Supervising Success: Strategies for Supporting Fast-track Postgraduate Students in Indonesia

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ABSTRACT

Students in fast-track postgraduate programmes face unique challenges, including intense academic pressure, role management difficulties, and high expectations for research output. This study, using the Self-Determination Theory (SDT) framework, specifically investigated good practices of supervisory strategies to improve postgraduate student well-being and academic performance in such accelerated programs. We collected data through online Focus Group Discussions (FGDs) with 264 supervisors from various academic fields and then analysed the data using thematic analysis. We incorporated expert review, FGDs facilitator guidance, and rigorous data validation processes to ensure trustworthiness. The findings reveal several critical challenges students face, including academic, self-management, relationship, financial, and program-related difficulties, highlighting areas where enhanced supervisory support is crucial. Furthermore, we found that supervisors assist students by providing essential academic information, offering structured guidance, and fostering a supportive environment. These findings can guide improved supervision strategies in a postgraduate fast-track programme.

Introduction

Education plays a vital role in national development by laying the groundwork for technological advancement, economic prosperity, and overall societal advancement. Cultivating a highly skilled academic workforce is crucial for countries aiming to boost global competitiveness. In this regard, the Indonesian Ministry of Education, Culture, Research, and Technology launched a scholarship programme named PMDSU (*Pendidikan Magister menuju Doktor untuk Sarjana Unggul*, translated as Master's Programme to Doctorate for Excellent Scholars). This initiative aims to accelerate the academic journey of exceptional undergraduates, enabling them to fast-track their master's and doctoral degree completion under the mentorship of experienced supervisors. It is expected that this program

could expedite the production of high-quality research and foster academic excellence. Furthermore, the PMDSU programme is designed to cultivate a new generation of highly skilled researchers, thereby enhancing Indonesia's competitive edge on the global stage (Ministry of Education, n.d.).

Despite the potential benefits of fast-track postgraduate programs, students enrolled in such programs face unique and often overwhelming challenges (Almasri et al., 2022; Barry et al., 2018; Bireda, 2015; Castelló et al., 2017; Sverdlik et al., 2018). In the PMDSU program, a master's and doctorate typically take six years to complete and are condensed into four years. During this shorter timeframe, PMDSU students must conduct and publish high-quality research while excellently meeting their academic responsibilities (Ministry of Education, n.d.). Even in a typical master's programme, postgraduate students encounter various challenges, including mastering complex topics and excelling in scientific writing, all while maintaining personal well-being in the face of intense academic pressures (Bireda, 2015). Managing demanding academic requirements, juggling family responsibilities, and navigating role conflicts are everyday stressors that students face and, in the end, can contribute to burnout (Castelló et al., 2017; Sverdlik et al., 2018). Furthermore, financial constraints and feelings of isolation often compound these challenges, leading to psychological issues like anxiety and depression (Almasri et al., 2022; Barry et al., 2018; Bireda, 2015). Students' relationships with their supervisors are another crucial challenge for postgraduate students. A good relationship can help increase students' determination to complete their research, while a discrepancy could lead to more confusion and stress (Sverdlik et al., 2018).

Previous studies have underscored the crucial role of adequate supervisory support in helping students overcome these obstacles and complete their postgraduate degree programmes (Devos et al., 2015; Rigler et al., 2017; Wollast et al., 2023). According to Self-Determination Theory (SDT), individuals will likely flourish in environments that meet their fundamental psychological needs for autonomy, competence, and relatedness (Ryan & Deci, 2022). In the context of postgraduate education, adequate supervision should address autonomy, competence, and relatedness needs by offering structured guidance, emotional support, and opportunities for meaningful academic engagement (Devos et al., 2015). For example, supervisors should empower their students by granting them autonomy to determine their work. This autonomy can foster a sense of responsibility and ownership, increasing motivation and productivity. Simultaneously, supervisors must boost students' sense of competence by providing constructive feedback. Furthermore, reassuring students during difficult times can help students acknowledge supervisors' care for their studies (Devos et al., 2015). Previous research on doctoral supervision has also identified the key factors for a successful supervisor & student relationship, including clear communication of expectations, regular and constructive feedback, and the establishment of a supportive academic community (Hospel & Galand, 2016; Rigler et al., 2017).

However, most of these studies have been conducted in Western contexts, where educational norms, cultural values, and academic systems are distinct from non-Western countries (Hassan et al., 2010). In Indonesia, hierarchical cultural norms play a significant role in shaping the student-supervisor relationship. As the teacher-centred culture is strong in Asia, supervisors have greater power and authority, potentially limiting students' sense of autonomy and agency in their research (Gong et al., 2021; Hofstede, 2011). This dynamic can be at odds with the egalitarian and autonomous approach to postgraduate supervision commonly encouraged in Western settings, creating unique challenges for Indonesian students. In contrast to Western cultures, which often prioritise individualism and encourage students to take the initiative, Indonesian students may feel uncomfortable asserting their

preferences or questioning their supervisors' guidance. This situation can hinder open communication and may limit the effectiveness of supervisory support, particularly for students struggling to meet the demands of a fast-track program (Devos et al., 2015).

Therefore, this study addresses the gap in the existing literature by exploring the specific challenges faced by fast-track postgraduate students in Indonesia and identifying supervisory strategies that can best support these students. Focusing on fast-track students in Indonesia, this study offers a novel contribution to the literature by investigating the experience of accelerated programme supervision, specifically in a non-Western, accelerated academic context, which has been largely underexplored. This perspective holds the key to uncovering new insights and potential solutions that could prevent students from dropping out of their accelerated programme and promote their academic excellence. For these reasons, this study aims to identify good practices of supervision strategy to support students in dealing with the challenges associated with fast-tracked postgraduate education. The study also outlines recommendations for enhancing supervisory support in accelerated programmes like PMDSU.

Method

Study Design

This study employed a qualitative design with a semi-structured group interview approach, using focus group discussions (FGDs) to gather various experiences and strategies from the PMDSU supervisors (Hammarberg et al., 2016; Shafie et al., 2022). Using FGD, the data collected is more profound due to the discussion and arguments happening in each group (Shafie et al., 2022). The FGDs were conducted online using a video conference method to accommodate participants' geographical dispersion while maintaining the data quality (Shafie et al., 2022; Woodyatt et al., 2016).

Before the FGDs, a focus group discussion guide was created by the researcher to be used as a guide for the facilitators. Semi-structured interview questions were also prepared, with finding supervisors' best practices in mentoring their students as the main objective. To ensure dependability, the FGD guide was reviewed by a psychologist first and revised accordingly before being shared with the facilitators (Shafie et al., 2022). Briefing sessions were also conducted for each facilitator group as the facilitator's role is critical to ensure a smooth and consistent discussion process (Nyumba et al., 2018). These sessions provided facilitators with detailed instructions on how to use the FGD guide and manage the online discussions. During the session, two main questions are being discussed. The questions discussed in the FGDs were: (1) What are the academic and non-academic challenges you commonly encounter among PMDSU students? (2) What are your good practices for assisting the PMDSU students in overcoming these difficulties?

Ethical considerations were addressed by obtaining informed consent from all participants before the focus group discussion sessions (Sim & Waterfield, 2019). Participants were assured of the confidentiality of their responses, and all data were anonymised to protect their identity and were treated as group data (Sim & Waterfield, 2019). Participants were also informed about the session recording and allowed to opt out if uncomfortable. To ensure data privacy, the FGDs' video recording data has been stored in a protected cloud folder that only researchers can access (Carter et al., 2021). Lastly, the written recordings of the focus group discussions were shared with the participants to guarantee there was no sensitive or wrong information.

Participants and Facilitators

The participants of this study were experienced PMDSU supervisors who have been supervisors for one or more PMDSU batches. Participants were then searched and selected using a purposive sampling method within a qualitative study where researchers can screen people with specific knowledge about a topic (Rai & Thapa, 2019). In this case, the researcher then collected a list of supervisors who supervised more than one batch of PMDSU from the Ministry of Education and contacted them to ensure their availability. A total of 234 participants were collected, 73 females and 161 males. Most participants (204) were professors, while the rest were associate professors (30). The participants were divided into 30 groups, each with 6–8 participants. The FGDs were led by 30 facilitators who are also experienced supervisors who have been supervising PMDSU students for more than one batch. The FGD facilitators consist of seven females and 23 males. Among the facilitators, 29 were professors, and one was an associate professor.

Data Collection and Analysis

The FGDs were conducted via Zoom, which used its breakout room feature to create a conducive environment for small group discussions. Miro and Google Docs were used for real-time note-taking and collaboration. Each FGD session was facilitated by a senior supervisor who deeply understood the context and could guide the discussions effectively (Nyumba et al., 2018). Furthermore, the facilitator ensures the discussion is visually recorded via Zoom and written via Miro or Google Docs.

To analyse the data, the researcher conducted a thematic analysis of the FGD results across all groups. Thematic analysis is a process of understanding data by identifying patterns (Braun & Clarke, 2022). Several steps were taken, adapted from Castleberry and Nolen (2018): (1) Compiling. This is the initial step where the raw data is compiled and cleaned to increase its readability, removing any blank data or typing mistakes. It should be noted that during the process, we didn't receive back the data from three facilitators (Groups 2, 9, and 25), and they're labelled "missing.". Due to this situation, the analysis continued with only data from 27 groups. (2) Coding. The raw data is reviewed in this stage, and relevant information is tagged with labels or "codes." The authors used colours and name labels to differentiate each data. (3) Identify themes. Once the data has been coded, they're grouped into several themes. Themes represent patterns or topics that come up repeatedly across different codes. Each theme also has its own colour that represents it, and this was done so that the researcher could differentiate the theme groups. (4) Interpreting. Interpretation means drawing a higher-level conclusion regarding the relationship between all themes and codes. During this process, we developed the general context of the research findings: (5) Concluding. The authors related the findings to previous research questions in this final step.

Results

This study revealed two significant findings. First, we identified the numerous challenges that postgraduate students encounter while participating in the fast-track program. These challenges were grouped into distinct themes: academic, self-management, relationship, financial, and program-related issues. Secondly, we uncovered supervisors' diverse strategies to support and guide students through their educational journey. These strategies were classified based on the supervisors' supportive actions, such as providing valuable

information, fostering an encouraging environment, and offering structured mentorship and guidance.

Students Challenges

Students face a multitude of challenges during their postgraduate journey. This section provides an overview of the student's difficulties from the perspective of their supervisors. During the focus group discussion, we asked supervisors to identify the prevalent challenges that hinder their students' progress toward degree completion. The findings were later classified into four categories.

Academic challenges. Most focus group discussions concurred that students' inadequate academic skills pose a significant obstacle. Supervisors noted that students often lack solid foundational knowledge and struggle with literature comprehension. Despite the necessity of proficient English skills for understanding literature, many students reported difficulties reading literature written in English. Additionally, students often require assistance to operate laboratory equipment, even though it's a prominent skill for their study. Here are some comments from the FGD:

"Students have difficulties in describing the novelty of their research" (Group 29).
"Students are not keen on reading literature" (Group 29).
"Students have limited English skills" (Group 21).
"Students lack experience working in a laboratory" (Group 1).

In addition to the research topic mastery, supervisors also expressed dissatisfaction with students' writing and presenting skills, especially when related to scientific works. One of the supervisors' main concerns was the students' minimal understanding of research methodologies and difficulties articulating their academic thoughts. Students also struggle to analyse their research data, giving poor results. Several FGD groups also concluded that the students lacked experience in publishing scientific journals. See the statements that support this conclusion below:

"(They have) a weak ability to synthesise (data)" (Group 08).
"New undergraduate students tend to be less experienced in research and writing" (Group 18).
"Oftentimes, the issues raised do not match the research methods being used" (Group 29).

Self-management challenges. With all the demands coming left and right, supervisors noted that students often struggle to manage their emotions, resulting in low self-confidence and deteriorating mental health. In addition, students were also found to need help with self-regulation and time management. The supervisors shared that they often found students procrastinating on their research cause of their difficulties in regulating themself and prioritising important task. For example, the supervisors pointed out these challenges for students:

"Stress due to the demands of reputable publications" (Group 3).
"Students find it difficult to divide their time because of other projects outside academics" (Group 10).
"Students are afraid to meet with promoters because of their insecurities." (Group 10).

Relationship management challenges. As students must spend a lot of time working on their research, balancing academic and relationship demands can be a significant difficulty. Often, supervisors find that students become stressed and demotivated due to discord in their relationships. These situations can happen with partners, family, friends, and

supervisors. In addition, supervisors also need help managing their relationship with their students; differences in characteristics and communication styles are some of the contributing factors. Some of them mentioned that:

"The student's family condition is problematic" (Group 07).
"There are family problems, so they (the students) cannot complete their studies" (Group 29).
"There's a barrier like a different culture; (they say) it's scary to meet with the supervisor" (Group 16).

Other FGD groups shared that their students often find themselves in a new social role, such as being a husband or a parent, causing them to hold or stop their studies entirely.

"Students "disappear" due to marriage or job application" (Group 3).
"PMDSU students become pregnant before completing their studies, hindering the completion of their studies on time" (Group 26).
"Students want to settle down and get married" (Group 28).

Financial challenges. We discovered that students are still struggling to secure funding for their research, which results in difficulties in continuing their studies. This issue was frequently linked to the economic conditions of the students' families. Some students even sought part-time jobs or paid projects to improve their financial condition. See the related FGD result below:

"Students disappear due to family economic problems" (Group 11).
"Financial problems" (Group 16).

Programme-Related Challenges. This issue mainly relates to the clarity of rules and details of the fast-track programme, different policies at each university, and other administrative demands that students face. The differences in institutions that offer master's and doctoral programmes are also difficulties faced by students. For example, the supervisor shared:

"(They) faced difficulty in obtaining a visa when conducting collaborative research abroad" (Group 27).
"There are differences in the study programme policies of each university regarding the master's and doctoral study period in 4 years" (Group 15).
"The faculty staff does not understand the fast-track programme system." (Group 16).

Supervisors Support

In the section after this, we will report on supervisors' answers to this question, "What are your good practices for assisting the PMDSU awardees in overcoming these difficulties?". The responses to this question are diverse, proving the magnitude of actions taken to support the postgraduate students. However, after the thematic analysis, we found three commonly used strategies.

Giving valuable information. Based on the data, supervisors support the students by providing them with the necessary resources and helping them establish relevant connections. It includes connecting students with other institutions or funders. The supervisors also give information regarding research grants or funds and share relevant research topics. Furthermore, supervisors with lab-related topics often assist students in finding alternative lab tools or materials. For example, the supervisors' FGD result stated that:

"We contact partners (in other universities) and implement collaborative research schemes" (Group 19).

"We also planned out a tentative research theme beforehand so that students received guidance to carry it out" (Group 15).

"(Attempted to search for) other tools with similar characterisation have been tried, although they are not very exact" (Group 18).

Providing Structured Guidance. We also identified that much of supervisors' support revolves around giving doctoral students structured and comprehensive guidance throughout their doctoral journey. This includes providing students with plans to improve their topic mastery, such as sitting in on classes, conducting literature reviews, or attending seminars on related materials. There are also efforts to improve students' skills, whether related to reading and writing papers, personal skills such as self-regulation and time management, or complementary skills like English and lab proficiency. We also found that supervisors try to make their advisory sessions more structured by asking students to write clear action notes after each meeting. Some examples they shared are:

"We practised reading and reviewing papers & presentations weekly" (Group 01).

"The overseas internship has been planned from the beginning; where to go and what to do has been thought of" (Group 15).

"We provided tutorials held specifically for subjects considered difficult for students" (Group 18).

Creating a supportive environment. Besides tangible support, the data also shows that supervisors are trying to create a supportive environment for the students. The finding includes supervisors' personalised and emotional-focused communication approach, especially when their students face motivational problems. It also includes supervisors' actions to facilitate peer support by creating PMDSU awardees' WhatsApp groups and creating sharing sessions between students. As some supervisors shared in the FGD:

"During the consultation, we open with other things first (small talks) before jumping to the material" (Group 10).

"We carry out a group sharing session to provide support" (Group 3).

"(We) engaged students in many group activities with other PMDSU fellows" (Group 1).

Discussion

This study offers critical insights into the challenges fast-track postgraduate students face in Indonesia and the supervisory strategies that support their academic journey. By applying SDT as a framework, the discussion enhances our understanding of how supervisors can effectively help students manage these challenges, which have significant implications for student well-being and academic performance.

PMDSU students encounter various academic challenges, including a lack of fundamental knowledge in specific research areas, difficulties with scientific writing, and limited proficiency in English. The demanding nature of the PMDSU program requires students to quickly master advanced content, which is made even more challenging by their limited time for research and publication. Previous studies on early-career researchers and postgraduate students have documented similar issues, where the pressure to produce high-quality academic work within a constrained timeframe leads to significant stress (Cornwall et al., 2019). Previously, Bireda (2015) also identified that students often express a need for improved digital literacy and academic writing skills based on supervisor feedback. The findings of this study mirror the existing literature, highlighting the heightened difficulties that fast-track students face in learning and applying research methodologies, writing good articles, and publishing their work, which is often essential for academic advancement and

program completion. These findings align with our study, emphasizing the steep learning curve students face in mastering research methodologies, writing scientific articles, and publishing their work tasks that are essential for academic success and program completion.

In addition to academic challenges, fast-track students also face significant self-management challenges, particularly with prioritizing tasks and regulating emotions. Many students struggle to balance the rigorous academic demands of fast-track programs with personal and professional responsibilities, leading to procrastination, stress, and self-doubt. These self-management concerns are well-documented in postgraduate education literature, where the psychological burden of managing multiple priorities contributes to low self-confidence, leading to burnout, anxiety, and depression (Almasri et al., 2022; Bireda, 2015; Castelló et al., 2017; Sverdlik et al., 2018). The compressed timeline of fast-track programs intensifies these challenges, limiting students' ability to manage workloads effectively, further exacerbating stress, and undermining their confidence.

Another prevalent issue is relationship management, particularly in balancing academic demands with family, friends, and supervisors. Students reported feeling isolated due to the demands of their academic workload, leading to strained relationships and a sense of disconnection from their support networks. This finding aligns with previous studies highlighting the importance of solid student-supervisor relationships for academic success (Le Roux, 2018; Rigler et al., 2017; Wollast et al., 2023). In Indonesia's collectivist culture, familial expectations and responsibilities add another layer of complexity, as students are often required to maintain traditional family roles while pursuing their academic goals (Utari, 2023). The additional emotional burden of managing these competing demands can amplify feelings of isolation and stress, making it difficult for students to sustain healthy relationships.

Moreover, many students face financial challenges, even with scholarship support. Although the PMDSU program offers funding, students must often cover additional research expenses, such as conference participation, data collection, and travel. This financial strain can significantly affect students' ability to focus on their studies, as they may need to seek external funding or part-time employment to cover these costs (Rigler et al., 2017). Research has shown that financial difficulties are a key factor contributing to postgraduate student attrition, as students with limited financial resources are more likely to experience stress and disengagement from their studies (Bireda, 2015; Greene, 2015; Rigler et al., 2017). Our study confirms these trends, as financial concerns emerged as a significant stressor for students in the PMDSU.

Finally, participants reported program-related challenges, particularly navigating university policies, program requirements, and administrative processes. Frequently cited obstacles to progress reports included confusion regarding institutional guidelines, visa issues for conducting research abroad, and difficulties obtaining necessary resources (e.g., lab equipment or research materials). This finding aligns with a previous study that revealed administrative barriers could hinder students' performance from completing their research on time, creating additional stress and potentially delaying program completion (Ekpoh, 2016).

Supervisors play a crucial role in helping fast-track students overcome various challenges by employing three primary strategies: providing valuable information, offering structured guidance, and fostering a supportive environment. These strategies align with Self-Determination Theory (SDT), which emphasizes three core psychological needs for student motivation and well-being: autonomy, competence, and relatedness (Ryan & Deci, 2022).

The first support strategy gives valuable information. Supervisors acted as crucial sources of information, helping students navigate academic resources, research networks, and institutional policies. This guidance was essential for students in fast-track programs, who often have limited time to identify and utilise the resources they need to succeed. By giving students relevant materials, supervisors could help prevent students from dropping out by enhancing their engagement and satisfaction (Blanchard & Haccoun, 2020). Students are also free to filter and choose the most needed information. Any opportunities for students to make their own choices and initiatives are crucial, as they fulfil one's need for autonomy and foster student confidence (Devos et al., 2015; Litalien & Guay, 2015; Wollast et al., 2023). However, it should be noted that over-controlling the information used by postgraduate students can have the opposite effect (Wollast et al., 2023). For example, they can pressure students to use the supervisor's preferred approach (Blanchard & Haccoun, 2020; Devos et al., 2015). Ideally, providing information must be accompanied by a rational explanation and respect for the student's perspectives (Devos et al., 2015). By providing students with access to academic literature, research methodologies, and professional networks, supervisors helped students build their autonomy- an essential element of SDT (Blanchard & Haccoun, 2020).

The second strategy, providing structured guidance, is crucial for helping students develop the competencies needed to meet the rigorous academic demands of the PMDSU program. The supervisor provides structured guidance to support PMDSU students throughout their educational journey, including plans to enhance research understanding, skill improvement, and structured advisory sessions. This strategy strengthened previous findings that structured guidance is crucial for developing students' competencies and improving students' well-being (Hospel & Galand, 2016; Wollast et al., 2023). Students often acknowledged their academic shortcomings (Bireda, 2015) and preferred a supervisor who could provide structured support to guide them (Olivier et al., 2021). With clear outcome expectations and detailed directions for each activity, students can slowly develop their skills, fostering a sense of competence in themselves(Devos et al., 2015; Hospel & Galand, 2016). Specifically, proper constructive feedback, clear writing guidelines, regular supervision, and in-depth responses to their enquiries can achieve structured guidance (Devos et al., 2015; Olivier et al., 2021; Rigler et al., 2017). Supervisors could maintain students' motivation and improve their engagement by doing all these things (Hospel & Galand, 2016; Olivier et al., 2021).

The third strategy was creating a supportive environment. Supervisors are working to establish a nurturing environment for students. This involves personalised and emotionally focused communication, particularly when students encounter motivation challenges. Supervisors also make efforts to foster peer support by creating WhatsApp groups for PMDSU awardees and organising sharing sessions among students. Emotional and social support from supervisors was critical in helping students manage the stress and emotional challenges of the fast-track program. It allows them to lift their emotional burden, and by doing so, it buffers the negative effects of stress, lowers anxiety levels, and improves emotional well-being (Blanchard & Haccoun, 2020; Greene, 2015; Sverdlik et al., 2018). Supervisors in this study actively worked to create a sense of community among their students, often facilitating peer support networks and encouraging collaboration. These efforts were particularly important in the Indonesian context, where collectivist cultural values emphasise the importance of social harmony and interdependence (Hofstede, 2011). Devos et al. (2015) also mentioned the importance of supervisors treating students with compassion, particularly when they're facing stressful times. Taking a little time to show interest and listen to their problem can be crucial to solving their emotional problem.

However, Wollast et al. (2023) noted that once students' need for control and structure is satisfied, emotional support becomes a secondary necessity. Therefore, supervisors should prioritise providing structured support with relevant information before focusing on emotional support, reassuring students, and enhancing their confidence in the process.

Based on the discussion, it is strongly recommended that both supervisors and universities take proactive steps to enhance the support provided to PMDSU students. Specifically, we are looking at strategies to provide the three basic psychological factors: autonomy, competence, and relatedness. Supervisors could initiate the process by providing students with a curated list of recommended literature to foster autonomy. In tandem, universities and supervisors should contemplate implementing comprehensive research writing guidelines and meticulously structured workshops. These initiatives would serve to enhance students' academic skills while fulfilling their need for competence. Moreover, establishing a nurturing environment, such as research groups, can aid students in managing emotional difficulties. It also fosters a sense of relatedness, thereby creating a supportive and collaborative academic community.

This study has its limitations. Firstly, this research attempts to understand the types of support supervisors provide from the supervisors' perspective. Given the nature of social support, which can differ between the giver and receiver, there is a need for additional research that examines the types of support required from the student's viewpoint. Secondly, the data collection process was conducted collectively without considering the gender of the supervisor or the student. Consequently, the research findings are discussed in a general, non-gendered context. For future research, the authors recommend further exploration into the relationship between gender, the differences in student difficulties, and the support provided by supervisors. This could bring a more nuanced understanding of the dynamics in fast-track postgraduate programmes. A mixed-methods approach, including qualitative interviews and quantitative surveys or statistical analyses, would also help confirm the results across a larger, more diverse sample and give more helpful information for improving fast-track program supervision.

Conclusion

This study has identified several key challenges fast-track postgraduate students face, including academic, self-management, relationship, financial, and program-related difficulties. The findings underscore the crucial role of adequate supervisory support, particularly in accelerated academic settings. Striking a balance between autonomy and structured support empowers students to become more independent while ensuring they receive the academic and emotional guidance needed to succeed. Moreover, a supportive environment helps mitigate the psychological and social pressures often impeding student progress. These findings are essential for improving supervisory practices in Indonesia, where hierarchical cultural norms can influence the student-supervisor dynamic. Enhancing these practices will empower institutions to guide the next generation of scholars more effectively, promoting their academic success and overall well-being. Future research should investigate these dynamics from the students' perspectives, employing a mixed-method approach to provide a more comprehensive understanding of the supervisory process

Declarations

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