

"An invitation to dine" - Ben Smith

Meeting the expectations? The PhD candidates at UiB assess their supervisors

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The data

- Web survey to UIB PhDcandidates Dec. 2014/15*
- N=337
- Four faculties:
 - Social Science (76)
 - Law (16)
 - Psychology (64)
 - Natural Sciences (178)
 - Unspecified (3)
- Adj. response rate: 49,9%
 - * 2014 (Dec.)=Faculty of Socal Science, the other faculties in 2015 (Dec.)



The questionnaire

- · General satisfaction with supervision
- · Optimism about final quality of thesis
- · Faculty/institute
- Social background of candidate
 - age, gender, parents' educational level, foreign student
- Educational background of candidate
 - same supervisor, master at UiB
- PhD situation
 - monograph/article, year of PhD, co-supervisor, office at UiB, has changed supervisor, part-/fulltime
- · Age / gender of supervisor
- Supervisors «supervising style»
 - Preferred (25 items)
 - Experienced (25 items)
- Open questions: "What aspects of your working relationship with your main supervisor are you most/least pleased / satisfied with?



On the table today

- Are the PhD-candidates **satisfied** with their supervisors?
- Are they **optimistic** about their thesis final quality?
- What **factors** are linked to dissatisfaction and pessimism?
- What do they see as **desirable qualities** in a supervisor?
- How do their own supervisors live up to this? Where are the gaps?
- How does their ideals and the perceived gaps - vary with faculty, social characteristics of the candidate and the supervisor, and their PhD situation?
- Finally: The Psychology PhDcandidates - in their own words



«How satisfied are you, all in all, with the supervision of your PhD thesis?»

Very unsatisfied

- Somewhat unsatisfied
- Neither satisfied or unsatisfied
- Somewhat satisfied

Very satisfied



«How optimistic or pessimistic are you about the quality of your completed thesis?»

- Very pessimistic
- Somewhat pessimistic
- Neither optimistic or pessimistic
- Somewhat optimistic
- Very optimistic



Who are dissatisfied and pessimistic? (odds ratios)

- Beeing unsatisfied with supervision is more likely if ...
 - ...the candidate is late (1,6) or writing a monograph (1,2)
 - ...the candidate is 30+ years old (1,3) or female (1,2)
 - ...the candidate do not have a co-supervisor (1,3)
 - ...the superivisor is **another** gender (1,3)
 - ...the supervisor did **not** supervise their master thesis (1,3)
 - Pessimism for the thesis is more likely if ...
 - ...the candidate is late (1,3) or writing a monograph (1,6)
 - ...the candidate is < 30 years old (1,6)

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- ... the candidate do not have a co-supervisor (2,3**)
- ...the superivisor is **the same** gender (1,6)
- ...the supervisor supervised their master thesis (1,3)

And of course, dissatisfaction and pessimism are closely linked (OR: 4,1)



What kind of supervisor do the PhD-candidates want?

"Types of Mankind", Nott and Gliddon, 1854

Monitor and provide feedback about my performance to ensure adequate progress Introduce me to scholarly networks Assist me to publish my research Inform me of supervisor's/school's expectations in regard to performance and progress Ensure that I have a project of appropriate size and degree of difficulty Require written work on a pre-arranged schedule so progress can be assessed regularly Give me support and guidance in preparation of my written thesis Comment on the content and drafts of my thesis Share knowledge with me Maintain close regular contact/meetings on a pre-arranged schedule Be interested in my research project Help me to identify important goals Provide pointed/pertinent supervision Suggest ways that I can make the most effective use of time Help me to develop academic writing skills Recognize and develop my intellectual property Relay the extent of support available for research on topic selected, resources Make available regular discussion groups for both myself and other students Treat me equitably/fairly in terms of time and effort Give me new ideas for research Support me on technical issues and problems Keep records of all meetings and indicate action taken or advice given Assist me in consulting other people for expertise Give me strong encouragement in my research Answer my specific questions Be well informed about the different aspects of research support (eg grants & sc Be an expert in my area of research Be available and easy to approach about any problem Listen to and respect my existing knowledge and skills Have general expertise in supervising research Encourage me to become interested in areas outside my research topic Encourage me to explore issues for myself Help me with topic selection Provide a lot of detailed supervision (quantity) Help me on extra-research issues such as personal life, employment and technical training Univ. of Western Australia (1994). "Student Perceptions of Research Supervision (SPORS)". Questionnaire. http:// <u>http://</u> <u>www.itl.usyd.edu.au/</u> <u>supervision/files/</u> <u>spors.pdf</u>

(1) (2) (3) (4) ⁽⁵⁾ Low High

Preferred qualities in a PhD supervisor (all faculties)

Be interested in my research project		4,6
Comment on the content and drafts of my thesis		4,5
Share knowledge with me		4,4
Be available and easy to approach about any problem		4,2
Treat me equitably/fairly in terms of time and effort		4,2
Give me support and guidance in preparation of my written thesis		4,2
Ensure that I have a project of appropriate size and degree of difficulty		4,1
Answer my specific questions		4,1
Assist me to publish my research		4,1
Listen to and respect my existing knowledge and skills		4,0
Give me strong encouragement in my research		4,0
Help me to identify important goals		4,0
Monitor and provide feedback about my performance to ensure adequate progress		3,9
Be an expert in my area of research		3,9 3,9
Encourage me to explore issues for myself		3,9
Have general expertise in supervising research		3,8
Provide pointed/pertinent supervision		3,8
Help me to develop academic writing skills		3,7
Recognize and develop my intellectual property		3,7
Give me new ideas for research		3,7
Introduce me to scholarly networks		3,7
Inform me of supervisor's/school's expectations in regard to performance and pro		3,6
Help me with topic selection		3,5
Relay the extent of support available for research on topic selected, resources		3,5
Be well informed about the different aspects of research support (eg grants & sc		3,4
Assist me in consulting other people for expertise		3,4
Suggest ways that I can make the most effective use of time		3,3
Maintain close regular contact/meetings on a pre-arranged schedule		3,3
Require written work on a pre-arranged schedule so progress can be assessed regu		3,1
Encourage me to become interested in areas outside my research topic		3,1
Make available regular discussion groups for both myself and other students		3,0
Support me on technical issues and problems		2,9
Provide a lot of detailed supervision (quantity)		2,9
Keep records of all meetings and indicate action taken or advice given	2,	
Help me on extra-research issues such as personal life, employment and technical	2,3	
	0 1,25	2,5 3,75

5

Differences between faculties

- preferred supervision styles



Preferred supervision styles: 3 components (PCA)

Only top six variables for each component is shown

	Support me on technical issues and problems	
	Assist me to publish my research	
1. "The	Help me on extra-research issues such as personal life, employment and technical	
research leader"	Help me with topic selection	
	Give me new ideas for research	
	Make available regular discussion groups for both myself and other students	
	Relay the extent of support available for research on topic selected, resources	

Listen to and respect my existing knowledge and skills

	Be interested in my research project	
	Treat me equitably/fairly in terms of time and effort	2. "The patron-
	Comment on the content and drafts of my thesis	collegue"
	Give me strong encouragement in my research	
	Encourage me to explore issues for myself	
	Require written work on a pre-arranged schedule so progress can be assessed regularly	
	Maintain close regular contact/meetings on a pre-arranged schedule	
3. "The	Provide a lot of detailed supervision (quantity)	
	Monitor and provide feedback about my performance to ensure adequate progress	
schoolteacher"	eacher" Suggest ways that I can make the most effective use of time	

Ensure that I have a project of appropriate size and degree of difficulty

Preferred supervision styles: 3 components (PCA)

Factors that correlate this style of supervision (correlations)

1. "The research leader"

3. "The schoolteacher"

Being satisfied with the supervision (.15) and optimistic (.16) Writing an article-based PhD (.15) Being in the first or second year of PhD. work (.13) Being female (.12) or a foreign student (.11)

(NatSci=44)	Is a candidate at the faculty of Law (.18), Psychology (.20) or Social Sci. (.25)
	Being female (.25) or >30 years of age (.17) or NOT a foreign student (28)
2. "The patron-	Writing a monograph (.24)
collegue"	Supervisor is another gender (.16)
001103010	Having taken the master at UiB (.14)
	Being satisfied with the supervision (.11) and optimistic (.13)

Being a candidate at the Faculty of Law (.22) but not Natural Sciences (-.21)

Being pessimistic about the quality of thesis (.17)

Writing a monograph (.14)

Experienced qualities in their PhD supervisor (all faculties)

ed in my research project				4,0
proach about any problem				4,0
ting knowledge and skills				3,9
ent and drafts of my thesis				3,9
in terms of time and effort				3,8
wer my specific questions				3,8
Share knowledge with me				3,8
e in supervising research				3,8
explore issues for myself				3,7
ert in my area of research				3,7
uragement in my research				3,6
ration of my written thesis				3,6
ze and degree of difficulty				3,5
o identify important goals				3,5
ne to publish my research				3,4
Ip me with topic selection				3,4
nted/pertinent supervision				3,3
ne new ideas for research				3,3
p my intellectual property				3,3
op academic writing skills				3,3
h support (eg grants & sc			3	,2
ensure adequate progress			3,	1
topic selected, resources			3,	1
other people for expertise			3,0	
me to scholarly networks			3,0	
d to performance and pro			2,9	
outside my research topic			2,8	
led supervision (quantity)			2,8	
most effective use of time			2,8	
n a pre-arranged schedule			2,8	
myself and other students			2,6	
nical issues and problems			2,6	
ess can be assessed regu			2,6	
employment and technical			2,3	
tion taken or advice given		2,1		
	0	1 2	3	3 4

Be interest Be available and easy to app Listen to and respect my exis Comment on the conte Treat me equitably/fairly i Ansv Have general expertis Encourage me to Be an exp Give me strong encou Give me support and guidance in prepar Ensure that I have a project of appropriate size Help me to Assist n He **Provide poin** Give n **Recognize and develo** Help me to develo Be well informed about the different aspects of researc Monitor and provide feedback about my performance to e Relay the extent of support available for research on Assist me in consulting Introduce Inform me of supervisor's/school's expectations in regar Encourage me to become interested in areas of Provide a lot of detai Suggest ways that I can make the Maintain close regular contact/meetings on Make available regular discussion groups for both r Support me on techn Require written work on a pre-arranged schedule so progre Help me on extra-research issues such as personal life, e

Keep records of all meetings and indicate action taken or advice given

The gap: Differerence between preferred and experienced qualities in their PhD supervisor (all faculties)



0,2

Gaps between preferred and experienced supervision style: 4 components (PCA)

Only top four variables for each component is shown

1. Lack of	Give me support and guidance in preparation of my written thesis
support, time,	Treat me equitably/fairly in terms of time and effort
feedback,	Help me to develop academic writing skills
	Comment on the content and drafts of my thesis
encouragement	

2. Lack of specific	Give me new ideas for research
	Help me with topic selection
academic	Relay the extent of support available for research on topic selected
expertise	Be an expert in my area of research

Encourage me to become interested in areas outside my research topic	C
Encourage me to explore issues for myself	

3. Lack of freedom

Help me on extra-research issues such as personal life, employment ...

Introduce me to scholarly networks

4. Lack of regular meetings, monitoring of progress etc.

Require written work on a pre-arranged schedule so progress can be assessed regularly

Maintain close regular contact/meetings on a pre-arranged schedule

Monitor and provide feedback about my performance to ensure adequate progress

Provide a lot of detailed supervision (quantity)

Gaps between preferred and experienced supervision style: 4 components (PCA)

Factors that correlate with these gaps (correlations)

1. Lack of	Being unsatisfied with supervision (.53) an	d pessimistic (.14)
support, time,	Being female (.13), supervisor is another gender (.15), NOT master at UIB (16)	
feedback,	Writing an article-based PhD (.15)	
-	NOT being a Law student (15)	
encouragement		
Being unsatisfied with su Not being a foreign stude	pervision (.51) and pessimistic (.21) nt (13)	2. Lack of specific academic expertise
	Being unsatisfied with supervision (.51) an	d pessimistic (.28)
3. Lack of freedom	Being male (.19), supervisor is another gender (.13)	
	Not being a foreign student (17)	
		4. Lack of regular

Being unsatisfied with supervision (.49) and pessimistic (.31)

Being late in the PhD cycle (.14)

Not being a foreign student (-.14)

4. Lack of regular meetings, monitoring of progress etc.