educational institutions. It is important that researchers produce fundamental knowledge which can be used to improve institutional practice and to develop practical theory (Herzog, 2004).

Swaziland and elsewhere

Students have been concerned about their academic supervision, particularly unprofessional supervision in academic research activities in different countries including Swaziland (Dlamini, 2018; De wet, 2001; Grant, 2003). Students have been calling for inclusive supervision, which is an aspect of inclusive education, aiming at the achievement of an inclusive professional development in educational institutions and society (Dlamini, 2018).

Unprofessional or exclusionary supervision, characterised by lack of care, compassion and hope has been a concern because of its detrimental effects in students' learning, emotional wellbeing and social cost to the individual students', families, institutions' image, communities and wider societies (Dlamini, 2018).

The inevitable pain generated by unprofessional supervision within educational institutions in Swaziland and elsewhere requires a collective academic response. It challenges educational institutions to adopt a more explicit focus on professionalism and professional values; compassion, care and hope (Dlamini, 2018; levi, 2014). Dlamini, (2018) study revealed that supervisors need to be sensitivity to their work and be aware that being sensitive has a potential of building hope, trust, accountability and good work ethics in research and other educational activities. Dlamini, (2018) noted that both supervisors and research students should keep on reflecting on their current and past practices for learning purposes. This suggests that supervision of students is currently characterised by no reflective practice or spontaneous process of engaging in self-dialogue and self-observation on key educational aspects such as hope, empathy, care and compassion, and their influence on learning. That means, reflective practice is a self-recall of the individual's past and present experiences (Yip,

2006 p 780), memories are aroused when recalling all these experiences, happy and unhappy, encouraging as well as discouraging, pleasurable or traumatic memories.

X. Methodology of the study

This is a study of Masters Research students' and a supervisor's reflection and narratives on motivational discourses and dispositions of hope in the supervision processes at the faculty of education, University of ESwatini. The aim of this study is to present the impact of the motivational discourse and disposition of hope on students' supervision through reflection.

In this study, a qualitative approach was used because of the focus of the study, which reflects on the disposition of hope in the supervision of Masters' students. Qualitative approach was used in this study because it was considered as helpful and relevant when researching complex matters in education and in other social related studies. Supervision of students' thesis needs to be anchored on qualitative approach because it is a complex educational matter. As Grant, (2003) noted that students' experiences supervision as a complex and unstable process because it involves complex academic and interpersonal skills and institutional practices. Qualitative approach has the potential of capturing the dynamics and realities of supervision (Yin, 2006).

XI. Study design

The study was designed to be descriptive in nature, using qualitative data collection procedures. This is an ethnographic and reflective study which explores the students' lived experiences on motivational discourses and disposition of hope in supervision. Qualitative approach was adopted for the empirical work because it allowed visible and invisible complex research questions and practices to be investigated in depth. Students' supervision is a complex matter because of its peculiarly intense and negotiated character and impact on character of the research students and the supervisors (Grant, 2003). Supervision is complex because it is shaped and framed by broader layers of contexts and dynamics within and between the contexts. These contexts could be easily understood and unpacked by the **Self-Efficacy and Hope two-way interaction model** see figure 1 and the social contrast theory which helps in explaining the endogenous and exogenous factors which motivates research students or professionals in schools while executing their professionals duties.



Figure 1: Self-Efficacy and Hope two- way interaction model

The interaction model and social contrast theory helped to unpack the complex motivational discourses and different ways in which power relationships were mediated at different levels of the students' research process. Motivational discourses in particular cannot be viewed in isolation or be isolated from the different levels of supervision practices. This has a potential of avoiding drawing a simplistic and one sided conclusion about the influences of the different motivational discourses (policy matters, professionals and students practices) on research students success. Students supervision should not only focus on the supervision per se but

also on policies and procedures of the institution and other core sets of beliefs that will allow research students to interact appropriately in different future settings (Eney and Davidson, 2012). The importance of policies and core sets of beliefs in students' supervision revealed that any research oriented policy development without the input of those students who actually experience the effects or brunt of the policies and procedures is demotivating to them (Eney and Davidson, 2012).

This model links with this ethnographic research study, which aims at uncovering the links between the professionals' practices, policies and other institutional processes. Ethnographic and reflective studies analysis peoples' practices and knowledge through their semiotic practices and unpack the roles of institutions policies in legitimising negative motivational discourses and other injustices during the research process. Talmy, (2013) had emphasised that critical ethnographers are committed to describing institutional practices such individual or institutional racism, discrimination, social inequality, transforming these unfavourable conditions and maintaining a critically reflexive researcher stance and ethic care. Ethic care or ethic sensitivity is a key ingredient of any well –run institution or society (Noreen, 1988). Rahman, (2011) claimed that once the pendulum of ethics loses its regular power it creates institutional turmoil on its key mandate, teaching and learning. An ethnographic research process as students' research itself requires the researchers' care and professionalism (van Manen, 2011).

The Self-Efficacy and Hope two- way interaction model in figure 1 and social contrast theory helped the researcher to achieve this research objective:

- (a) To describe how institutional contexts (professional practices and policies) influenced research students' hope during their research journey/process at University of Swaziland, Faculty of Education 2013- 2018.

Different data collections tools were used and these include interviews, observation and documentary evidence. Van Manen (2011) claimed that an ethnographic study is likely to use interviews (usually more like a conversation rather than a standard interviews. Conversations with research students from the department of Curriculum and Teaching and Education Foundation and Management were done informally in different locations. Thus, field-notes were accumulated. Direct observation of events (proposals' presentations, thesis defences and students' behaviours also observed) and analysis of documents (research students related policies, supervisors' comments and examiners' feedback) were analysed. Observation was used to explore the visible and invisible practices in the communication between supervisors and research students that contribute to students' hopelessness and despair and eventually dropping out from the research process.

XII. Population

The population of the study consists of 15 students who were under my professional care for their research processes and preparing for their proposals and those engaged in the actual research process between 2014-2018 academic years.

XIII. Sample

The 15 research students were sampled through the convenient sampling procedure and criterion purposive sampling procedure. The majority of the students were referred to the researcher after they had some complexities with their previous supervisors and they had some experiences to reflect on. Moon, (1999) stated that reflective study draws on both past and present experiences, and use the experiences to inform future practices. Reflective practice involves recalling happy and unhappy experiences, encouraging, discouraging memories and discovering pleasurable or traumatic memories (Yip, 2006, p 780).

These students were different from those who were working with supervisors of their choice (supervisors chosen by them, not for them). These students were easily observed and conversation with them was convenient, and thus makes it easier to collect the data. The observation and conversation processes stated during the preparations and presentations of the proposals and continued during the research process itself.

The researcher had some conversations which ranged between 20 – 25 minutes per section almost every Fridays and Saturdays afternoon. These conversations helped in teasing out the key information and other processes such as existence of prejudice, racism and exclusionary practices.

Observations of the selected research students' behaviours during the research process, their presentations of proposals and thesis viva or defences were used to gather the data. The observations were conducted every session. These research sessions were conducted on Fridays afternoon and Saturdays, where both the supervisor and research students engaged in conversations related to the research processes.

Documents such as external examiners reports and policies relating to students supervision were used as sources of data. These documents were used because it provided the data necessary to examine the use of University related policies and procedures by departments regarding students' supervision and oral examinations. The latter emphasises the appropriateness of discourse analysis as a research analysis tool in

studies such as students’ supervision which are more often than not embedded in institutional practices such as racism, prejudice and exclusionary practices. Van Dijk, (1997) stated that discourses analysis plays an important role in understanding the production and reproduction of prejudice and racism in different contexts (such as students’ supervision) through texts or documents. Terre Blache and Durrheim, (1999, P 154) define discourse analysis as the act of showing how certain discourses (practices) are deployed to achieve particular effects in a specific project or mission. This relates to this study because students supervision aims at achieving particular effects (producing independent researchers and professionals). The discourse analysis was helpful in showing how certain discourses or practices were deployed by both supervisors and Examiners during the research processes. The discourses and practices involved the handling of research oriented matters by relevant offices (Head of Departments and Coordinator of research and Director of the post graduate research).

The discourse analysis is helpful in understanding how a particular effect of the broader context in which the supervision process occurs (De wet, 2001). In this study discourse analysis was also helpful in understanding how motivational discourses affected the research students’ supervision processes. This was achieved through engaging in detailed readings of different texts (University reports, policies and interview texts) to show implicit and explicit patterns of practices of the students’ supervision process and other related matters that affect students’ motivation. Terre Blanche and Durrheim, (1990) emphasised that more often than not, everything is part of everything else, so isolating students’ supervision from the institutional, supervisors’ and students’ cultures is of necessity already to misunderstand it. To understand students’ motivational discourses requires researchers to place the institutional contexts supervisors’ practices and the cultures such as professionalism at the centre of the research equation. Terre Blanche and Durrheim, (1990) further stated that discourse analysis assists researcher to reflect on research contexts and textual activities such as interview and policy activities where the researchers: looking for binary ideas, opposing ideas on the research matter, identifying recurrent practices, terms, phrases on the texts, picking ideas from what is said and how it is said about subject matter or students’ supervision. Stevens (1998) further emphasised the appropriateness of discourse analysis as a research instrument in studies usually affected by prejudice and racism. Study on students’ supervision are usually affected by prejudice and racism (Grant, 2003), discourse analysis plays a key role in understanding the production and reproduction of unbalance power relationship, prejudice and racism in research students supervision.

XIV. Data analysis

Data collected from observations and students’ conversations were analysed using the discourses analysis procedures and summarised in descriptive form in relation to the motivational discourses and dispositions observed and deduced from the conversations with students. The data were inductively analysed and developed into a list and then presented in tables (see **table 1 proposal presentations observations; table 2 students conversation data**).

Table 1 Proposal Presentations Observations;

Observed Academics behaviours	Observed Research students behaviours
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Their reaction to students appeared to be an attack; • Their behaviour reinforced inequality of access to education; • Their behaviour, comments created stress, tension and self-doubt among students; • Their behaviour depicted less focus on students’ hope sensitivity; • Their behaviour appeared directly or indirectly legitimised departmental and institutional racism; • Their behaviour more concern about their reputation rather than students interests; • Their behaviour less concern about the spirit of cultivating optimism among students; • Their behaviour depicted less concern about the cultivating the spirit of defiance of adversity; • Their behaviour depicted that the exercise of ethics of care were undermined; • Their behaviour appeared undermining students’ intelligence; • Disagreement among professionals breeds confusion among students. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Proposal presentations related remarks undermined students’ efficacy and inculcated the culture of hopelessness; • Proposal presentations destabilised the sense of efficacy before it firmly establishes itself; • Proposal presentations related remarks undermined students effort and passion; • Proposal presentations related remarks led to students reduction in self-efficacy; • Students’ were obsessed with supervisors’ behaviours and practices; • Students’ unpreparedness on the proposals; • Supervisors’ unprofessional behaviours and practices made students to worry far too much about their ability and not enough about strategies that must be employed to succeed; • Proposals were perceived as battlefield rather than an academic activity.

Table 2; Students’ conversation data).

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Supervisors overlooked the costs (emotional costs and financial costs) involved in student staying too long on the research programme; • Inappropriate professionals comments or remarks increased the research students search for negative evidence on his or her part or supervisors’ part;- students kept asking questions: I’m good enough to be a research student or is the supervisor good enough?;
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- Inappropriate research conditions threatened research student's identity (suitability for the research) and professional identity;
- Students' intelligence undermined;
- Hope was disturbed which led to students' despair, hopelessness in the research process;
- Students encountered overwhelmingly frustrating situations, characterised by absence of hope in themselves, supervisors and the supervision processes;
- Institutional contexts facilitated the state of hopelessness;
- Existing research related policies breeds sense of hopelessness;
- Unprofessional behaviours among professionals-you will not succeed under that supervision-confused students;
- Students social persuasion/persuasive boots was undermined, they believed that they doubted that they have what it takes to succeed;
- Cognitive and emotional states in judging their capabilities and supervisors capabilities were undermined;
- Emotional states clouded their thinking capabilities to judge their efficacy;
- Students were beset by self-doubts, had negative mood which affected or undermined their motivation;
- Students had disbelief in themselves and their capabilities;
- Students were persuaded that they lack capabilities and implicitly acted on those misconceptions;
- Students overlooked their ability to reflect on ability to meet the research related demands and set specific tasks to achieve;
- Supervisors' failure to ask the research students themselves what they to get out of the research thesis, added self-doubt or feeling of exploitation;
- Professionals' failure to reflect on institutional contexts (research policies, professionals practices, code of ethics) with the aim of transforming students research related practice;
- An oppressive supervision environment, characterised by imbalance of power in a professional working environment
- Lack of expertise in pedagogy that builds confidence in students and which affirms students' research effort.

The trends and patterns on the data were used to identify the motivational discourses which influenced research students' hope in different ways during their research processes of their masters' thesis in 2014-2018.

XV. Findings

The objective of the study was to describe the motivational discourses of 15 selected research masters students from the faculty of education, University of Swaziland. The research students and academics were observed and had some conversations on motivational discourses (institutional contexts and students' hope, students' self-efficacy, professional practices and policies) (See Table 1 and 2).

XVI. Institutional contexts (professionals' practices)

Freire, (1996) clearly articulated the need to use hope to transform institutional contexts and circumstances to improve any education project including research students' supervision. He further claimed that professionals who are involved in educational related projects need to maintain hopefulness while struggling to ensure the improvement of education for all. The findings of the study indicated that institutional contexts facilitated the state of hopelessness among students. The observed students and professionals implicitly and explicitly demonstrated behaviour which destabilised the sense of efficacy before it firmly establishes itself among the students.

The study revealed that the inappropriate professionals' comments or remarks increased the research students search for negative evidence on his or her part or supervisors' part. The students kept on asking questions: I'm good enough to be a research student or is the supervisor good enough? Some of the observed students demonstrated poor working relationship or uncooperative behaviour with the supervisors because of unprofessional comments made by some supervisors. This revealed that some supervisors were unable to develop and secure a desirable learning approach and environments, which stimulate the desired interests, develops the thinking ability and a clear focus, a more valuable tool in a research activity. The findings also indicated that some supervisors through their unprofessional practices failed to realise the connection between their own practices or behaviours and the research students' success. They kept on placing blame on factors beyond the research students control, such as proficiency in English and limited students motivation on the research process. This made the research students not to take risk and move beyond the current zone of competence and if things go wrong they started to believe that they lack innate ability to accomplish the research thesis.

XVII. Students' Hope

Birmingham (2009) hope can be nurtured and be destroyed in any educational activity such as teaching and learning and students' supervision processes. He further notes that hope encourage, sustain and bring comfort in hardships. The findings of the study indicated that professionals' behaviours facilitated the state of hopelessness among students and were encountered overwhelmingly frustrating situations, characterised by absence of hope in themselves, supervisors and the supervision processes itself. The study noted that professionals' practices created a hopeless environment for the research students and disrupted the other key concepts such as morality. Birmingham, (2009) study also indicated that hope is essentially interwoven with

other moral concepts: caring, honesty, responsibility, social justice and commitment to a supportive learning environment. The study also indicated that the disruption of hope among the research students also disturbed the students' passion and motivation for their education. Birmingham (2009) study revealed that hope, passion and motivation are intertwined or hope is an irascible passion, motivation that arises more from the situations or research related processes.

The study indicated that the disruption of students hope by institutional contexts affected or disrupted other key complex networks of the research processes: orientations, knowledge, skills, and values necessary for building research communities of practice. It was observed that the disruption of hope among the professionals affected their orientation towards moral goodness. For example, professionals' hope for the success of research students which orients them towards the students flourishing was also disturbed. Birmingham, (2009) study findings also revealed that the existence of professionals hope for their students success help them to organize their thinking and actions towards students flourishing or success. His study findings also indicated that professionals motivated by hope for their students tend to be exceptionally courageous in the face of challenges and risks of their careers, reputations.

Students' hope and institutional research related policies

The study findings revealed that the absence of clear code of ethics which relate to research students made them to lose hope to the relevant office and made them to worry far too much about ethics matters and not enough about strategies that must be employed to succeed. The none existence of research related policies, mechanisms to help research students with research related questions and the absence of institutional self-observation breed a sense of hopelessness among the students and mistrust. Yip, (2006) study findings indicated that the absence of institutional self-observation, self-reflection and self-analysis on institutional context (research related policies) in educational organisations affect research students' hope, yet the essence of research activity, requires hope.

The findings of the study indicated that the absence of a close or sub-section which states how students and supervisors may ask some clarifications on the External Examiners' reports was demoralising and dehumanising to the research students and supervisor (s). It was observed that the External Examiner's decision was not debated in relation to students' performance on the oral examination. It was also observed that the role of the supervisor (s) within the Thesis Examination Committee was not clear and it was confusing. For example, one of the supervisors was told not to say a word while another was given the opportunity to air his views. All these brought some confusion on how the Thesis Examination Committee functions and a sense of hopelessness and frustrations.

Observations of the Thesis Examination Committee suggested that it lacked credibility and moral standards necessary for guiding professionals' behaviours in their place of work. This observed behaviour created inappropriate research conditions which threatened the research students' self-identity and professional identity.

XVIII. Conclusion

The study concluded that Professionals' unprofessional behaviours and practices, and Students' obsession with supervisors' behaviours and practices made them to lose hope to themselves and worry far too much about their ability and not enough about strategies that must be employed to succeed in their research thesis. These institutional contexts became a challenge to Supervisor's effort to, in activating students' hope that strengthens and defies adversity during the research process. Currently, the Faculty and other related offices may appear reinforcing social and economic inequality in education and society. Yet, higher institutions are mandated or expected to equip students with skills for their adult life, capable to generate inclusive economic and none-economic benefits to individual citizens and larger society.

The study concluded that the institutional contexts (professionals' practices and policies) demoralised and dehumanised some research students because stress, non-cooperative culture, tension and self-doubt among students were created. Eventually, some lost hope in themselves and their supervisors.

The study concluded that the institutional contexts (professionals' practices and policies) kept on overlooking the fact that undertaking education or research activity in higher institutions particularly in times of economic challenges involves costs: emotional costs, financial costs, direct costs and opportunity costs of time spent in education. This also maintained the mistaken belief among students that the existing institutional practices, policies and conditions are out of touch, unchallengeable or unchangeable.

It was concluded that the institution through its relevant office or Faculty of Education was not monitoring the quality of students' supervision, learning and the institutional broader contexts (or policies and professionals' practices) which constrain research students learning and supervision.

The study concluded that the existing research related policies; mechanisms to help research students with unanswered questions which emanate from External Examiners reports and the absence of institutional self-observation and self-reflection breed a sense of hopelessness and mistrust among the students;

The study concluded that the disposition of hope, passion, persistence and disciplined commitment to social justice may affect research student's success.

XIX. Recommendations

- More research on hope could be encouraged higher institutions to bring understanding on the power of hope in influencing both the supervisor and students' research work. As noted that Supervisors and students without the command of hope are more often subjected to frustrations, burnout, attritions and despair, and other key dispositions of hope also diminish;
- More reflective study on institutional contexts (professionals' practices and policies) as motivating discourses could be encouraged in institutions of higher learning;
- The culture of reflective practice among supervisors and students could be encouraged. Reflecting on the many wide and varied educational challenges of the relevant departments may help both research students and supervisors to refine their ideas and practices for the benefit of the institution and society. It may also help them to navigate supervision related change and uncertainties;
- Thesis Examination Committee functions need to be guided by a clear code of practice to avoid the current sense of hopelessness and frustrations experienced by both students and supervisors;
- Students should be provided with a space to relate their struggle of dealing with supervision in the absence of hope caused by oppressive learning environments;
- The Post Graduate office should consider putting in place clear mechanisms which urge the Thesis Examination Committee **collectively** to act or engage in behaviour that conforms to agreed –upon expectations.

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