

Post Graduate Students' Experiences with Research Supervisors

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ABSTRACT This study examined the experiences and challenges of post graduate students with research supervisors. The study adopted an interpretive qualitative research methodology and a case-study research design. Data were collected through face-to-face interviews with 40 post graduate students from 2 South African Universities in the Eastern Cape Province. In addition, questionnaires were also used as the main instrument of obtaining the feedback from the students. The study found that only a few students claimed satisfaction with their supervisors. However, it is noticed that a significant percentage (75%) of respondents are not satisfied at all with supervisors' feedback in relation to their research work. Their insufficient knowledge of the relevant field, change of supervisors due to transfer to other institutions, lack of supervisory support and supervisor's other work load have been identified as challenges facing some of the post graduate students in this study. The study recommends training of supervisors in research supervision. Issues to be addressed in the training of supervisors should include training in research methodology, technical expertise, managing the supervision relationship, quality control, providing constructive criticism and feedback and ethical concerns.