Exploring Paradigmatic Philosophical Foundations for Better Research Quality in Tanzania Universities via Grounded Theory

Romwald Joseph Kairembo
The Open University of Tanzania
The Faculty of Education
Department of Educational Foundations
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Correspondence: romwald.kairembo@out.ac.tz
+255752487599
ORCID: 0000-0001-8696-1731

Abstract
This study investigated how Tanzanian Master's students' research paradigms impact their dissertation composition, supervision, defense, and final grades. It highlights that researchers often neglect the importance of paradigm clarity and relevance in the knowledge creation process, affecting thesis assessments. Using Charmaz's 2006 Grounded Theory (GT) with inductive logic research, a qualitative approach, and multivariate descriptive design were employed. The study saturated sampled size involved 67 students, 6 external examiners (EEs), and 14 supervisors through triangulated sampling techniques. The Kaiser Oklin Measure (KMO) and Bartlets' tests ensured sample size adequacy and data relevancy. Multiple methods of: interviews, primary documents, and observations collected data. Data were collected via multiple methods of: semi structured interviews, documents, and observations. Interviews, primary documents, observation schedules and non parametric Likert scale intruments collected data. Multiple methods of: sorting, coding, memoing, theme building analysed qualitative data. The triangulated descriptive analysis techniques analysed the ordinal and nominal data. The analysis revealed that students who clarified their research paradigm and design theme received higher grades (A or B+), boosting their GPA. In contrast, students who failed to clarify these themes were graded lower, with scores implying B (Flat), C, D, or E grades, reducing their GPA. The findings suggested that examiners implicitly base their grading on paradigm clarity. The study three outcomes included: generated a mid-range Grounded Theory, three fresh hypotheses and a holistic model to address the lack of clarity in paradigms within universities. It urges

further research to improve a substantive theory emerged, test the three new hypotheses and to try a constituted holistic model of: paradigm, ontology, epistemology, methodology, axiology, logic, rhetorical language (POEMALoR) for easening paradigm attributes' clarity among university novice researchers .This paper is organised on subsections of: Introduction covering: study background, objectives, literature review, significance and methodology. Then follows data findings and discussion, it ends with conclusion and recommendation.

Keywords: *Assessment, distance learning, grounded theory, paradigms, philosophy.*

INTRODUCTION

This study investigated the confusion surrounding research paradigms in higher education, focusing on whether university faculty in the natural and social sciences possess sufficient knowledge to effectively guide students, and the extent to which paradigms influence dissertation quality. Additionally, it examined how often universities educate postgraduate students on research paradigms. Originally, Kuhn is said to have invented the term paradigm, where he was referring to ever emerging new concepts among scientists and technocrats in their daily works. The innovator noted how such new concepts; replace the old ones, hence causing the unending scientific revolutions. Kuhn (1962) thus, introduced and popularised the term "paradigm", referring to shifts in scientific thought that lead to the emergence of new concepts capable of replacing outdated ones. These shifts can drive scientific or technological revolutions, such as the transition from analogue to digital technologies. Despite criticisms, Kuhn's idea of paradigm shifts remains vital for understanding changes across diverse fields such as history, economics, politics, and culture. Originally associated with the natural sciences, paradigms now encompass broader worldviews, influencing key research decisions in methodology, epistemology, and ontology (Guba & Lincoln, 1994; Omari, 2011; Kivunja & Kuyini, 2017). Daniel and Yosoff (2005) and Kikula and Qorro (2007) also contribute to this discourse, highlighting the growing importance of paradigms in shaping academic research across disciplines.

Thales (624-548 B.C.E.) challenged European mythological beliefs and founded formal philosophy (Walsh, 1987). This does not mean Africans and Orients lacked mythical and critical thinkers; however, there are no written records. Philosophical and theological paradigms dominated

intellectual thought until the Enlightenment introduced metaphysical abstractions like gravity and nature (Walsh, 1987). Post-positivists believed that truth stems from social production and lacks objectivity, whereas positivists like Augustine Comte placed a high value on empirical knowledge. The "paradigm wars" of the 1970s to early 2000s involved positivists, anti-positivists, and post-positivists' disagreements over merging qualitative and quantitative methodologies. Philosophical problems about reality, knowledge, and values in study design persist (Tashakkori & Teddlie, 1998). In studies from UDSM and Malaysia University, the lack of a unified conceptual framework for education has caused confusion and incorrect research designs (Omari & Sumra, 1997; Daniel & Yosoff, 2005). Most research texts don't sufficiently explain paradigms, leaving new researchers unguided (Guba & Lincoln, 1994; Mackenzie & Knipe, 2006). Paradigm ambiguity affects dissertation and thesis quality, hindering scientific advancement. To improve higher education research outcomes, the study recommends a paradigm model that includes ontology, epistemology, and methodology (Collis & Hussey, 2013). Some scientists say science and philosophy have always been separate, but this is uncertain. They say that discussing paradigms and their philosophical basis wastes natural and social scientists' time (Silverman, 2010). The nature of scientific concepts intertwines metaphysics and the sciences. After Auguste's invention of induction, logical positivists questioned its practical applications. As if those are the only roles of ideas in study, philosophy is not irrelevant because it cannot solve problems quickly and practically. Crawler (2013) believes each study improves positivism, post-positivism, feminism, critical theory, or constructivism. Crawler says philosophy helps researchers understand the inquiry system and their prejudices. Philosophers can challenge topic groupings (Dobson, 2002; Web Crawler, 2013). Philosophy must be analytic to be scientific, according to Auguste Comte (1798–1857) (Walsh, 1987, 476). Carr (1995) questions if educational researchers may abandon their philosophy to support their findings on teaching and learning processes. Carr claims that education borrows from psychology, sociology, and philosophy. According to Dobson (2002), researchers use philosophy to justify their decisions by understanding alternative philosophical viewpoints. Carr suggests that educational scholars may study educational principles but still have philosophy and values (Carr, 1995, 90–97). Globally, research philosophy was scarce, and until the eve of this study, the researcher failed to find adequate studies on the topic, forcing the researcher to shift from using deductive logic to exploring empirical research to identify knowledge gaps. The majority of the

theoretical literature reviewed included the following: Shapere, 1972; Copleston, 1976; McNamara, 1979; Patton, 1990; Teays, 1995; Walonick, 1993; Omari & Sumra, 1997; Bogdan & Biklen, 1998; Day, 1998; Tashakkori & Teddlie, 1998; Williams, 1998; Ratzsch, 2000:45; Weidhorn, 2001; Dobson, 2002; Agrwaal, 2003; Daniel & Yosoff 2005; Dronen, 2006; Starr-Glass & Ali, 2012; Hussain None of those theoretical authors wanted to do an empirical investigation on how research paradigm clarity affects dissertation and thesis quality.

Nevertheless, the researcher encountered a few deductive studies including: Daniel and Yosoff (2005) reporting, about confusion observed about the wrongly emerging research paradigms, where research approaches and designs are also perceived by students as paradigms in Asia, at the university of Malaysia. Anderson (1993) studied social and political science students at Alaska University, to investigate on whether there existed the relationship between the self-directed learning and performance. Specifically, it determined whether there were possible areas of student individuality, and uniqueness that might contribute to successful completion of the traditional classroom courses. At Hellenic Open University (HOU) in Greece Panagiotakoupoulos & Vergidis (2004) studied, the root causes of students' increase rate in dropout. Specifically, it established the extent at which students dropped out. It assessed the student and non-related reasons for the dropout. That study too, found out that most of the learners at Hellenic Open University (HOU) were the employed workers, though no statistical significant was shown on whether being employed was a factor for dropout or not. Starr-Glass and Ali (2012) in Czech Republic did another study, about double standards in assessing dissertations. That study 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. It unveiled that assessment the process is a part of pedagogical beliefs and axiological components regarded as paradigms. The researchers found out that there existed competing and conflicting paradigms, which dominate educational evaluation of dissertations. In the 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. Through interviews they studied twelve lecturers on the role of set criteria in assessing learners' assignments. The researchers found that tutor assessors used holistic approach rather than analytical judgment. Also, the study found that a good number of assessors were not using the prescribed criteria during the marking of examinations and

assignments. In Africa, Nigerian researchers Olakulehin and Ojo (2008), repot about factors for low completion of the dissertations by students of the postgraduate diploma (PGDE) programme by distance mode at the Open University of Nigeria (OUN). It found that many respondents were faced with problem of identifying suitable research topics and supervisors. In Tanzania Kikula and Qorro (2007), the trend of acceptance rates for each categories applying research funds, found that the M.A degree graduates' proposals applying the fund for research on poverty alleviation, had the highest rate of errors, than those of Bachelors and PhDs degree holders. Surprisingly, on the acceptance criterion, the rejected rate of the M.A higher, though their accepted rated overshadowed those of PhD degree holders. All these studies reviewed had strengths in studying, the theme related to this study. However, critically speaking, the empirical studies reviewed fell short of not addressing the raised research study, inquiring, 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? Until this study was conducted, there was scarce of literature addressing the philosophical puzzle in form of the raised grand research question on how the clarity of paradigm not only could raise or lower students' performance but also their completion and graduation.

So, inductively on one hand, the researcher encountered with the first phenomenon at the Open University of Tanzania in a primary document named the Facts and Figures labeled OUTFAFI (2014) for this study portrayed in Table 1.

Table 1: Post graduate Masters Process Enrolment versus Completion Progress of Faculty (X)

	ENROLMENT TREND					COMPLETION (GRADUATION) TREND				
Years	M Dist. Ed.	M.Ed. Thesis	MED. APPS.	MED. ODL	**G.Tot.**	M.Dist. Ed.	M.Ed. Thesis	MED. (APPS)	MED. ODL	**G.Tot.**
2001	5	22	0	---	27	---	---	---	---	0
2002	14	9	0	---	23	---	---	---	---	0
2003	30	5	0	---	35	---	---	---	---	0
2004	35	0	0	---	35	---	---	---	---	0
2005	38	1	0	---	39	---	2	---	---	2
2006	0	0	52	---	52	---	0	---	---	0
2007	129	0	50	---	179	---	2	---	---	2
2008	20	0	140	---	160	---	2	---	---	2
2009	14	0	90	---	104	3	0	---	---	3
2010	4	0	269	---	273	8	0	4	---	12
2011	20	0	541	---	561	5	0	9	---	14
2012	20	0	539	74	633	0	2	20	---	22
2013	0	0	711	79	790	3	0	48	1	52
Total	**329**	**37**	**2392**	**153**	**2911**	**19**	**8**	**81**	**1**	**109**

Source: Source: OUTFAFI (2014).

The data presented in Table 1 highlights the early development of faculties at the Open University (OUT). The researcher at the Open University (OUT) selected two primary faculties, X and Y, based on their larger student enrolments compared to other faculties, as revealed in the initial documentation (OUT, 2014). The researcher compared these faculties based on two key processes: student enrolment and course completion, followed by the construction of knowledge through dissertations or theses. Successful completion of a dissertation or thesis is a prerequisite for graduation. Table 1 also outlines the history of the master's programs at OUT, which began in 2001. By 2014, Faculty X had enrolled 2,911 Master's candidates (OUT FAFI, 2014). OUT's policy expects students to complete their master's programs within five years (OUT, 2014:183). However, the data in Table 1 shows that only 2 out of 27 candidates (7.4%) who began in 2001 graduated within the expected

timeframe, while 25 students (92.6%) failed to do so (Table 1.7; OUT FAFI, 2014). This represents a significant underperformance trend.

Further data from Table 1.7 shows that by 2013, out of 2,911 enrolled candidates, only 109 graduated within the prescribed five-year period, leaving 2,802 (92.52%) who did not complete their degrees on time (OUT FAFI, 2014). This analysis suggests a major discrepancy between the high enrolment rates in Faculty X and the low completion rates. Despite significant student intake, the vast majority was unable to complete their coursework and dissertations within the set deadline, signaling an ongoing underperformance issue (OUT FAFI, 2014). The underperformance scenarios in terms of mismatching enrolment versus completion rates at OUT emerged from this initial analysis. For the sake of clarity, the researcher compared two OUT X and Y faculties on the same processes of enrolment and the graduation rates in the same period as per OUTFAFI (2014) document in Table 2 reveals.

Table 2: Post graduate Masters Enrolment versus Completion Progress (FBM)

	Enrolment trend				**Completion (graduation)trend**			
Years	MBA	MHRM	MPM	**G.Tot.**	MBA	MHRM	MPM	**G.Tot.**
2001	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
2002	12	0	0	12	0	0	0	0
2003	12	0	0	12	0	0	0	0
2004	236	0	0	236	0	0	0	0
2005	169	0	0	169	0	0	0	0
2006	553	0	0	553	0	0	0	0
2007	857	0	0	857	9	0	0	9
2008	333	0	0	333	22	0	0	22
2009	493	0	0	493	97	0	0	97
2010	629	0	0	629	122	0	0	122
2011	585	125	0	710	192	0	0	192
2012	321	183	0	504	132	20	0	152
2013	369	294	0	663	143	30	0	173
Total	**5171**	**602**	**0**	**5, 773**	**708**	**50**	**0**	**758**

Source: OUTFAFI (2014).

Table 2 shows the evolution of Faculty Y's enrollment and graduation rates. From 2001 to 2013, faculty Y enrolled 5,773 candidate researchers in Masters degree programs. In terms of enrollment, faculty Y outnumbers faculty X by twice as much. After five years, the official

duration for completion, which OUTFAFI (2014:183) depicts, leads the Y on both enrolment and completion rates, while faculty X lagged behind as its enrolment rate increased, which mismatched with its completion rate. In addition to the first meeting with students enrolled in Master's programs (Tables 1 and 2), the researcher also came across another phenomenon in a primary source: the pass, completion, and graduation rates for dissertations as shown in the External Examiners' Assessment Form dissertations (EEAFs 2014). Figure 1's data presentation and analysis section will explain this phenomenon's connection to the assessment process. This interaction revealed the study paradigm theme, prompting the researcher to clarify it among university researchers, including lecturers, supervisors, students developing research knowledge, and dissertation and thesis examiners as reflected in Table 3 presented hereunder.

Table 3: Themes Assessed and Subthemes as well as Criteria for Performance Emerged

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

Source: Field Notes (2014).

Table 3 presents the content and six themes of a university educational research proposal, from the abstract to the Methodology chapter, with further details in subsequent chapters not included in the EEAF document. The research utilizes Grounded Theory, specifically Charmaz's (2006) constructivist approach, focusing on initial data collection and analysis. The EEAF, guided by the Open University of Tanzania (OUT), is used to evaluate the quality of students' dissertations based on criteria such as paradigm clarity. The themes identified in Table 3 include: Theme 6.1 (Abstract), Theme 6.2 (Theoretical Background), Theme 6.3 (Methodology), Theme 6.4 (Data Analysis), and Theme 6.5 (Data Presentation). The study centers on Theme 6.3, particularly its sub-themes 6.3.1 and 6.3.2, which address the research paradigm and design. Core categories identified from Table 3 include: paradigm, clarity, design, quality, performance, and dissertations. The term 'paradigm' first encountered by the researcher at the University of Dar es Salaam (UDSM) was used frequently by lecturers but without explicit clarity. Table 3 represents a second significant instance of the term in academic contexts. Charmaz (2006:178) highlights that Grounded Theory theories arise from emerging processes in lived interactions. The researcher applied rigorous inductive analysis to the EEAF documents, leading to insightful findings detailed in Table 4.

Table 4: Inductive Analysis of Contents from Assessment Document Insightful Lessons Emerged

Substantive area/theory Emerged	Multi general conceptual categories/ constructs emerged	Themes
Foundational/philosophical conceptions of the scientific educational research. -Clarity of paradigm influences dissertation research design quality performance.	Clarity Paradigm Design Dissertation Quality Performance	Five-themes: Abstract, background theories, methodology, analysis and presentation.

Source: Field Data (2018).

From Table 4 one sees three columns each having its contents. The GT building requires identification of the substantive study area, and emerging categories of mere and core concepts as well as substantive. The emerged substantive area in the first column is the, "foundational conceptions underpinnings in educational research." Likewise, the substantive emerging theory seems to emanate from the earlier said

phrase 6.3.1 *"…candidate researchers' clear explanation of the research paradigm influencing the dissertation design quality performance…"*

The initial inductive analysis of clarity and paradigm constructs reveals that one of the themes, the external examiners are guided to assess rigorously, became one of the catchy words forming the title for this thesis. It was preliminary learnt that the paradigm construct cannot be neglected, when discussing about the methodology chapter content in dissertations knowledge constructed in universities. To this end, the philosophical puzzle in form of research grand question emerged inquiring; how has researchers': candidates, supervisors, external examiners' clarity of research paradigm philosophical conceptions, been a contributory factor among factors altering students' completion, graduation, and quality final grade pass rates for Master's degree dissertations in Tanzania Universities?

The initial theoretical sampling began right from the start of this study as per the GT, which helped the researcher to select relevant concepts and materials, such as essential documents related to the phrase emerged in the first phase paving the way to entire study as seen in (Tables 1, 2, 3). Elaborating how to go about the procedure in the GT Charmaz' (2006) proposes that the theoretical sampling means to start with data, constructing tentative ideas about the data, and then examines the themes emerging further, to enlighten the empirical inquiry (Charmaz, 2006:102&113). This suggestion assisted the researcher to select the substantive area, themes, and refine core conceptual categories emerged to focus on. The analysis of Table 1,2,3, and 4 gave the researcher a statement of ongoing core social problem that the association between students' clarity on the theme of paradigm in their research designs chosen, and how it contributes to alter dissertations and theses quality scores performance was inadequately known prior to this study. Even some few researches available including: Daniel & Yosoff (2005); Dronen (2006); Starr-Glass & Ali (2012); Hussain, Elyas & Nasseef (2013); Kivunja & Kuyini (2017), had not explored the theme of paradigms in this study so little was known about it in universes studied. This knowledge gap prompted the need to conduct this study in two sister universities located in Dar es Salaam. This was why this study was about, Exploring Paradigmatic Philosophical Foundations for better Research Quality in Tanzania Universities: Grounded Theory Perspective.

The main objective of this study was to explore university research

participants' understanding as well as perceptions of how one's clarity paradigms contributes to alter students' quality dissertations scores, completion and graduation rates, capable of generating substantive theory, fresh hypotheses as well as holistic model for easening paradigm's theme clarity. Specific objectives were; 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; (1) To assess the context in which the paradigms underpinned with philosophical conceptions are given due attention in universities studied. Four exploratory sub research questions under this objective inquired: 1(a) what ongoing specific core pressing issue emerged in the studied context? 1(b) what core categories emerged reflecting paradigm construct? 1(c) what core processes emerged from the field related to the paradigms conception when constructing research knowledge among Master's degree candidates in the studied universities context? (id) what core participants were found to involve in the processes involved in constructing research knowledge among Master's degree candidates in the studied universities context? Objective two determined the contribution of clarifying the theme of paradigms in raising and lowering students' constructed knowledge quality scores and their General Point Average (GPAs) in the studied universities context. Objective three determined the degree at which the studied universities lecturers are in consensus in informing the Master's degree programme students in terms of paradigm: clarity, primacy, holistic contents, influence and relevance, in the processes involved to construct research knowledge found in dissertations/theses in the studied universities context.

The significance of this study is timely, since its basic purpose is to contribute to inductively 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 students studied, unconsciously choose and use the paradigm of choice wrongly in the process of conducting the studies. If this study were not conducted, then the universities could not be informed of how clarity of research paradigms as a foundation of all categories research contributes to

dissertations and theses quality rise or fall, hence be given due attention. The substantive theory, fresh hypotheses and model of how to solve the problem of lack of clarity of paradigms theme could not have been brought forward.

In order to arrive at the fruition of this study methodologically, the researcher employed the constructivist paradigm and pragmatic philosophy to thoughtfully and logically select subtopics within the methodology chapter, thereby completing this investigation. This study utilised qualitative research approach because it fits the paradigm of choice. The researcher too, opted for triangulated multivariate exploratory descriptive design. This approach fitted the study's principal goal of evaluating participants' research paradigm comprehension and perspectives. According to Charmaz (2006), this design can inductively generate grounded theory (GT) and new hypotheses at the end of the investigation. According to Charmaz, a GT researcher should start with exploratory questions in the first phase of simultaneous data collection and analysis to easily search for core issues, categories, processes, and participants and guide subsequent phases. Therefore, this study involved three simultaneous data gathering and analysis phases. Phase one focused on four exploratory questions, while phase two focused on objective two, and phase three focused on objective three. This very study used triangulated purpose criteria and saturation sampling to sample two institutions, research participants, and primary documents in Dar es Salaam. This study involved saturated sample size of 68 Master's in education degree programme students, their dissertations, external examiner reports as units of analysis, 14 supervisors, and 6 external examiners from the Open University of Tanzania (OUT) Faculty X and the University of Dar es Salaam (UDSM) School Y. The descriptive Kaiser Oklin Measure (KMO) and Bartlets' tests ensured sample size and data relevance. The researcher collected data through primary documentary, face-to-face, online semi-structured interviews, phone calls, and live defence observations. The researcher too, employed methods such as: sorting, coding, categorising, continuous comparison, and contrasting to analyse qualitative data. Instruments such as: documentary, observation schedules collected data too. The basic calculator helped analyse descriptive nominal and ordinal data. The researcher assured the study findings' reliability, credibility, and dependability, including multiple: triangulated study instruments, data collection and analysis methodologies, and peer review specialists' critiques ensured the trustworthiness and credibility of this study's conclusions. Multiple

experts too from university's internal and external reviewers, editors, supervisors, critical literature reviewers, and critical faculty graduate seminar panelists were all involved to critique this study. The large sample size in this study may transfer conclusions rather than replicate them in case studies on similar themes at other colleges' context.

Study Findings and Discussion

The first objective of the study sought to assess the context in which the paradigms underpinned with philosophical conceptions were given due attention in the studied universities. Four exploratory sub-research questions were derived: 1(a) what ongoing specific core pressing issue emerged in the context studied? 1(b) what core categories emerged reflecting paradigm construct? 1(c) what core processes emerged from the field related to the paradigms conception when constructing research knowledge among master degree students in the studied universities? (id) what core participants were found to involve in the in processes involved in constructing research knowledge among master degree students in the studied universities context?

Ongoing Core Pressing Issue Emerged

A single encountered rubric document labeled as the External Examiners' Assessment Form (EEAFs) as it appears in Figure 1.1 part A, prompted this study to discover the pressing issue inductively in the contexts of the two studied universities as follows.

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**

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

Figure 1.1: Contents of OUT External Assessment Rubric Form for Dissertations
Source: Field Notes (2018).

Figure 1.1 shows core emergent issues from EEAFs, a sampled assessment rubric form discovered by the OUT researcher. The same document shows multiple emerging assessed items in the column with significant themes in serial Arabic numbers from 6.1 to 6.5. Sub-theme 6.3(i) of the methodology theme highlights a comprehensive explanation of the study paradigm and design (Figure 1.1). While heading the Open University of Tanzania (OUT) Faculty of Education (FED) postgraduate unit between 2011 and 2016, the researcher discovered the rubric. This team prepares dissertations and theses for the Postgraduate Directorate's external examination. The text contains several popular words; however, the researcher was unfamiliar with the term "paradigm." Contributors often emphasized paradigms, as the researcher represented the FED at postgraduate proposals and dissertation presentation seminars. Upon further exploration, the basic construct emerged as an umbrella word, firmly rooted in philosophical principles. The researcher discovered that competent panelist researchers, including lecturers, supervisors, and students, rarely discuss paradigms during proposal presentations or dissertation and thesis defenses. External Examiners (EEs) focused on sub-theme 6.3(i) in accordance with the OUT rubric but did not address the same theme in previous research processes, such as lecturing, supervising, writing, and defending dissertations and theses.

Extent to which other University Researchers are informed of Paradigm Underpinnings

After analyzing the first one, the researcher found 68 EEAF rubric papers, totaling 64 out of 88 primary documents in the postgraduate directorate. The examined document also recommended that the researcher locate a comparable Master in Education degree program rubric document from the University of Dar es Salaam (UDSM) School of Education, for the purpose of grading dissertations by coursework and thesis. One of the Grounded Theory (GT) nomenclature methods advises constant comparative analysis; therefore, finding identical documents from another university with similar context was necessary. Table 5 shows UDSM assessment tool rubrics with identical content to OUT in Figure 1.1. As shown in Table 5, part A of that form labeled as UDSM/PG.F9.

UNIVERSITY OF DAR ES SALAAM
SCHOOL OF EDUCATION

PART A

Table 5: UDSM similar External Examiners' Assessment Form FE699 (Dissertations)
Candidate's Name.....

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

Source: Field Notes (2018).

In Table 5 The reader also notes a clear similarity in the two compared rubrics on the course code of dissertations symbolised and numbered as OED 699 at OUT, while at UDSM it was FE 699. The contrast in codes showed that one was symbolised OED while the other FE (Tables 5; 6; 7).The weighing of different grade scores for the UDSM EEs' rubric revealed five items. Eight contents were assessed and weighted variously in four columns beginning with column two that was awarded scores out of 100. Others were columns labeled marks, grades and remarks as indicated in Table 1.1 and compared to that of OUT in (Figure 1.1). Such weights were further interpreted in a key in Table 6 with the range of grades and their scores as follows.

Table 6: Varying Weights in UDSM EEs' Rubric Assessment Tool

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

Source: Field Notes (2018).

*Signature of Examiner..... Date..... Print Name.....
*Date passed to coordinator of Post Graduate Programmes.....

Emerged Core Categories of Conceptions Related to the Research Paradigm

From previous Tables 5 and in Table 6, one observes the similar sample of the assessment form tool of the UDSM labeled with similar role of assessing master degree students' dissertations compared with that of OUT. Unlike the OUT tool which has three columns as shown in Figure 1.1, that of the UDSM has five columns, whereby the first has portions to

be assessed, the column with marks out of 100 statistical score grades that are in grade letters with the examiner's remarks (Table 6). The simultaneous field analysis of both documents has more details in part B, which is symbolised second part of these compared assessment tools illustrated in Table 1.2. Next is Part B, which consists of the EEs' recommendations for the dissertation and category of verdicts in both universities of OUT and UDSM as indicated in subsequent Table 7.

PART B

Table: 7: OUT Emerged Categories 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.	

Source: Field Notes (2018).
External-Examiners (EEs)……Signature…….....

From Table 7, one sees the second part B of the assessment form tool for assuring quality of dissertations and theses for the Open University of Tanzania at FED as detailed in later constant comparison of part B with similar contents from the UDSM as illustrated further in Table 8.

UDSM/PG.F9

PART B

Name of Candidate.....**Degree registered**.....**Dissertations/ Theses Title**.....

Table 8: 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 Notes (2018).
Key: (*) Minor changes refer to editorial corrections, slight re-organisation of sections and minor modifications of tables, programs or sentences (Table 8).

Comparatively, from contents of Figure 5 and Tables 6, 7 and 8, one observes similar details in part B of the UDSM assessment form as those in part B of the OUT assessment tool (Table 5). One could sum up some emerged major themes and sub-themes as the result of comparing two universities' assessment tools' contents from the field as Table 9 illustrates.

Table 9: Comparison between Assessed Universities Major Themes and Sub themes

OUT Assessment tool with eight assessed detailed major themes	**UDSM assessment tool with undetailed 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 paradigm and design*** ✓ Data presentation (with six sub themes) ✓ Analysis of the findings (with three sub-themes)	✓ Preliminaries ✓ Introduction ✓ Literature review ✓ Methodology ✓ Data presentation ✓ Data Discussion ✓ Conclusions ✓ References/Bibliography
Key Parametric value scores from 0-100 and Non-parametric letter grades A-E (Figure 1.1). **From part B** The tool has examiners' the dissertation and category of	**Key** Parametric value scores from 0-100 Non-parametric letter grades A-E (Table 1.1a). Examiner's remarks **From part B** Similarly, the tool has examiners' recommendations, for the dissertation and category of verdicts.

Source: Field Notes (2018).

From Table 9, the reader observes the compared and contrasted contents from the previous analysed Figure 1.1 and Tables 5-8. Having contents obtained and compared, the researcher followed the advice of the GT nomenclature suggesting to a researcher to first search key or unique emerged construct categories and transform them from empirical level to abstraction level. The researcher reminds the reader that in building, the GT multi concepts need to be downsized first from the empirical observable phenomenon to abstraction non-observable noumenon. The downsizing analysis assisted 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 unique and core constructs repeated in the analysed documents as illustrated in Table 10.

Core Conceptual Categories Emerged

Table 10: Emerged core Constructs and Categories with wider Scope

Core construct codes	Categories constituting constructs
Clarity	Definition, scope, semantic relations, and coherence
Paradigm with Underpinnings	Positivism, anti-positivism, post positivism, axiology, epistemology, logic, methodology, ontology, philosophy, and rhetoric
Design	Case studies, grounded theory, ethnography, evaluation, historical, grounded theory, evaluation exploratory, even action research (Qualitative designs). survey, experimental, quasi experimental…. (Quantitative designs)

Source: Field Notes (2018).

From Table 10, three 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). Clarity construct has high frequency with its four properties appearing in (Figure 1.1; Table 10).

The researcher identified the construct of clarity because it had the highest frequency by being repeated five times compared to the rest of the emerged criteria for performance such as appropriateness (Figure 1.1). This construct became one of the catchy words of the title in this study. Further exploration of the construct of clarity revealed that it comprised four properties as indicated in Table 11.

Table 11: 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 Notes (2018).

Looking at Table 11, one notes the operationalised construct of clarity emerging with its four sub-constructs at the empirical level in form of the gerund form of the action verbs. These were indicators of emerging processes as detailed later in this article. Corresponding to this finding, Charmaz (2006) contends that once the researcher achieves the gerund verbs, s/he has attained ongoing processes in the studied context. The

researcher sought to understand the manner of how clarity construct core category varied in the processes involved in research for dissertation at OUT. This construct frequently appeared in the assessment tool of OUT EEAFs, while it lacked in the similar UDSM assessment tool (Table 1.7). The compared frequency of clarity amid other emerged criterion conception is illustrated in Figure 1.2 as follows.

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 1.2: Criteria for Dissertations Performance found in Assessment Tool
Source: Field Notes (2018).

From Figure 1.2, one observes the emerged frequencies of repeating seven criteria constructs namely clarity, appropriateness, wellness, reliability, validity, systematisation and cleaning of data as revealed in the OUT assessment criteria for dissertations performance (Tables, 5; 6; 7; 8; 9; 10; 11; 12 Figures 1.1). From those illustrations, it was evident that the frequency of each criterion category was determined.

Emerged Research Design Construct Properties along Paradigm

The second and third core construct conceptual category that emerged from the analysed document was the research design accompanying sub theme 6.3 (i) clarity of paradigm in (Figure 1.1). The researcher selected the paradigm as the second core catchy construct appearing in the study title. This is because, the analysis of the documentary data showed that the emerged research paradigm construct had rare uses among the studied researchers, when compared to the rest of the other common constructs like clarity. The researcher investigated the properties that also were illustrated in Figure (1.1) and subsequent Tables are further illustrated in Table 12 as follows.

Table 12: Emerged 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 chose research design as emerged core construct because it complements the research paradigm in sub-theme 6.3 (i) (Figure 1.1; Table 12). In this study, methodology refers to a whole framework for doing research. In Table 12, three groups of research methodologies and designs are shown: the positivists' research designs (experimental, quasi-experimental survey) versus the post-positivists' research designs (case study, evaluation, GT) mixed approaches.

Thick Descriptions on Emerged Core Processes of Research: Lecturing and Learning

When inquired about the knowledgeability of the term paradigms in relation to the field of research for constructing knowledge found in dissertations and theses, a student symbolised CAND#32 responded by saying;

> *"…If I understood the question right, you requested me to clarify on what the paradigm refers to in regard to educational research*."[You are correct!] *To begin, I have no understanding of what a paradigm is or how it relates to research..."* [When probed further as per why this was the case, despite the fact that familiarizing oneself with many research paradigms is necessary before starting any research project, the response was], *"...But how could I have known its significance if my superior hadn't asked me about it…*? (CAND#87:32:7.5.014).

The other student responded on phone by rationalising,

> *"...Mheshimiwa mtafiti [meaning honorable researcher] ...in your semi-structured interview, I read your list of paradigm components, I can tell you that neither once did my facilitator's research lecturer nor my supervisor challenged me or bothered to clarify the term paradigm in the research method course..." (CAND#87:32:7.5.014).*

The same candidate's online interview schedule wrote;

> *"…Your document's related phrases reveal my lack of what a paradigm entails in research. Whether this contributed to my lack of "B" grades award rather than adorable scores of A and B+ "I'm not sure! By paradigm did you imply the study's design and methods? (CAND#32:7.5.014).*

Emerged Dissertations and Theses Assessment and External Quality Assuring Processes

Responding to my probes, one of the supervisors symbolised OVSEER #8 responded by saying;

> *"…Yap, am familiar with the phrase paradigm though I use it infrequently in my presentations! Enough is said about the research paradigm. In Tanzania higher learning institutions where I lecture educational research, academics utilise it selectively when teaching the research course. Distinctive research paradigms and research philosophies are required before entering a research field, unlike other institutions elsewhere. Paradigms are essential to me because they provide a framework for writing research questions, methodologies, and justifying why and how judgments made affect methodological components..." (OVSEER#8:17.3.2014).*

Emerged Dissertations and Theses Assessment and External Quality Assuring Processes

The other external examiner symbolised EE# 2 at the UDSM curiously said;

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

Furthermore, when probed to say something on the familiarity of what paradigm refers to, the external examiner symbolised as 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 positivists', interpretivists, and post-positivists' schools of thought translated in the qualitative or quantitative or mixture of both, I suppose. However, the term paradigm is not commonly used in our universities in particular at UDSM, though its relevance cannot be questioned in the research course…" (EE#2: 16.5.014).*

From the précis of compared assessment rubrics, EEs' dissertation score report contents for two studied universities in Figure (1.1); Table (5); Table (11) and from interviews further issues emerged for further discussion. These were the unique trend emerged about the potential close relationship from paradigm subtheme and dissertations scores compared signaling crude substantive GT. Other core constructs emerged in the context studied, were sub-construct categories in the context, studied main respondents in the processes and core ongoing activities and processes emerged.

Emerged Insights Reflecting Paradigm Mention Lacks in Dissertations Oral Defense

The researcher further explored the exploratory question in objective 1(c) research question which sought to find out the core processes that emerged in the studied universities reflecting the paradigm construct. Table 13 reveals the encountered issues related to oral defense process as follows.

Table 13: General Surfaced Insights from Live Observed Oral Defense Process

Panelists' Mandate to alter EEs' Scores (NO)

	Crossed examined themes	Theoretical background	Literature	Methodology	Methods	Data an alysis	Data Present ation	Verdict	Comment
Panelist	Panelist A	X	-	X	v	X	v	Pass	-
	Panelist B	X	-	X	v	v	X	Pass	-
	Panelist C	v	x	V	x	X	X	-	-
	Panelist D	X	X	X	x	v	X	-	-

Source: Field Notes (2018).

Table 13 illustrates a four-row, nine-column document. The oral defense pathways listed remained active. Subtheme 6.3(i) motivated this study to clarify Figure 1.1's research paradigm and design. The picture and Table 13 revealed several other more sub-themes. At live oral dissertation and thesis defenses, saturation and criteria sampling were used to select OUT students. The defence paper included a greeting, self-introduction, and column check. Upon the arrival of the panel chair, we distributed the assessment forms along with the external report in (Figure 1.1). The process prioritised transparency, work ownership, and defender confidence. The internal examiners of OUT dissertations evaluate a student's dissertation based on clarity, ownership, and confidence, then decide whether to accept it as is, require a defender to make minor or

major changes, or reject the entire document. The researcher observed the defence process and found no reference to an explicit paradigm or implicit underlying ideas. The researcher was also curious about how well defending students and their panelist supervisors met Figure 1.1 of sub-theme 6.3(i) requirement that pupils clarify the study paradigm and design. The researcher conducted this study to understand the expectations of the OUT institution and examiners regarding sub-theme 6.3(i) (Figure 1.1). Even without explicitly defining the paradigm theme, it was not mentioned in the teaching, learning, or live-observed dissertation defence procedures during the eight live-observed meetings of the Faculty of Education's internal quality assurance panel at OUT. Implicit university participants were revealed through documentary, interview, and observation studies. Table 14 displays the categories of eligible participants in dissertations and theses for the universities under examination, including those involved in.

Table 14: OUT Studied Participants: Supervisors/Overseers' Profile Emerged

S/N	Sex	Levof eleducation	Rank	Role atOUT	Experience
Symbol **# 7**	F	Ph.D.	Senior Dr.	Overseer	Five yrs
Symbol **# 8**	M	Ph.D.	Dr.	Overseer	One yr
Symbol **# 9**	M	Ph.D.	Full professor		Seven yrs
Symbol **# 10**	M	Ph.D.	Dr.	Overseer	Three yrs
Symbol **# 11**	F	Ph.D.	Senior Dr.	Overseer	Five yrs
Symbol **# 12**	M	Ph.D.	Associate professor	Overseer	Four yrs
Symbol **# 13**	F	Ph.D.	Facilitator	Overseer	Three yrs
Symbol**# 14**	F	Ph.D.	Associate Prof	Leader	Seven yrs

Source: Field Data (2018).

Table 14 depicts fourteen out of twenty supervisors popularly referred to as overseers' profiles in this study, are labeled OVSEER#. Majority of the fourteen studied overseers were found having double roles of lecturing and supervising. The process of writing dissertations and theses revealed that the main actors were the students and their supervisors in the process of constructing knowledge that of course begins from classroom research theory learning. The process of defending the constructed knowledge in the dissertations revealed further the main participants being students who from the defense attained the status of prospective graduands. It was revealed further that some overseers formed a panel of defense under the autonomy of the directorate of the postgraduate. Table 14 discloses participants profile on socio-economic roles such as sex, education, rank,

job at OUT, and experience of guiding inexperienced researchers towards graduation. Besides those, Table 14 shows further that all overseers studied had doctorate degree qualifications when compared to the EEs. Majority of the studied staff members were lecturers, some of whom were senior lecturers, associate professors and a full professor. The overseers were found to have more than one year in playing the role of supervising dissertations and theses. Also, some had a role to guide the students through the educational research process (Table 14). Keen analysis revealed that lecturers in education field held the PhDs degrees to qualify for the supervision role. It emerged that, though all those who had doctorate qualifications rank varied as previously elaborated.

While some lecturers were junior others were senior lecturers, associate professors and full professors as illustrated in Table 15.

Table 15: Emerged External Examiners' (EEs') Profile

Respondent's	Sex	Level Education	Rank	Role at OUT	Experience of assessors
Symbol #1	M	Ph.D.	Full Professor	External	Five years
Symbol # 2	M	Ph.D.	Full Professor	External	Four years
Symbol # 3	F	Ph.D.	Associate Professor	External	Five years
Symbol # 4	F	Ph.D.	Senior Dr.	External	One year
Symbol # 5	F	Ph.D.	Senior Dr.	External	One year
Symbol #6	M	Ph.D.	Senior Dr.	External	Three years

Source: Field Data (2018).

The analysis of Table 1.5 reveals that the UDSM provides majority of external examiners for OUT, since the randomly sorted assessment forms revealed that all 6 external examiners for OUT dissertations and theses originate from UDSM (Table 15). The rationale could be, since OUT's founding, the two universities have reciprocally started and taught part-time courses interchangeably. The study revealed that 68 out of 88 students pursued Master's degree program, with the majority opting for coursework. One student chose a by thesis mode. During research, overseers were discovered. The major participants in the knowledge constructed evaluation were shortlisted internal reviewers from lecturers and invited external examiners (EEs) who evaluated dissertations and theses (Figure 1; Tables 14, and 15). The final group, which included the new researchers, was coded as STUDs #1 in the study. All participants worked for the faculty under study. Unlike the UDSM, which was incorporated into course outlines, the external examiner's assessment

procedure form of OUT displays the research paradigm subtheme. The students in the study had BED, B.A. Ed., or PGDE degrees. The Open University Facts and Figures (OUTFAFI, 2015) reported 61 graduates and 48 potential graduates in early 2014. We used theoretical and purposeful criteria to shortlist 68 out of 109 candidates. The researcher only sampled students who satisfied his or her criteria. According to Charmaz's (2006) GT nomenclature guides, after the first phase of data analysis for exploratory sub-research questions for objectives 1(a), (1b), 1(c), and 1(d), the researcher used the results to guide phase two of collecting and analyzing data at the same time for objective two. The researcher labelled the selected student participants as STUDs#, indicating their lack of experience in research. The primary documentation study revealed that the Faculty of Education had 109 master's degree graduates as of 2014, of which 61 were actual graduates and 48 were potential graduates (OUTFAFI, 2015). We chose 68 applications from 109 using theoretical and purposeful criteria. The researcher only selected students who met his criteria.

Objective 1(a), (1b), 1(c), and 1(d) exploratory sub-research questions were completed in phase one of simultaneous data collection and analysis.

Comparison between Research Textbook Writers on Paradigm and University Texts

Objective 1(b) addressed an exploratory sub-research question on what key conceptual categories arose in the realm of studied university contexts (Figure 1.1).

This study examined how researchers viewed explicit research paradigms' denotation, scope, semantic relationship, and coherence. It was also critical to examine the arguments of secondary and elementary textbook authors, as well as those of university experts. We gathered data through interviews and documentaries. In the postgraduate education research course, the researcher evaluated the extent to which candidates were educated about the research paradigm by the research secondary books from OUT's main library. The researcher selected five study texts from a broad list using criterion sampling and found six authors: Mason (2007), Flick, Descombe, and Silverman (2010), and Marvasti and Gilbert (2012). The analysis of library documents revealed that three out of five (60%) secondary text books mentioned the paradigm in various ways. Mason (2007) and Descombe (2010) ignore it. Lack of detailed textual materials,

such as compendia, contributes to inexperienced researchers' lack of research paradigm understanding (Mackenzie & Knipe, 2006).

Presence of Paradigm Conception in University Research Teaching Resources

Despite ADM's #14 claim that OUT had no written notes in place to graduate students, the researcher found the Director of Research for Postgraduate Studies (DRPS) having the research teaching resource book co-authored by Kitula, Ngaruko, and Swai (2012) at OUT. Thus, the analysis of the that text indicates that it is relevant for the postgraduate students in the Faculty of natural sciences but less so for students in the humanities and social sciences such as: education, law, and business studies, and history because it does not adequately cover varying research paradigms such as the post-positivists' except the sole positivists' approaches of quantification. However, on page one of that book, there is a superficial mention of philosophy (Kitula et al; 2012). The textbook at OUT for research course evidences the manner of how the concept of explicit inquiry paradigm that is anchored by philosophical foundations lacks adequate attention during the writing process of research, consciously or unconsciously. The finding regarding Kitula's et al. (2012) attempt to educate students about paradigms and philosophical underpinnings during the research course is crucial as it echoes the argument that, whether we are aware of our philosophical assumptions or not, we use them implicitly during the research process (Carr, 1995; Crabtree, 2012).

Paradigms Construct Knowledgeability among Studied University Students

The findings from exploratory research question 1(a) directed the researcher to interview research participants on their views about what they understood on research paradigm. When asked to provide their own understanding of what research paradigms were, the participant symbolised as CAND#35 responded*:*

> *"…What a paradigm entails, as well as its dimensions and relationship to research procedures, is unclear to me. I recall reading that in one of my research books, albeit I cannot recall which one. I am not sure whether I used this word in my dissertation because it has been quite some many days since I graduated. It is challenging me to articulate paradigm in my own words... (*CAND#35:03.8.014).

Another student symbolised as CAND#23 contributed by stating,

> *"…To be honest, I am familiar with the phrase paradigm in research as it*

applies to the area of research and this is where I first met it. Nonetheless, I am perplexed on how it connects to the dissertation's quality. That is, I am unable to elucidate how it works. Though I spent much time with my supervisor, we never explored such a topic throughout my study, or perhaps we did so in an indirect manner..." (CAND#23:6.5.2014).

Paradigm Constructs among the University EEs and Administrators

One of the external examiners symbolised as EEs #6 commented on the investigated topic;

"...Despite my expertise of assessing OUT dissertations, I find the concept of paradigm new and difficult to understand among students and university professors alike." This is despite the topic being part of the postgraduate research lectures even here at UDSM. Prior to teaching research methodology components, paradigms should be taught, however, this is rarely done in Tanzanian institutions. Our UDSM research course outlines exclude this critical issue on paradigm, but let me cross-check. Certainly not!! However, allow me to demonstrate that no one can get anywhere without first comprehending the route. For me, the paradigm serves as a road map, directing a researcher in the right direction. In general, teaching and application may vary according to individuals. I believe there is a void about this theme at UDSM and in particular the School of Education where I lecture..." (EE#6:19.9.014).

Yet another EE# 2 wondered about my selected this research topic and said;

"...Duh! You've selected a particularly challenging field of research. Indeed, numerous novice PhD scholars struggle to articulate this issue even here at our UDSM's School of Education where I work. Fortunately, I am grading one of my university's Ph.D. dissertations, and there is no reference of the paradigm elsewhere in the dissertation. Come and read this section independently to verify my assertions. The PhD student gave solely the philosophy of pragmatism. Are you familiar with pragmatism? Is this a paradigm shift? However, I am assuming that this is not a paradigm…" (EE# 2:16.5.014).

Regarding the familiarity of the terms paradigm and research design in relation to the observed underperformance scenarios, the respondent symbolised as EE#4 argued saying;

"...Yes, let me say that I was pleased to discover that the subtheme of paradigm is receiving attention in the processes of educational research, even though I do not see it reflected in students' dissertations. Personally, I believe that the paradigms one chooses are determined by the university one attends. The majority of academics adhere to what they learned at their colleges, where they encountered the propensity of organizational cultures such as phenomenology, psychology as defined by the American Psychological Association (APA), and behaviorism. As a result, you will see that we have established entrenched norms of conducting research rather than listening to students' developing

*ideas. However, variations in paradigms should not prevent supervisors from assisting research supervisees in developing their own frameworks in response to research challenges..." (*EE#4:16.5.014).

One of overseers symbolised as OVSEER#14 was asked to respond on the same issue and critically said;

"...If our students' assessments include a paradigm notion by coincidence, I believe it is due to our habit of employing terms without much study or explication. The expression "paradigm shift" has recently become popular at the Ministry of Education, but no one can explain it. I am sure some fellows attending such courses in those ministry seminars picked up the word paradigm and put it in our assessment form. Paradigm shift in teaching and learning is a word that many, including me, are unfamiliar with. I believe they don't know what it means. Nevertheless, I never refer to my consulting experience when my students do research or write their dissertations. I don't see a problem if my students don't use it and finish their course without it. My main guidance is the university's prospectus..." (OVSEER#14: 29.3.2014).

Responding to researcher's question, a newly graduated PhD graduate argued:

"...Paradigm is situated in research field but it is not a commonly applied term especially at the level of M.A, where it is used sparingly and within Tanzanian universities. Nevertheless, in established universities like the one where I studied, research paradigm conceptions are explicitly emphasised in the research course and in dissertations defenses. 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 are arrived at..."(OVSEER #8: 17.3.2014).

Responding to the very category of sub-questions about awareness of the paradigm construct, the administrator and supervisor respondent ADMN#20 said;

"*...What I know is that each faculty has a course for research methodology, so students are expected to be informed of it so that they have prior knowledge on basic concepts in research. One expects faculties to have included a topic on paradigm in the course outlines, since this component is examined by the EEs in students' dissertations. It is not the mandate of the DRPS to dictate the faculties on what to include in their research courses. However, it is the role of responsible deans and departmental heads to ensure foundation concepts are within the course outlines for students to study. Isn't it so?* (ADMN #20: 29.3.2014).

The detailed descriptive analysis revealed that the studied students did not demonstrate explicit understanding of research paradigm in relation to writing of their dissertations and theses. Furthermore, the students failed

to describe the explicit research paradigm holistically as required by the evaluation form, including definition, larger scope, semantic link and coherence (Figures 1.1; 1.2). The interview findings with the postgraduate students, supervisors, and examiners revealed that inadequate attention was given to paradigm construct processes involved in the construction of research knowledge found in dissertations in Tanzanian universities involved in this study. Consequently, the theme of paradigm was unpopular among the majority of the researchers who decided to avoid it as exhibited in the findings (Jacob, 2009). Much more, it was found that the confusion among the researchers on the same theme was worsened by writers of research textbooks who write shallowly and using interchangeable synonyms in clarifying the concepts of research paradigms. By so doing, they lead learners into the dilemma on what exactly it is, where it fits in the research process as noted by Mackenzie and Knipe, (2006). The findings of this study echo another study about paradigms in Malaysian universities, where Daniel and Yosoff (2005) reported that there was a confusion leading to emerging pseudo mixed paradigms among students in Malaysia's universities. Consequently, the construct of paradigm has remained as a mystery to inexperienced researchers (Mackenzie and Knipe, 2006). Contributing to the primacy of paradigm and how experienced assessors mark dissertations, another study found that paradigm is a significant factor influencing examination of theses in universities (Mullins & Kiley, 2007).

From the descriptions analysed too, one notes that from the universities studied on the processes of constructing research knowledge, emphasis on paradigms of choice should not be neglected. This decision of OUT to include the paradigm in examining processes, not only was applauded by the studied EEs from the UDSM but also several gurus of social research researchers have acknowledged it. For instance, Efinger, Maldonado, and Adler (2004) conducted a study among two students' groups experimentally, where one group studied philosophy of research, while the other group had not opted that course. That study confirmed that exposing students to clarity of paradigms underpinned with philosophical underpinnings prior showed excellent results to the experimental group when compared to the controlled one. The students in the studied group discovered the relevance of learning philosophy of research before one proceeds to the field. Much more, scholars including Bogdan and Biklen, (1982); Carr, (1995); Williams, (1998); Tashakkori and Teddlie, (1998); Agrwaal, (2003); Chilisa and Preece, (2005); Guba and Lincoln, (2005);

Mackenzie and Knipe, (2006); Omari, (2011) are in consensus that the choice of paradigms prior to conducting research is paramount.

Compared Paradigm Subtheme versus Excellent Scores for Dissertations Trend

Objective two of this study determined the contribution of clarifying the theme of paradigms in raising and lowering students' constructed knowledge quality scores and their General Point Average GPAs in two studied universities. Therefore, the following analysis reflects previous given key grades in the two universities' EEs' rubrics of assessing dissertations and theses (Figure 1.1 and Table 6). In those scores' key ranging between 70 and 100 culminated not only into the highest quality grades of A, but also into abrupt rise in excellent GPAs of the entire course. Scores ranging between 60 and 69 out of 100 lead to higher and very good GPAs with quality letter grade B+. Moreover, scores ranging between 50 and 59 out of 100, lead to good GPAs with average quality grade B (plain). The rest scores ranging between 0 and 49 out of 100 lead to marginal lowest GPAs with grades C, D, and E (in (Figure 1.1 and Table). Having collected 68 External Examiners (EEs)' reports from the studied EEs totaling 88, only 63 dissertations and one (1) thesis amounting to 64 reached saturation in the two studied universities,. These were initially subjected to the manual analysis. In this analysis, four (4) dissertations out of 68 were discarded after the criterion sampling showed the saturation. The simple calculator tool aided the analysis of the emerged descriptive statistical data as illustrated in Tables 16, 17, 18 and 19. Table 16 is presented first as follows.

Table 16: Excellent Grade- "A" Dissertations versus Paradigm Sub theme

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.

From Table 16, some dissertations are awarded with excellent grade titled "A" quality grade on paradigm subtheme, the analysis revealed variations. In this analysis two calculations were done, the first involved five (5) scores allotted to a single subtheme 6.3(i) that was partly calculated as (x/5 x 100) to discover what a student was awarded by the EE on the

paradigm theme. The second calculation was holistic, where the researcher calculated x/26 x 100 scores for 26 sub-themes, so as to discover the trend of the extent to which each theme contributed to the entire dissertation or thesis awards from the EE (Figure, 1.1; Table 16). The results had surprising insights as indicated in Table 16. The analysis of the very Table 1.12 presents a category of five out of 64 students who were assessed by varying EEs as grade A achievers. Surprisingly, in that category, majority 3(60) percent out of 5 achievers, who were awarded grade A for their entire dissertations, likewise they were awarded 5/5(100) percent scores for clarifying the sub-theme 6.3 (i) of paradigm and design. In that category of A achievers, 1 student (20) percent) out of five students was awarded quality letter grade B+ for clarifying the paradigm and design theme in a very good way. Still yet, in that very category only 1 student (20) percent) out 5 achievers, despite his/her dissertation having scored grade A, the EE awarded low scores for clarifying the paradigm theme averagely (Table 16).

Comparison of Very Good Quality for Paradigm Sub-theme with Entire Study Scores

The next category of achievers was that of very good with grade B+ achievers for the entire dissertations in constructing research knowledge in their dissertations and theses as portrayed in Table 17.

Table 17: Grade- B+ Dissertations versus Paradigm Score Performance

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

Source: Field Data (2018).

Table 17 shows eighteen achievers in the very good grade B+ category for entire dissertations and theses. The analysis revealed that few 4 students (22.22) percent out of 18 achievers in that category were awarded quality letter of grade "A" for clarifying the paradigm and design sub-theme excellently while the majority 11 (61.11) percent out of 18 achievers in that category had achieved Very Good B+ quality grade for

explaining the very sub-theme in a good manner in their entire dissertations. Surprisingly still, none in this category of performers performed with low marginal B (plain) quality grade. However, 3 (16.66) percent out of 18 achievers were awarded marginal lower quality letter grade of C for clarifying the sub-theme paradigm sparingly. No candidate was awarded the marginal lowest quality letter grades of D or E(Table 17).

Comparison of Marginal High Scores for Paradigm Subtheme with Dissertations Trend

The other category of achievers is Good quality with letter grade B (Plain) in their entire dissertations or thesis as portrayed in 18 as follows.

Table 18: Marginal Grade- B Dissertation versus Paradigm Theme scores

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

Source: Field Data (2018).

From Table 18, it is indicated that 34 studied students had similar results by scoring a B (Plain) grade as a score for the entire dissertation. However, these students showed differences in the paradigm theme score, whereby two students (2) scored the highest grade with letter A, eleven (11) students scored higher grade with letter B+, eight (8) students scored marginal high grade with letter B (Plain) grade, and twelve (12) scored marginal low C grade. No candidate scored marginal lower grade with letter D. Nevertheless, only one (1) candidate scored the marginal lowest grade of all with letter E. In this research paper, grades B, C, D and E for dissertations are labeled as the marginal grades (Table 18).

Marginal Low Scores for Paradigm Subtheme and Dissertations Trend

The fourth category of achievers was of those students whose category scored low, lower, or the lowest quality letter grade with C, D, and E. Table 19 illustrates the marginal awards as follows.

Table 19: Lower and Lowest Grades C and E Dissertations versus Paradigm theme

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

Source: Field Data (2018).

Table 19 shows that seven (7) students out of 64 achievers scored low, lower and the lowest scores, hence, putting them into the categories of quality letter grades labeled marginal low C, lower D, and lowest E on their entire dissertations and thesis (Table 19). Further analysis revealed that the majority, 5(71.42) percent) out of 7 achievers, in this category had either marginal low, lower, or lowest scores, with the exception of a very few, 2(28.57) percent out of 7 achievers, with very good quality letter grade of B+ (Table 19). Data analysis revealed furthermore that the marginal awards for dissertations and thesis from the EEs in this category, tasked these achievers to do major changes after achieving the verdict of either resubmitting or outright rejection, hence, redoing the entire study as implied verdicts in Tables 7; 8; 9. Consequently, such results lowered their GPAs for their entire courses. The researcher's determination of the marginal low, lower and lowest quality in this study was further obtained from researched students' cumulative assessment progressive report trends document labeled as SARIS, as depicted in Tables: 20. Table 20 is presented first.

Table 20: 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 (2013/2018).

Table 20 presents what the researcher collected from the field. One notes one of the encountered general reports for a student whose number is symbolised as HD/E/XXX/T.20xx (Table 20). Fortunately, the SARIS document provides more enlightening information in columns. Course code is in column one, course title in column two, units are in column three, grades in column four, points in column five and the GPA in column six. The analysis indicates that this student had seven courses; with each course being worthy of weight of two units except for the dissertation which had 6 units alone and in total it contributed to 24 points (Table 20).

The very student passed the dissertation with excellent 70 scores out of 100 with quality letter grade which raised her entire cumulative coursework with the GPA to 3.9 (Table 21). Fortunately, the outstanding performance of the candidate tallied with excellent scores for the sub-theme of paradigms and design as well as higher GPA for her dissertation. The analysis of the various Tables (16; 17; 18; 19) exhibited that, despite other subthemes being assessed, several students lost 5/5 marks because of less clarity of research paradigms theme (Figure 1.1). Consequently, that loss denied some students higher scores, grades and GPAs for their dissertations.

Table 21: Candidate HD/E/yyyy/T.200xx SARIS Report Level: III

Code	Course Title	Unit	Grade	Point	GPA
OED 617	Gender and Development Education	2	B	6	
OED625	Educational Planning	2	B+	8	
OED 624	Development of Organisations	2	B	6	
OED 626	Research: Methodology, Computer Application	2	B+	8	
OED27	Policy Analysis, Implementation of Primary and Secondary Education	2	A	10	
OED 632	Economics of Education	2	B+	8	
OED699	**Dissertation**	**6**	**B**	**18**	
		20		**70**	**3.5**

Source: Field Data (2014).

From Table 21, one notes another candidate's SARIS report symbolised HD/E/yyyy/T.200xx for more clarity. The SARIS has the same contents as the former one. From the two tables, one notes similar emerged sub-

themes as in the previous table: course codes, course titles, course units, course grade points and attained general course GPA (Tables 21). From the analysis of the data in the two compared Tables 20 and 21, one sees that although candidate HD/E/XXX/T20xxx had an outstanding results in entire coursework between quality letter grades of A and B+, though with two average quality letter grades of B (Plain), in entire coursework, when compared to his/her counterpart student symbolised as HD/E/yyyy/T.200xx who both scored 70 in dissertations which is worthy quality grade A. However, the later achieved average second class with GPA of 3.5 when compared to the previous one (Tables 20; 21).

Emerged Conceptual Categories of course Codes, Units, Grades Points and Attained GPAs

The report summarises by listing course codes, the names of the covered courses, and their unit weights. Once again, one must consider the grades and points assigned to each course. A dissertation score of 10 points is considered the best quality of all the other grades, and followed by a B+ grade of 8 points, which is considered a better achievement. Next, is the B (Plain) quality letter with six points that is considered as good average achievement (OUT ARMIS, 2014). The researcher used this tendency to rationalise the values of the other grades, which are C with four points, D with two points, and E with zero (0), considered as low, lower, and lowest points of all as illustrated in (Table 19).

Paradigm Underpinned with Philosophical Conceptions in University Strategic Plans

The Directorate of Research for Postgraduate Students (DRPS) had created an evaluation tool for dissertation quality in order to strengthen quality control and assurance of research reports both internally and externally. One of the tools found was the EEs assessment forms (EEAFs 2004-2016; Table 5; OUT, 2008). This field article provided the impetus for the paradigm subtopic. The EEAFs tool was explicitly deduced from the OUT quality assurance policy strategic plan which established the instrument's use. Students are required to "...clearly outline the research paradigm of choice and design..." in subtopic 6.3(i) of the policy paper. As a result, students' dissertations must explicitly describe the research paradigm, as external examiners will realistically scrutinize it (Figure 1.1). Kairembo and Mwereke (2012) describe a vision statement as a component of metaphysics, a cohesive general statement that explains why an institution, such as a university, exists (Kairembo & Mwereke, 2012: 12,138).

Universities' Lack of Consensus on Level of Including Research Paradigms Theme

Objective three of this study examined how well institutions agreed on master's dissertations, as well as these paradigms for clarity, priority, holistic content, influence, and relevance. How often do the two universities teach master's students about research knowledge generation paradigms for dissertations and theses? EEAF evaluation rubrics and course outlines were crucial to the UDSM and OUT documentation studies (Figure 1.1, Tables 5, 6). These showed that the two universities agreed to include philosophical themes in education students' dissertation course designs for inexperienced researchers. At Dar es Salaam University, the researcher discovered the FE: 600a: Research Methods in Education course overview. The report found that 12-credit coursework-based master's students completed Core 1 in their first semester. UDSM (2018) recommends learning ontological and epistemological assumptions in module 1:1. 3. Field documents contradicted the Open University of Tanzania (OUT) Faculty of Education course plan. OED 626: Methodology. This course is for education master's or postgraduate diploma students, unlike UDSM. This course outline introduces students to various disciplinary approaches to education, with a particular emphasis on item 1.4: the Research and Theoretical Field course. Field examines educational research epistemology and assumptions (2018). In their course frameworks, both schools implicitly feature research paradigms as worldview notions. Why are paradigms not explicitly taught in universities? OUT's subsequent summative assessment incorporates an explicit research paradigm. You can use the research design in Figure (1.1) to review dissertations and theses, but not the course plans for OED 626 students. OUT, EEAF 2004-2017, and OUT 2018 require lecturers to discuss strictly philosophy, epistemology, and methodology. While addressing ontology, epistemology, and methodology, the UDSM (2018) research course structure and assessment rubrics do not cover paradigms. For starters, the two universities' analyses demonstrated that they teach paradigms superficially. Both universities studied advocate a philosophy of hasty, implicit, and incomplete technique on a theme of research paradigm, as evidenced in their course works and assessed study materials for students. The thinking that paradigms construct attributes constitute: philosophy, ontology, epistemology and methodology (POEM) emerged among experts' explored secondary books as they appear in the references section Guba and Lincoln, 2005; Patton, 1990). Likewise, the conceptual frameworks that paradigm is made of: philosophy. Epistemology, and

methodology (PEM), emerged as another reductionist fallacy rather than the holistic one, calling for the need of holistic model to halt that fallacy found in teaching research as methodology instead of covering whole parts making up whole paradigm attributes namely:: Puzzles, ontology, epistemology, methodology, axiology, logic and rhetoric language of each paradigm hence (POEMALoR) The other thinking that paradigm is made of ontology, epistemology, and methodology (OEM) also emerged as an assumption found in (Creswell's 1994) paradigm. Nevertheless the branches of philosophy also emerged in terms of: ontology, epistemology, axiology, and logic in documents of research explored at universities contexts studied. The findings at two universities exhibited not mentioning axiology or logic explicitly, though students' dissertations and theses at UDSM stress ethical and logical research in methodology section. Similar to OUT, institutions disagrees on paradigm placement in course outlines though it appears in its assessment forms for the external examiners' level. The fourth result showed that the universities investigated lacked a uniform framework to clarify dissertation and thesis paradigms. The fifth conclusion highlights the need for a complete framework that defines university research paradigms like lecturing, learning, conducting, writing, supervising, defending, internal and external dissertation assessment, and informed studies. On the third objective, research participants and documents showed that the universities that were studied include philosophical ideas about paradigms in their course descriptions but do not teach them directly in research courses for theses and dissertations. This was shown by interviews with students marked as CAND#23:6.5.2014 and CAND# 32:7.5.2014. These results back up Jacob's (2009) claim that paradigms and related ideas are not –linked with rationale that, majority of researchers dismiss paradigms as irrelevant.

CONCLUSIONS

This study identified a significant fundamental concern at two university institutions under examination, which is represented by the broad theme 6.3.(i) in (Figure 1.1; Table 3). This theme involves External Examiners (EEs) evaluating research paradigms and design as part of the process of constructing research knowledge, which culminates in dissertations and theses. Second, the key conceptual category of 'clarity' in the OUT assessment rubric received the highest ranking. It was the most frequent concept (8) and a unique concept and study design in that rubric (Figure 1.1, Tables 5, 6, 7). They discovered that clarity, akin to a paradigm in research, is a hallmark of all disciplines. Suddaby (2010) also found the

clarity construct complicated, consisting of denotation, scope, semantic link, and coherence. Third, teaching, learning, conducting, writing, supervising, dissertation defending, and internal and external dissertation quality assessment of produced knowledge were key education research procedures in both universities. Researchers evaluated highly aware audiences, such as students, instructors who supervised or monitored them, and internal and external examiners. Objective two's fourth main finding showed that methodology chapter paradigm clarity likely prompted internal and external examiners to grant different scores, which raised or dropped one's course GPA. The fifth key finding from objective three examined how well the research universities consistently and uniformly communicated with Master degree students about paradigm clarity, priority, comprehensive contents, influence, and relevance. Scholars disagreed on paradigm clarity, priority, holistic substance, and relevance. The sixth conclusion showed that the surveyed universities disagreed on paradigms' holistic components. Internal and external reviews of students' dissertations and theses lacked a holistic framework. Examined institutions rarely provided explanations for philosophical paradigms, including their denotation, scope, semantic links, and cohesiveness. In conclusion, three objectives generated new hypotheses and inductive mid-range substantive grounded theory (GT) to inform dissertations and theses using paradigms in research in several Tanzanian universities.

Substantive Fresh Hypotheses and Grounded Theory (GT) Generated

Though studied university researchers are not in consensus about informing their students about the paradigms clarity, primacy, holistic contents, influence and relevance, , this study findings unveiled that the more some studied students explained clearly the subtheme of research paradigm underpinned with philosophical conceptions along research design in methodology chapter, the more likely motivated the External Examiners (EEs) to award either Excellent (A) or Very Good (B+) quality final score grades, for their entire dissertations. This in turn raised their GPAs and the opposite was true to the averagely high, marginal low, lower, and lowest dissertations score grades.

The Substantive Grounded Theory (GT) Emerged

The analyses of data further generated the GT propounding that,

One’s clarity of articulating paradigms theme across entire dissertations most likely motivates external examiners to award excellent and very good scores to students, who clarified well that theme in their dissertations/ theses hence; amplifying their GPAs and the opposite was true to the average and low marginal score achievers.

RECOMMENDATIONS

The implication of these study findings call for the need for universities to pay due attention to their responsibility to inform inexperienced researchers about paradigms underpinned with complex philosophical conceptions that include clarity, primacy, holistic contents, influence and relevance towards paradigms informed studies. Secondly, there is a need to have in place a holistic framework for articulating research paradigms of choice such as lecturing, learning, supervising, and internal and external examining in Tanzanian university institutions. Above all, every university faculties/schools should create a research foundation course concentrating on paradigms and their philosophical underpinnings to build informed research expertise. Further there is a need too to investigate how best the writers proposed paradigm models apart from my proposed POEMALOR are functioning in Tanzania and East African universities.

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