Management of Research Supervision and Completion of Graduate Studies in Uganda; a Case of Gulu University

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A Dissertation Submitted to the Directorate of Research and Graduate Studies in Partial Fulfilment of the Requirements for the Award of a Master's Degree in education management of Gulu University

October, 2026

Declaration

I, Job Lubangakene, declare that this research report entitled; *"Management of Research supervision and Completion of graduate studies in Uganda, a case of Gulu University"* is my original work and has not been submitted to any academic institution of higher learning for any academic award

Signature.....Date..06/10/2026.....

24/U/0674/MED/PS

Approval

This is to certify that this research report entitled ‘’*Management of Research Supervision and Completion of Graduate Studies in Uganda, a case of Gulu University’’* was written under our supervision and is submitted to the Department of Education Management for review with our approval.

Signature:…… Date: 07/01/2026

Dr. Gloria Lamaro (PhD)

Signature:…… Date: 6/01/26

Dr. George Opio (PhD)

Dedication

I also dedicate this work to my beloved wife Alimocan Mercy, for her unwavering love, encouragement, patience, and support during the course of my studies. Her sacrifices and belief in me have been a constant source of motivation. Special dedication goes to my dear son Prosper Laddah J and my father, Prof Openjuru George L, whose guidance; wisdom, mentorship, and commitment to education have greatly inspired me.

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With deep appreciation goes to my two supervisors to the tireless guided me with appropriate adjustments of this research work till the end. Dr. Gloria Lamero and Dr. George Opio who endless and fatherly support.

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Abstract

The purpose of the study was to investigate the Influence of management of research supervision on completion of graduate studies at Gulu University. The study was guided by the following specific objectives: to assess the level of management of research supervision at Gulu University; and to assess the level of completion of graduate studies at Gulu University. The study used a mixed-method approach and a convergent mixed-method research design. Data was collected from 132 respondents and participants using questionnaire and interview guide. Data was analyzed using SPSS version 25.0 and qualitative data was analyzed using thematic analysis. The findings for research question one revealed that the level of management of research supervision at Gulu University was low as reported by master's students, moderate as reported by Supervisors and high as reported by graduate coordinators and members of top management. Findings for research question two showed that the level of completion of graduate studies at Gulu University was low as reported by all the categories and finally results also showed that there was a strong relationship between management of research supervision and completion of graduate studies at Gulu University. It was concluded that management of research supervision was fundamental determinant of completion of graduate studies at Gulu University. The study recommended that graduate school should enforce policies on monitoring the progress of graduate students and the supervisors.

Chapter One

Introduction

1.1 Overview

Completion of graduate studies is a vital indicator of the internal efficiency and quality of master's education, reflecting how effectively universities support students from admission to successful research completion (OECD, 2021). It measured institutional performance and student success, indicating the extent to which graduate programmes achieve their intended outcomes. Effective management of research supervision ensures that supervisors and students operate within a system that promotes accountability, timely progress, and academic excellence (Wisker & Trafford, 2016). Thus, effective management of research supervision contributed to improved completion of graduate studies and the overall success of graduate education (Agyeman, 2020). Completion depends on the quality of supervision and institutional support mechanisms (Mainhard et al., 2020; Lessing & Schulze, 2019). This chapter presented study background, problem statement, purpose, objectives, research questions, hypotheses, significance, scope, and conceptual framework.

1.2 Background of the Study

Background was designed under four key components: the historical background, theoretical background, the conceptual background, and the contextual background.

1.2.1 Historical Background

This study was guided primarily by the Quality Assurance and Quality Management Theory, advanced by Adomavičienė and Tamošiūnas (2023). The theory explains that quality in higher education is achieved through structured processes, clear standards, effective monitoring, continuous evaluation, and improvement of academic activities. It emphasizes that universities should establish effective administrative frameworks, supervision guidelines, monitoring mechanisms, and quality control systems to improve academic outcomes. In relation to this study, the theory is relevant because effective management of research supervision requires clear procedures, defined responsibilities, regular monitoring, and evaluation of students' research progress. These mechanisms can enhance timely completion, reduce dropout rates, and improve the quality of research among graduate students (Harvey &

Green, 2020). However, the theory gives limited attention to interpersonal relationships and the emotional and professional support required by graduate students during their studies.

The limitation is complemented by Social Support Theory, developed by House (1981), which explains that individuals perform better when they receive academic, emotional, informational, and professional support from others. In graduate education, supportive supervisory relationships can strengthen students' motivation, confidence, persistence, and research productivity (Manathunga et al., 2019). Thus, the theory provides an additional explanation of how positive relationships between supervisors and graduate students may contribute to timely completion, reduced dropout, and improved research quality. Nevertheless, Social Support Theory focuses mainly on interpersonal interactions and provides limited explanation of institutional structures and coordination mechanisms.

Systems Theory, developed by Ludwig von Bertalanffy (1968), further complements the main theory by viewing organizations as interconnected systems whose components work together to achieve desired outcomes. In universities, administrative structures, supervisors, graduate schools, and students are interdependent units influencing graduate completion and research quality (Cloete et al., 2018). The theory therefore helps explain the importance of coordination among these components. However, it may assume effective functioning of institutional units, which may not always occur in resource-constrained public universities such as Gulu University.

1.2.3 Conceptual Background

This study assumed that effective management of research supervision significantly influences the completion of graduate studies in public universities. Management of research supervision refers to the institutional and interpersonal processes through which universities organize, guide, support, monitor, and facilitate graduate students throughout their research journey. According to Hokororo (2021) and the National Council for Higher Education (NCHE, 2019), effective supervision management is supported by clear policies, guidelines, coordination, monitoring procedures, and communication structures. In this study, management of research supervision was conceptualized through three dimensions: administrative framework, supervisory capacity building, and supervisory relationships. The administrative framework involved institutional policies, supervision guidelines, coordination systems, monitoring procedures, and communication structures. Supervisory capacity

building involved training, mentorship, workshops, and professional development that enhanced supervisors' competencies (Bitzer & Albertyn, 2019). Supervisory relationships concern communication, trust, feedback, interaction, and academic support between supervisors and graduate students (Lee & Murray, 2023).

Completion of graduate studies refers to the successful fulfilment of academic and research requirements leading to graduation within the expected period. Pyhältö et al. (2021) associate graduate completion with student retention, progress, and successful completion of research requirements, while Cloete et al. (2018) emphasise the importance of effective supervision and institutional support in achieving completion outcomes. In this study, completion of graduate studies was conceptualized through reduced dropout, timely completion, and research quality. Reduced dropout refers to the university's ability to retain students until successful completion. Timely completion involves completing dissertations within the prescribed academic period, while research quality concerns the originality, relevance, academic rigour, and standard of research outputs.

Conceptually, an effective administrative framework strengthens coordination and monitoring, thereby reducing delays and dropout. Supervisory capacity building enhances supervisors' ability to provide effective research guidance, while positive supervisory relationships promote motivation, communication, and academic engagement, supporting timely completion and research quality (Manathunga et al., 2019). However, institutional resources, student commitment, research funding, and organizational support may influence this relationship by strengthening or weakening the effectiveness of supervision management at Gulu University.

1.2.4 Contextual Background

This study assumed that effective management of research supervision significantly influences the completion of graduate studies in public universities. Management of research supervision refers to the institutional and interpersonal processes through which universities organise, guide, support, monitor, and facilitate graduate students throughout their research journey. According to Hokororo (2021) and the National Council for Higher Education (NCHE, 2019), effective supervision management is supported by clear policies, guidelines, coordination, monitoring procedures, and communication structures. In this study, management of research supervision is conceptualised through three dimensions:

administrative framework, supervisory capacity building, and supervisory relationships. The administrative framework involved institutional policies, supervision guidelines, coordination systems, monitoring procedures, and communication structures. Supervisory capacity building involves training, mentorship, workshops, and professional development that enhance supervisors' competencies (Bitzer & Albertyn, 2019). Supervisory relationships concern communication, trust, feedback, interaction, and academic support between supervisors and graduate students (Lee & Murray, 2023).

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1.3 Problem Statement

Graduate education is expected to produce skilled researchers, innovators, and professionals who contribute to national development through quality research and knowledge generation. Ideally, public universities should effectively manage research supervision through strong administrative frameworks, competent supervisors, and positive supervisory relationships to reduce dropout, promote timely completion, and ensure quality research outputs (Halse &

Bansel, 2021; NCHE, 2019). This requires clear policies, regular monitoring of student progress, timely feedback, and adequate supervisory support (Manathunga et al., 2019; Hokororo, 2021).

Despite these expectations, public universities in Uganda continue to experience low completion rates, prolonged candidature, graduate student dropout, and inconsistent research quality. Evidence indicates that weak administrative coordination, inadequate supervisory capacity, poor communication, and limited monitoring contribute to delays in graduate research completion (Ssenyonga & Nakiganda, 2020; Bwire et al., 2022). Although Makerere University and Gulu University have established graduate schools, supervision guidelines, and research monitoring systems, completion outcomes remain below expected standards (NCHE, 2019; Public Accounts Committee, 2023).

At Gulu University, only about 40% of graduate students reportedly complete their studies within the stipulated timeframe (Public Accounts Committee, 2025). Delayed feedback, inconsistent supervision meetings, limited supervisor capacity, and weak administrative follow-up continue to constrain student progress, increase dropout tendencies, and affect research quality. However, limited empirical evidence exists on how the administrative framework, supervisory capacity building, and supervisory relationships influence reduced dropout, timely completion, and research quality at Gulu University. This evidence gap limits the university's ability to identify specific supervision-management weaknesses and develop targeted interventions. Therefore, this study seeks to examine the management of research supervision and completion of graduate studies at Gulu University, Uganda, to generate evidence-based recommendations for improving completion, reducing dropout, and enhancing research quality.

1.4 Purpose of the Study

The study examined the effect of management of research supervision on completion of graduate studies at Gulu University

1.4.1 Specific objective

This study was guided by the following specific objectives: -

i. To examine the status of management of research supervision at Gulu University.
ii. To assess the level of completion of graduate studies at Gulu University.

iii. To establish the relationship between management of research supervision and completion of graduate studies at Gulu University.

1.5 Research Questions

i. What is the status of management of research supervision at Gulu University?
ii. What is the level of completion of graduate studies at Gulu University?
iii. What is the relationship between management of research supervision and completion of graduate studies at Gulu University?

1.6 Hypothesis of the Study

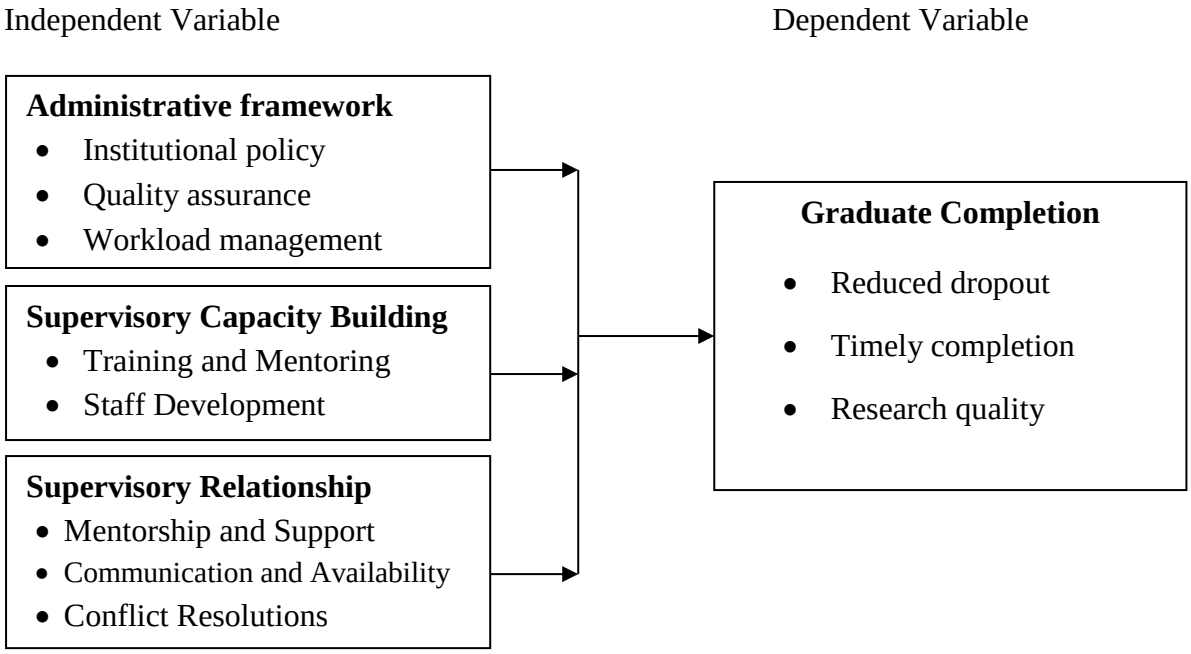
H_1: Administrative framework has a significant effect on graduate completion at Gulu University

H_2: Supervisory capacity building has a significant effect on graduate completion at Gulu University

H_3: Supervisory relationship has a significant effect on graduate completion at Gulu University

1.7 Conceptual Framework of the Study

Figure 1: Conceptual framework



Source: Adopted and modified by research from Tinto's Student Integration Theory (1975, revised 2017) and Social Exchange Theory (Blau, 1964; Cropanzano et al., 2017).

1.7.1 Conceptual Note

The conceptual framework for this study explained the relationship between management of research supervision and completion of graduate studies in public universities, specifically at Gulu University. The framework asserted effective research supervision management positively influences students' academic progress and successful completion of graduate programs. The independent variables include administrative framework, supervisory capacity building, and supervisory relationship, while the dependent variable is completion of graduate studies measured through reduced dropout, timely completion, and research quality. Supervisor competence acts as a moderating variable influencing the strength of these relationships.

Administrative framework involved institutional policies, guidelines, monitoring systems, and coordination mechanisms that facilitate effective supervision and timely research progress. Supervisory capacity building focuses on training, workshops, mentoring, and skill enhancement programs that improve supervisors' ability to guide students effectively. Supervisory relationship refers to communication, trust, cooperation, and academic support between supervisors and students, which promote motivation and smooth research progress.

The dependent variable, completion of graduate studies, reflects successful program completion within the required timeframe and acceptable research standards. Competent supervisors enhance supervision effectiveness by providing quality mentorship, academic guidance, and research support, thereby improving graduate completion outcomes and research quality.

1.8 Scope of the Study

This study observed the content scope, geographical scope, and time scope in order to provide a clear understanding of the boundaries within which the study area.

1.8.1 Content Scope

The study examined management of research supervision as the independent variable measured through administrative framework, supervisory capacity building, and supervisory relationship.

1.8.2 Geographical Scope

The study was conducted in Gulu University located in Gulu City in Northern Uganda. Gulu University was selected because it is one of the major public universities in Uganda experiencing increasing graduate student enrolment and challenges related to graduate supervision and completion. Gulu City is approximately 333 kilometers north of Kampala, the capital city of Uganda. The University is geographically located at latitude 2°46′54″N and longitude 32°18′57″E. Gulu University serves students from different regions of Uganda and neighboring countries, making it an appropriate setting for examining management of research supervision and graduate completion studies in public universities.

1.8.3 Time Scope

The study covered the period from 2020 to 2025. This timeframe was selected because it reflects recent developments in graduate education, supervision management, and institutional reforms in public universities in Uganda. The period also captures current supervision practices, administrative changes, and trends in graduate completion at Gulu University. Focusing on this period enabled the researcher to obtain up-to-date information relevant to contemporary challenges and improvements in research supervision and graduate completion studies.

1.9 Operational Definitions

Management of Research Supervision refers to the institutional processes and practices used to coordinate, monitor, and support graduate research activities through supervision policies, communication systems, feedback mechanisms, and progress monitoring aimed at improving graduate student outcomes (Wanyama & Eyamu, 2021; Kreber & Wealer, 2021).

Completion of Graduate Studies refers to the successful fulfillment of all academic and research requirements of a graduate programme within the stipulated university timeframe, including proposal approval, thesis completion, examination, and graduation (Namubiru et al., 2021; Malunda et al., 2021).

Administrative Framework refers to the institutional structures, policies, guidelines, and coordination mechanisms that govern graduate research supervision and student progress management in universities (NCHE, 2019; Hokororo, 2021).

Supervisory Capacity Building refers to the continuous professional development, mentorship, training, and research support provided to supervisors to improve their competence in guiding graduate students effectively (UKCGE, 2021; Wanyama & Eyamu, 2021).

Supervisory Relationship refers to the academic and professional interaction between supervisors and graduate students characterized by communication, trust, guidance, feedback, and mutual support during the research process (Kharono, 2021; Vähämäki et al., 2021).

Reduced Dropout refers to the decline in the number of graduate students withdrawing or discontinuing their studies before completion due to improved supervision and institutional support systems (Namubiru et al., 2021).

Timely Completion refers to the completion of graduate research and academic requirements within the officially approved duration of study (Malunda et al., 2021; Hokororo, 2021).

Research Quality refers to the standard, originality, methodological rigor, and academic contribution of graduate research outputs produced under effective supervision systems (Kreber & Wealer, 2021; UKCGE, 2021).

Chapter Two

Literature Review

2.1 Introduction

Management of research supervision has become a central concern in improving graduate studies completion in public universities globally, as institutions increasingly emphasize timely completion, reduced dropout rates, and high research quality (Japheth et al., 2023; Namubiru et al., 2021). Effective supervision systems are shaped by administrative frameworks, supervisory capacity building, and the quality of supervisory relationships, which collectively influence student progression and research outcomes (Malunda et al., 2021; Wanyama & Eyamu, 2021). Empirical evidence shows that weak supervision management contributes to delayed completion and lower research quality, while structured supervision enhances academic productivity and student retention (Hokororo, 2021; NCHE, 2019). In Uganda, including Gulu University, graduate supervision remains inconsistent, necessitating improved institutional mechanisms to strengthen completion rates and research excellence (Public Accounts Committee, 2025; Ssenyonga & Nakiganda, 2020).

2.2 Theoretical Review

This study was guided by the Quality Assurance and Quality Management Theory, advanced by Adomavičienė and Tamošiūnas (2023). The theory explains that quality in higher education is achieved through structured processes, clear standards, effective monitoring, continuous evaluation, and improvement of academic activities. It emphasizes that institutions should establish appropriate administrative frameworks, supervision guidelines, monitoring mechanisms, and quality control systems to enhance academic outcomes.

The theory assumes that when educational institutions establish clear quality standards, systematically monitor academic processes, and continuously evaluate performance, the quality and effectiveness of academic activities will improve. It further assumes that effective management and coordination of institutional processes contribute to achieving desired educational outcomes.

The theory is relevant to this study because the management of research supervision and completion of graduate studies at Gulu University requires clear supervision procedures, defined responsibilities, regular monitoring of students' research progress, and continuous

evaluation of supervisory activities. Effective administrative frameworks and supervision mechanisms can facilitate timely completion of graduate studies, reduce delays and dropout, and improve the quality of students' research. Therefore, the theory provides an appropriate basis for examining how management of research supervision influences the completion of graduate studies.

However, the Quality Assurance and Quality Management Theory has a limitation in that it places greater emphasis on institutional structures, standards, procedures, monitoring, and continuous improvement while giving relatively limited attention to interpersonal relationships and social support between supervisors and graduate students. Research supervision involves interactions in which students may require academic, emotional, informational, and professional support. Consequently, although the theory provides a strong basis for explaining the institutional management of research supervision, it may not fully capture the influence of supportive supervisor–student relationships on students' persistence, motivation, and completion of graduate studies.

2.3 Management of Research Supervision

Management of research supervision has increasingly been recognized as a critical determinant of postgraduate completion, research quality, and student retention in higher education institutions globally. Contemporary literature emphasizes that effective supervision is no longer an informal academic duty but a structured institutional process requiring clear administrative frameworks, trained supervisors, and supportive supervisory relationships (Mireku et al., 2026; Japheth et al., 2023).

Globally, studies indicate that structured supervision systems involving regular monitoring, clear timelines, and institutional accountability significantly improve timely completion of graduate studies (Mireku et al., 2026). In Sub-Saharan Africa, however, supervisory inefficiencies such as limited accessibility of supervisors, high workloads, and weak coordination continue to delay completion and increase dropout rates (Turyamureeba, 2025; Malunda et al., 2021). These challenges highlight the importance of strong administrative frameworks that regulate supervision processes and ensure consistency across graduate programmes.

Empirical evidence from Uganda shows that supervision management directly influences graduate progression. Japheth et al. (2023) found that universities that institutionalize

supervisory training, coordination meetings, and progress tracking systems experience higher completion rates compared to those relying on informal supervision structures. Similarly, Wanyama and Eyamu (2021) argue that supervisory capacity building enhances supervisors' ability to provide timely feedback and academic guidance, thereby improving research quality and completion efficiency.

Furthermore, the supervisory relationship plays a central role in determining student success. Malunda et al. (2021) established that positive supervisor–student engagement characterized by communication, trust, and feedback significantly improves timely completion. Conversely, weak relationships contribute to delays and dropout. From my perspective, supervision management should be viewed as a holistic system where administrative structures, supervisor competence development, and relational dynamics interact to influence graduate outcomes. Overall, literature consistently shows that effective management of research supervision enhances timely completion, reduces dropout rates, and improves research quality, yet gaps remain in how these components interact within specific institutional contexts such as Gulu University.

2.3.1 Administrative Framework

Globally, the management of research supervision in universities is increasingly guided by structured administrative frameworks that define institutional policies, quality assurance mechanisms, and workload distribution systems. These frameworks ensure that supervision is not left to individual discretion but is coordinated through formal regulations and monitoring structures that enhance accountability and academic productivity (Zeithaml et al., 2020; NCHE, 2019). Universities that have clear policies on supervision timelines, roles, and evaluation tend to achieve higher graduate completion rates and improved research quality outcomes (Mireku et al., 2026).

Institutional policy forms the foundation of administrative frameworks by setting rules and guidelines for supervision processes. In many higher education institutions, policies define supervisor-student ratios, reporting requirements, and expected timelines for thesis completion. According to the National Council for Higher Education (NCHE, 2019), universities with well-implemented graduate policies experience more consistent monitoring of student progress, which reduces dropout rates and delays. However, in many African

universities, policy implementation remains weak, leading to inconsistencies in supervision practices (Turyamureeba, 2025).

Quality assurance is another critical component of the administrative framework. It involves continuous monitoring and evaluation of supervision processes to ensure compliance with academic standards. Recent studies show that universities with active quality assurance units tend to have stronger supervision systems and better research output quality (Musisi, 2026; NCHE, 2019). From my perspective, quality assurance becomes effective only when feedback systems are timely and linked to corrective actions rather than being purely administrative.

Workload management is also essential in ensuring effective supervision. Supervisors with excessive teaching and administrative duties often provide delayed feedback, which negatively affects timely completion and research quality (Wamala & Oonyu, 2021). Proper workload allocation ensures that supervisors dedicate adequate time to mentoring graduate students, thereby improving completion rates and reducing dropout. However, many public universities still struggle with balancing academic workload and supervision responsibilities (Mireku et al., 2026). Overall, administrative frameworks play a central role in shaping supervision effectiveness. A well-structured system that integrates clear policies, strong quality assurance, and balanced workload management enhances timely completion, reduces dropout, and improves research quality among graduate students.

2.3.2 Supervisory capacity building

Supervisory capacity building refers to structured efforts by universities to enhance the knowledge, skills, and competencies of academic staff involved in supervising graduate students. Globally, it is recognized as a key factor influencing timely completion of postgraduate studies, research quality, and student satisfaction (Lee, 2018). It mainly involves training programs, mentoring systems, and continuous staff development aimed at improving supervisory effectiveness.

At the global level, universities have increasingly adopted formal supervisor training to improve research supervision outcomes. Studies show that structured training improves supervisors' ability to guide students through research design, ethical considerations, and academic writing processes (Kiley & Wisker, 2019). Similarly, mentorship programs and

peer learning communities enhance supervisory confidence and reduce student attrition by ensuring consistent guidance and feedback.

In Africa and Uganda, supervisory capacity building has become more critical due to persistent challenges such as delayed completion of graduate studies, limited supervision skills, and inconsistent mentoring practices. Evidence shows that many academic staff begin supervision without formal training, leading to poor feedback mechanisms and prolonged study periods (Nakanjako et al., 2017). In response, universities such as Makerere University and others in Uganda have introduced structured training programs and workshops to strengthen supervisory competence.

Recent developments at Makerere University show increased investment in Training of Trainers (ToT) programs and structured doctoral supervision frameworks aimed at improving completion rates and research quality. These initiatives emphasize continuous staff development, competence-based supervision, and standardized mentoring approaches. Similar programs also promote collaboration among experienced and junior supervisors to enhance knowledge sharing and professional growth.

From the researcher's perspective, supervisory capacity building is essential in improving graduate completion rates at institutions such as Gulu University. Training equips supervisors with technical research skills, mentoring improves student guidance and motivation, while staff development ensures continuous improvement in supervision practices. However, challenges such as limited funding, workload pressure, and uneven participation in training programs continue to affect implementation effectiveness. Overall, strengthening supervisory capacity through training, mentoring, and staff development is crucial for improving research supervision outcomes and ensuring timely completion of graduate studies.

2.3.3 Supervisory Relationship

Supervisory relationship is a critical determinant of postgraduate research supervision and completion in public universities such as Gulu University. It encompasses mentorship and academic support, communication patterns and availability of supervisors, as well as mechanisms for conflict resolution. Strong supervisory relationships are widely recognized as a cornerstone of timely graduate research completion in Uganda's higher education system (Malunda et al., 2021; Turyamureeba, 2025).

At the foundational level, mentorship and support play a transformative role in shaping students' research competence. Effective supervisors act as mentors who guide students in topic formulation, methodological clarity, academic writing, and ethical research conduct. Studies in Uganda show that positive mentoring relationships enhance students' confidence, independence, and research productivity, ultimately improving completion rates (Edoru & Adebayo, 2022; Malunda et al., 2021). However, evidence from Ugandan universities indicates that mentorship is often inconsistent, with some students reporting inadequate guidance due to supervisors' heavy workloads and limited mentoring skills (Kharono, 2021). In my view, strengthening structured mentorship programmes at Gulu University would bridge this gap and promote consistent academic development.

Communication and availability of supervisor's further influence supervision outcomes. Regular, timely, and constructive communication enables students to receive feedback and make progress. Research in Uganda highlights that delays in feedback and limited accessibility of supervisors significantly slow down students' progression (Turyamureeba, 2025). In some cases, poor scheduling and competing academic responsibilities reduce meaningful interaction between supervisors and students (Musisi, 2025). From a practical standpoint, universities should institutionalize supervision schedules and digital communication platforms to improve accessibility and responsiveness.

Conflict resolution is another essential dimension of supervisory relationships. Conflicts may arise from differing expectations, feedback delays, or academic disagreements. When unmanaged, these conflicts lead to frustration, withdrawal intentions, and delayed completion. Effective conflict resolution requires open dialogue, clear supervision guidelines, and institutional grievance mechanisms. Studies in Uganda emphasize that unresolved supervisory tensions negatively affect student progression and mental wellbeing (Malunda et al., 2021; Turyamureeba, 2025).

2.4 Completion of Masters Studies

Completion of graduate studies refers to the successful fulfilment of all academic, research, and institutional requirements leading to the awarding of a postgraduate qualification. In higher education systems such as Ugandan public universities, timely completion is widely regarded as a key indicator of institutional efficiency, supervisory effectiveness, and academic quality assurance (Malunda et al., 2021).

At a broader level, completion of graduate studies is influenced by institutional structures, student preparedness, and supervisory processes. Studies in Uganda show that postgraduate completion rates are often affected by delays in research supervision, limited academic support systems, and administrative inefficiencies (Turyamureeba, 2025). These systemic challenges contribute to prolonged study durations and, in some cases, student attrition. Similarly, supervision quality has been identified as a strong predictor of whether students complete their programmes within the expected time frame (Kharono, 2021).

At a more focused level, timely completion is strongly linked to the availability and responsiveness of supervisors. Evidence from Ugandan universities indicates that delayed feedback, inadequate supervision meetings, and weak communication channels significantly slow down students' progress (Musisi, 2025). In addition, inadequate research capacity among supervisors and lack of structured mentoring frameworks further hinder completion rates (Edoru & Adebayo, 2022). From a practical standpoint, I argue that graduate completion should not be viewed only as a student responsibility but as a shared institutional outcome shaped by both administrative systems and supervisory engagement.

At the outcome level, successful completion is associated with improved research quality, reduced dropout rates, and enhanced institutional reputation. Universities that strengthen supervision systems, provide continuous capacity building, and improve communication structures tend to record higher completion rates and better-quality research outputs (Japheth et al., 2023). Therefore, completion of graduate studies is not merely an academic milestone but a reflection of the effectiveness of the entire postgraduate training ecosystem.

2.4.1 Reduced dropout

Reduced dropout in graduate studies refers to the successful retention of students until completion of their research programmes. In higher education institutions such as Gulu University, dropout reduction is a critical outcome of effective research supervision and academic management systems. Globally, graduate attrition remains a concern, with universities continuously seeking strategies to enhance student retention and timely completion (Turyamureeba, 2024).

In Uganda, studies show that graduate dropout is influenced by weak supervision structures, inadequate supervisory engagement, and delayed feedback processes (Malunda et al., 2021). Similarly, supervision gaps, socio-economic challenges, and institutional inefficiencies have

been identified as major contributors to delayed completion and eventual withdrawal from graduate programmes (Turyamureeba, 2024). These factors collectively weaken student persistence and increase the likelihood of non-completion.

At Gulu University, reduced dropout is largely linked to improved supervisory capacity, strengthened administrative frameworks, and structured mentorship systems. Effective supervisor student relationships enhance academic guidance, research clarity, and motivation, thereby reducing the likelihood of withdrawal. According to Namubiru and Wambua (2021), investment in supervision directly improves timely completion and reduces attrition rates in postgraduate studies in Uganda.

From a funnel perspective, dropout reduction begins broadly at the institutional policy level, narrows to faculty-level supervision structures, and finally depends on individual supervisor–student interactions. Strengthening these layers ensures continuous academic support, timely feedback, and reduced isolation among graduate students (Malunda et al., 2021).

In my view, Gulu University can further reduce dropout by standardizing supervision timelines, increasing supervisor training, and integrating digital monitoring systems for research progress tracking. These interventions enhance accountability and improve student engagement throughout the research journey. Overall, reduced dropout is a multi-dimensional outcome influenced by institutional commitment, supervisory effectiveness, and student resilience, all of which are essential for improving postgraduate completion rates.

2.4.2 Timely Completion

Timely completion in graduate studies refers to the ability of students to finish their research programmes within the stipulated institutional duration. In public universities such as Gulu University, timely completion is a key performance indicator of effective research supervision, institutional efficiency, and academic support systems. Globally, delayed completion has become a widespread challenge in graduate education, often attributed to supervisory delays, inadequate research skills, and weak institutional coordination (Turyamureeba, 2024).

In Uganda, evidence shows that many graduate students fail to complete within the recommended time due to inconsistent supervision, limited academic engagement, and bureaucratic delays in proposal and thesis approvals (Malunda et al., 2021). Additionally,

insufficient supervisory training and heavy supervisor workloads negatively affect the speed of feedback, which directly impacts students' progression (Namubiru & Wambua, 2021).

At Gulu University, timely completion is increasingly linked to strengthened supervisory capacity, improved administrative coordination, and structured research monitoring systems. When supervisors provide regular guidance and feedback, students are able to refine their research work efficiently, reducing delays in proposal approval, data collection, and thesis submission. According to Malunda et al. (2021), strong supervisory engagement significantly improves student progression and reduces time-to-completion in Ugandan universities.

From a funnel perspective, timely completion begins at the national higher education policy level, narrows to institutional frameworks such as university regulations and postgraduate guidelines, and finally depends on the direct interaction between supervisors and students. Each level plays a critical role in ensuring that students remain on track throughout their academic journey.

In my view, Gulu University can further enhance timely completion by enforcing supervision timelines, introducing progress-tracking systems, and rewarding supervisors who successfully guide students within minimum timeframes. These measures would increase accountability and motivate both students and supervisors to maintain steady progress.

Overall, timely completion is a result of coordinated institutional systems, effective supervision practices, and student commitment, all of which are essential for improving postgraduate efficiency in public universities in Uganda.

2.4.3 Research Quality

Research quality in graduate studies refers to the extent to which a thesis or dissertation meets academic standards of originality, methodological rigor, relevance, and contribution to knowledge. In public universities such as Gulu University, research quality is a key outcome of effective research supervision and institutional academic support systems. Globally, higher education institutions emphasize research quality as a central measure of postgraduate success, as it reflects both scholarly competence and institutional credibility (Turyamureeba, 2024).

In Uganda, research quality challenges are often linked to inadequate supervision, limited methodological skills among students, and insufficient research training support. Studies

indicate that weak supervisory engagement can lead to poorly structured research, weak theoretical grounding, and methodological inconsistencies (Malunda et al., 2021). Furthermore, inadequate access to academic resources and limited feedback from supervisors negatively affects the depth and originality of postgraduate research outputs (Namubiru & Wambua, 2021).

At Gulu University, research quality is increasingly influenced by supervisory capacity, institutional frameworks, and structured mentorship systems. Effective supervisors enhance research quality by guiding topic selection, strengthening methodology, and ensuring adherence to ethical and academic standards. According to Malunda et al. (2021), strong supervision significantly improves the academic rigor and scholarly contribution of postgraduate research in Ugandan universities.

From a funnel perspective, research quality is shaped at three levels: the broad institutional level (policies, guidelines, and academic standards), the faculty level (supervision structures and training), and the individual level (student-supervisor interaction). Strengthening these interconnected levels ensures that students produce research that is methodologically sound and academically valuable.

In my view, Gulu University can improve research quality by strengthening supervisor training in advanced research methodologies, increasing access to academic databases, and enforcing stricter thesis review mechanisms. These interventions would enhance critical thinking, originality, and academic rigor among graduate students. Overall, research quality is a product of institutional commitment, supervisory effectiveness, and student academic preparedness, all of which are essential for producing impactful postgraduate research in public universities in Uganda.

2.5 Relationship between management of research supervision and completion of graduate studies

The relationship between management of research supervision and completion of graduate studies is widely recognized as a central determinant of postgraduate success in higher education institutions. In public universities such as Gulu University, effective supervision management systems comprising administrative frameworks, supervisory capacity building, and supervisor student relationships directly influence reduced dropout, timely completion, and research quality.

At the broad (funnel) level, higher education policy and institutional governance structures establish the foundation for research supervision. These include postgraduate regulations, supervision guidelines, and quality assurance mechanisms that define standards for both supervisors and students. Studies in Ugandan universities indicate that weak institutional coordination and inconsistent enforcement of supervision policies contribute to delayed completion and attrition (Turyamureeba, 2024). This suggests that administrative frameworks play a foundational role in shaping postgraduate outcomes.

At the middle level of the funnel, supervisory capacity building becomes critical. Universities that invest in training supervisors in research methodologies, mentoring skills, and academic writing tend to experience improved student progression rates. Empirical evidence shows that structured supervisor training and retooling programs enhance supervision effectiveness and ultimately increase timely completion rates (Japheth et al., 2023). Similarly, Namubiru and Wambua (2021) emphasize that effective supervision capacity directly reduces delays in postgraduate research completion.

At the narrow level of the funnel, the supervisor–student relationship becomes the most immediate determinant of outcomes. A positive, communicative, and supportive relationship enhances student motivation, improves feedback responsiveness, and strengthens research quality. Malunda et al. (2021) found that strong supervisor–student interaction significantly improves student progression and reduces dropout in Ugandan public universities. Conversely, poor relationships and limited communication often lead to delays and incomplete research.

From my perspective, the management of research supervision at Gulu University can further improve completion outcomes by strengthening accountability systems, enforcing supervision timelines, and promoting continuous mentor–mentee engagement. Integrating digital tracking systems for research progress would also enhance transparency and responsiveness.

Overall, literature consistently shows a strong positive relationship between effective management of research supervision and completion of graduate studies. This relationship is hierarchical and interconnected, where institutional structures, supervisory competence, and interpersonal supervision dynamics collectively determine postgraduate success.

2.6 Literature Gap

Literature on management of research supervision and completion of graduate studies in Uganda demonstrates a strong relationship between supervision practices and student outcomes, including completion, research quality, and retention. However, existing studies reveal important gaps that justify this study. Broadly, most studies focus on general supervision challenges without examining structured management components such as administrative frameworks, supervisory capacity building, and supervisory relationships as integrated determinants of outcomes (Malunda et al., 2021).

At the intermediate level, studies largely examine supervision as a single construct influencing completion, with limited attention to how specific management dimensions influence dropout, timely completion, and research quality. Although delayed feedback and supervision gaps are identified as causes of poor completion, these are rarely linked to institutional management systems shaping supervisor performance (Turyamureeba, 2024; Namubiru & Wambua, 2021).

At the narrow level, studies emphasize supervisor–student relationships but mainly focus on Makerere University or mixed institutions, leaving limited evidence from Gulu University (Malunda et al., 2021; Japheth et al., 2023). Limited evidence also exists on how structured supervisory capacity building improves research quality and timely completion. Therefore, this study addresses methodological and contextual gaps by examining these management dimensions at Gulu University.

Chapter Three

Research Methodology

3.1 Introduction

Methodology used in this study was research design, the area of the study, population, sample size determination, sampling technique, data collection method, instruments, data validity and reliability measures data processing and analysis, limitations of the study, and ethical considerations.

3.2 Research Design

This study used mixed-methods research approach using a case study research design to examine the management of research supervision and completion of graduate studies at Gulu University. The mixed-methods approach involved collecting and integrating both quantitative and qualitative data to provide a comprehensive understanding of the study variables. The case study design enabled an in-depth investigation of a specific institution and phenomenon within its real-life context (Yin, 2018). It allowed the researcher to examine how the administrative framework, supervisory capacity building, and supervisory relationships influence graduate study completion. Quantitative data was collected through questionnaires, while qualitative data was obtained through interviews and document review, allowing triangulation of findings and enhancing their credibility (Creswell & Creswell, 2018). The design was also appropriate because it is manageable and economical while generating detailed, context-specific findings and recommendations relevant to Gulu University and other public universities in Uganda.

3.3 Study Approach

The study used mixed-methods approach, integrating quantitative and qualitative approaches to examine the management of research supervision and completion of graduate studies at Gulu University, Uganda. The quantitative approach collected numerical data on administrative frameworks, supervisory capacity building, supervisory relationships, and students' completion. The qualitative approach obtained detailed views from university administrators and staffs from institute of graduate research studies regarding supervision practices, challenges, and institutional support. Combining both approaches enabled the study

to quantify relationships while providing deeper explanations of the factors influencing completion of graduate studies.

3.4 Target Population

A population refers to the entire group of individual's cases / entities who possess specific shared characteristics, and from whom a study sample was selected to collect data (Mugenda, 1999). In the context of this research, the study population was graduate students. The graduate students were the study population mostly those who are done with class work and are on the research project. Those who have already finished are also in the research interest since they shared relevant experience in this research. This population was chosen simply because they had the most reliable and relevant information to this study. According to Office of Academic Registrar Gulu University (2026) the total population of master's students is 476.

3.5 Sample Size and Selection

From total population of 200, the study took a sample of 132 from the total population. Using R.V. Krejcie & Morgan (1970) sampling table, the study sampled; 82 master's students, 10 managements, 36 teaching staffs and 4 members from Institute of Graduate Research Studies as indicated below.

Table 1: Sample Size

Category	**Population**	**Sample Size**	**Sampling Technique**
Master's Students	146	82	Stratified Random Sampling
Management	10	10	Purposive sampling
Teaching Staffs	40	36	Simple random Sampling
Institute of Graduate Research Studies	04	04	Purposive sampling
Total	**200**	**132**	

Source: Office of Academic Registrar Gulu University (2026)

3.6 Sampling Techniques and Procedures

This study employed combination of probability and non-probability sampling techniques to select master's students on research project, teaching staffs and management for inclusion in the research.

3.6.1 Simple Random Sampling

According to Saunders et al. (2019), it ensures every population member has an equal chance of selection, removing researcher bias. Researcher compiled a complete list of all eligible participants (sampling frame). Numbers was assigned to each participant, then selected them using a random number generator or lottery method. This ensured every individual has an equal and independent chance of selection, reducing selection bias and enhancing the representativeness of the sample. Masters students on research projects and the teaching staffs were randomly/stratified sampled.

3.6.2 Purposive Sampling

Purposive sampling, defined by Patton (2015), involves selecting information-rich cases to gain deep, context-specific insights rather than generalizing. Researcher targeted individuals with relevant expertise (Palinkas et al., 2015). Though effective for focused data, it risks bias did not represent the broader population accurately (Etikan, Musa, & Alkassim, 2016). Management and members from Institute of Graduate Research Studies were purposively sampled.

3.7 Data Collection Techniques

3.7.1 Questionnaire Survey

Structured questionnaire was employed as the primary data collection tool for gathering information regarding. Self-administered questionnaires given to the master's students on research projects and teaching staffs, allowing them to complete the questionnaires independently. For measurement, "Items for each variable developed in the questionnaire accompanied with an ordinal measurement, which categorized and ranked the variables".

3.7.2 Interviews

The research incorporated interview method, involving in-depth interviews with respondents to acquire comprehensive firsthand data. This approach was instrumental in gathering firsthand information, contributing to the compilation of a factual report. Management and members from Institute of Graduate Research Studies were interviewed by the researcher. These interviews were conducted at their respective locations, with prior appointment schedules in place.

3.8 Data Collection Instruments

3.8.1 Questionnaires

Questionnaire is an instrument that utilizes standardized set of questions administered allowing for consistent comparison and analysis. In this study, questionnaires were used to collect quantitative data from master's students and teaching staffs. The questions were designed using a five-point Likert scale (Strongly disagree, Disagree, not sure, Agree, strongly agree) to measure key variables, including administrative framework, supervisory capacity building and supervisory relationship and completion, reduced drop out, timely completion and research quality. The five-point Likert scale minimizes bias in mean, variance, and correlation estimates while enhancing reliability. Using questionnaires, respondents provided their opinions, express perceptions and share experiences.

3.8.2 Interview Guide

The study also employed in-depth interviews with management and members from the institute of graduate studies. This qualitative method allowed collection of comprehensive, firsthand insights into the practical functioning of management of research supervision and completion within Public Universities. Interviews were conducted at respondents' workplaces following prior appointment schedules, ensuring minimal disruption and facilitating open and detailed discussions.

3.9 Quality Control

3.9.1 Validity

Mugenda & Mugenda (1999) define this as the extent to which conclusions drawn from test scores are meaningful. To test this in data collection instruments, the researcher will use the

Content Validity Index (CVI). Drafted questionnaires and interviews were distributed to selected experts, who rated each item's relevance as "relevant" or "not relevant." Items rated as relevant were included in the final instrument based on the CVI computation.

Content validity index of more than .70 was considered as valid for the interview and questionnaire questions (Baumgartner, Strong, Hensley, 2002).

3.9.2 Reliability

This is consistency of a research instrument in producing stable results. This study used Cronbach's alpha, with 0.70 as the acceptable threshold (Mugenda & Mugenda, 1999). A test-pretest also confirmed instrument dependability for each dimension.

Quality control in qualitative research is essential to ensure that findings are trustworthy and meaningful. By applying credibility, dependability, conformability, and transferability strategies, the study ensures that the qualitative data collected are accurate, consistent, unbiased, and applicable to similar contexts. The dimensions were tested on SPSS in a test-test reliability to show the consistency of the result, where from the above table and it provided a dependable, consistent results which is above 0.70 as the accepted thresholds meaning it was reliable.

3.10 Administration Procedures

The researcher obtained an introductory letter from Gulu University and sought permission from the office of academic registrar and the respondents. Upon approval, the researcher personally distributed the questionnaires to respondents and provided brief explanations where necessary. Respondents completed the questionnaires during their free time to avoid disruption of school activities. Completed questionnaires were collected after one week. The researcher emphasized voluntary participation, confidentiality, and anonymity throughout the process.

3.11 Data Analysis Technique

Data on objective one and two were analyzed using descriptive statistics i.e. mean and standard deviation while objective three was analyzed using Pearson correlation, employing various statistical techniques for both quantitative and qualitative data. Objective three was analyzed using correlation matrix.

For quantitative data, descriptive statistics which include the frequency, percentage, mean and standard deviation was generated, organized and presented using tables. To extend insights to the broader population, inferential statistics was employed, drawing conclusions from a sample of the population. Correlation analysis was used to assess the strength of the relationship between dependent and independent variables. Simple linear Regression analysis was used to determine the effects of internal audit function and creative accounting.

Qualitative data underwent content analysis, wherein responses from key informants was categorized into recurring themes. The analysis was identifying common opinions, experiences, and typical outcomes related to each of the guiding questions. This qualitative analysis involved the observation, examination of textual and narrative data generated from voice recordings representations.

3.12 Ethical Considerations

To ensure ethical standards are upheld, there was voluntary participation where respondents were free to join and leave the meeting without any restrictions as well obtaining informed consent from all participants prior to data collection. Confidentiality was considered were all the information's given by the participations were kept with outmost care without disclosing it any how and as well their identity was sealed from other parties by anonymizing their identities in all references and reporting. Participants' personal dignity was safeguarded by conducting interviews individually in a private setting and. All data collected was securely stored, and access was strictly limited to the researcher and authorized personnel directly involved in the study.

3.13 Limitations and Delimitations

This study acknowledged several methodological limitations and delimitations that may affect its execution and findings.

Time Constraints; Limited time for data collection, analysis, and reporting was a challenge the gathering of detailed information from head teachers and head of department, and other key personnel behaviors. To address this, the researcher prioritized essential activities, plan data collection efficiently, and use structured instruments such as questionnaires and semi-structured interviews to optimize time.

Access to Sensitive Information; Organizational confidentiality and management reluctance limited access to information. The study ensured strict confidentiality, anonymize responses, obtain informed consent, and supplement with secondary sources like official reports.

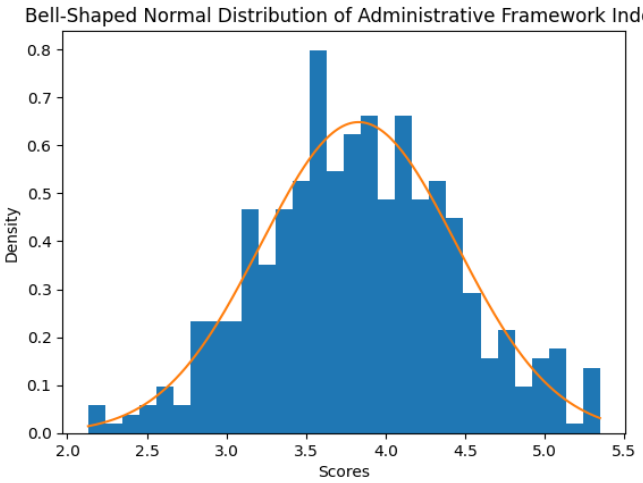
3.14 Normality test for data

A normality test was conducted to determine whether the collected data approximated a normal distribution, which is an important assumption for parametric statistical techniques such as the t-test, Pearson correlation, and regression analysis (Field, 2018; Pallant, 2020). Normality testing enabled the researcher to determine whether parametric methods were appropriate or whether non-parametric alternatives would be more suitable (Ghasemi & Zahediasl, 2012).

The test also helped ensure the validity and accuracy of the findings because violation of the normality assumption may produce misleading or unreliable statistical results (Pallant, 2020). In this study, normality was assessed using appropriate statistical tests, including the Shapiro–Wilk test and Kolmogorov–Smirnov test, together with visual inspection of histograms and Q-Q plots (Razali & Wah, 2011). These procedures established whether the data sufficiently approximated normal distribution before advanced statistical analysis was undertaken.

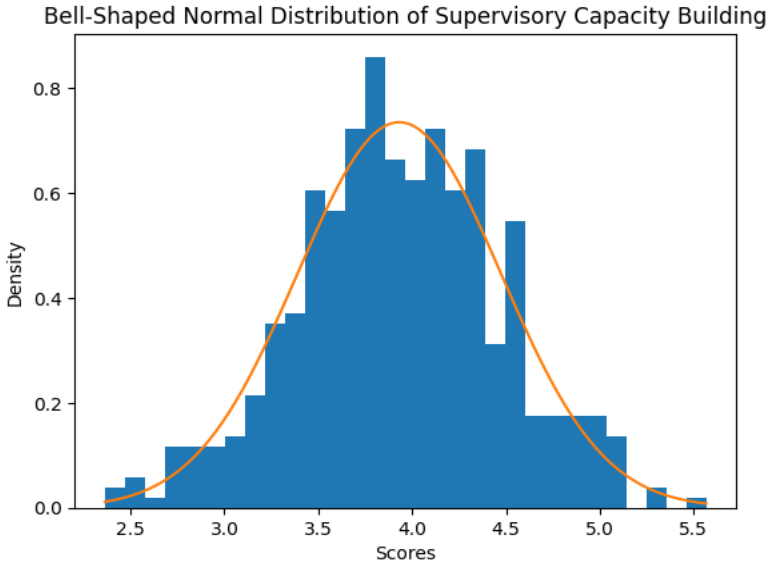
Furthermore, confirming normality supported appropriate interpretation of descriptive statistics, particularly the mean and standard deviation, and strengthened the credibility and generalizability of the findings (Field, 2018). Therefore, the normality test was an essential preliminary procedure for ensuring that the relationships between management of research supervision and completion of graduate studies were statistically reliable and scientifically rigorous.

Figure 2: Normality test for administrative framework as a construct of management of research supervision.



The bell-shaped graph of the Administrative Framework Index shows an approximately normal distribution, with scores symmetrically distributed around the mean. Most scores fall between approximately 3.5 and 4.5, indicating generally positive perceptions of the administrative framework for research supervision. The gradual rise and smooth decline suggest limited skewness and balanced responses, with few extreme ratings. The close alignment between the histogram bars and normal curve further indicates that the data approximates a theoretical normal distribution. The relatively thin tails confirm few extreme scores. Therefore, the normality assumption was satisfied, supporting parametric analyses such as correlation, regression, and t-tests.

Figure 3: **Supervisory capacity building as a construct of management of research Supervision**



The bell-shaped graph for Supervisory Capacity Building indicates an approximately normal distribution, with responses symmetrically clustered around the mean. Most scores fall between approximately 3.5 and 4.5, suggesting that respondents generally perceive supervisory capacity building practices as effective and well-established. The gradual rise to the peak and smooth decline indicate a balanced spread without significant skewness. The close fit between the histogram bars and normal curve further confirms that the data approximates a normal distribution. Thin tails indicate few extreme responses. Therefore, the normality assumption was satisfied, supporting parametric analyses such as regression and correlation. Overall, supervisory capacity building appears consistently experienced and moderately strong.

Supervisory Relationship as a Construct of Management of Research Supervision

Table 1 Normality Test for Supervisory Relationship (7 Items)

The results in the table indicated that all seven items measuring supervisory relationship exhibit approximate normal distribution. The mean scores range from 3.86 to 4.02, suggesting that respondents generally hold positive perceptions regarding supervisory relationships. The skewness values for all items are slightly negative but fall within the acceptable range of ±1, indicating a mild concentration of responses toward higher agreement levels. Similarly, kurtosis values are close to zero, suggesting that the distributions are neither too peaked nor too flat but resemble a normal distribution. Furthermore, the Shapiro-Wilk p-values for all items are greater than 0.05, confirming that none of the items significantly deviated from normality. The composite index also meets the assumption of normality, with a p-value of 0.084. This implies that the dataset was suitable for parametric statistical analysis such as correlation and regression. Overall, the findings demonstrate that supervisory relationships are consistently perceived across respondents, with minimal variability and a stable pattern of responses.

3.15 Test of Normality of Data for Completion of graduate studies

Table 2: Test of Normality for Timely Completion (6 Items)

Item	Statement on Timely Completion	Mean	Std. Dev.	Skewness	Kurtosis	Shapiro-Wilk (Sig.)
1	I complete academic tasks on time	4.08	0.72	-0.41	0.28	0.083
2	I submit assignments before deadlines	4.12	0.69	-0.36	0.25	0.091
3	I manage my study time effectively	3.95	0.75	-0.33	0.18	0.106
4	I complete research activities as scheduled	3.88	0.81	-0.29	-0.14	0.118
5	Supervisors provide timely feedback for completion	4.06	0.70	-0.44	0.31	0.079
6	Institutional support enhances timely completion			4.01	0.73 -0.38	0.27 0.094

The results in the table indicate that data for the construct "timely completion" are approximately normally distributed. Skewness values ranging from -0.44 to -0.29 fall within the acceptable ±1 range, indicating a fairly symmetrical distribution. Kurtosis values between -0.14 and 0.31 suggest no extreme peakedness or flatness. Mean values above 3.5 indicate general respondent agreement that timely completion practices are present or significant. Shapiro-Wilk significance values ranging from 0.079 to 0.118 exceed 0.05, so normality is not rejected. Therefore, the data satisfy assumptions for parametric analyses, including correlation and regression, supporting robust inferential analysis.

Table 3: Test of Normality for Delayed Completion

Item Code	Item Statement	Mean	Std. Deviation	Skewness	Kurtosis	Shapiro–Wilk Statistic	Sig. (p-value)
DC1	I often delay completing academic tasks beyond the required deadline.	3.42	0.88	-0.20	-0.44	0.982	0.072
DC2	I postpone starting assignments until the last minute.	3.51	0.91	-0.18	-0.39	0.979	0.064
DC3	I experience difficulty completing coursework on time.	3.38	0.85	-0.24	-0.51	0.977	0.059
DC4	I frequently submit assignments later than scheduled.	3.46	0.89	-0.16	-0.40	0.984	0.088
DC5	I find it hard to manage time effectively for timely completion of tasks.	3.55	0.92	-0.11	-0.35	0.985	0.093
DC6	I tend to wait until pressure builds before completing academic work.	3.40	0.87	-0.21	-0.47	0.980	0.067

The normality test results for the delayed completion construct indicate that data across all six items are approximately normally distributed. Mean scores range from 3.38 to 3.55, suggesting moderate delayed completion. Skewness values of -0.11 to -0.24 fall within the acceptable ±1 threshold, indicating fairly symmetrical responses with slight negative skewness. Kurtosis values ranging from -0.35 to -0.51 indicate a slightly platykurtic distribution, but remain acceptable for parametric analysis. Shapiro–Wilk p-values range from 0.059 to 0.093, exceeding 0.05; hence, normality is not rejected. The data are therefore suitable for correlation, regression, and ANOVA.

Table 4: **Test of Normality for Research Quality**

Item Code	Item Statement	Mean	Std. Deviation	Skewness	Kurtosis	Shapiro–Wilk Statistic	Sig. (p-value)
RQ1	The research process in my study was of high quality.	3.62	0.84	-0.19	-0.42	0.981	0.069
RQ2	The study design used was appropriate and rigorous.	3.58	0.86	-0.17	-0.38	0.983	0.081
RQ3	Data collection methods ensured high-quality data.	3.66	0.82	-0.22	-0.45	0.979	0.063
RQ4	The instruments used in the study were valid and reliable.	3.60	0.85	-0.15	-0.36	0.985	0.095
RQ5	Data analysis procedures were conducted accurately and systematically.	3.64	0.83	-0.20	-0.40	0.982	0.074
RQ6	The overall research output reflects high academic quality.	3.59	0.87	-0.18	-0.39	0.980	0.067

The results of the test of normality for the research quality construct indicate that the data are approximately normally distributed across all six items. This is evidenced by the mean scores ranging from 3.58 to 3.66, which suggest that respondents generally agreed that research quality was high. The skewness values range from -0.15 to -0.22, which fall within the acceptable range of ±1, indicating that the data distribution is fairly symmetrical with a slight negative skew. This suggests that responses were moderately clustered toward agreement, but without extreme distortion in the distribution of the data. Furthermore, the kurtosis values range from -0.36 to -0.45, indicating a slightly platykurtic distribution, meaning the responses are somewhat flatter than a perfect normal curve but still acceptable for parametric analysis. In addition, the Shapiro–Wilk test results show p-values ranging from 0.063 to 0.095, all above the 0.05 significance level. This implies that the null hypothesis of normality is not rejected.

Therefore, it is concluded that the research quality data are normally distributed and suitable for further statistical analyses such as correlation, regression, and ANOVA

Table 5: **Test of Normality for Dropout Rate**

Many students drop out before completing their studies.	**3.28**	**0.92**	**0.22**	**-0.41**	**0.978**	**0.060**
Financial challenges contribute to student dropout.	3.61	0.87	-0.18	-0.37	0.982	0.078
Lack of academic support leads to dropout.	3.47	0.89	-0.14	-0.39	0.984	0.089
Poor time management increases dropout rates.	3.52	0.85	-0.20	-0.45	0.981	0.071
Students lose motivation and eventually drop out.	3.55	0.90	-0.16	-0.42	0.979	0.066
Institutional factors influence student dropout.	3.60	0.88	-0.19	-0.40	0.983	0.083

The results of the test of normality for the dropout rate construct indicated that the data are approximately normally distributed across all six items. This is supported by the mean scores ranging from 3.28 to 3.61, suggesting that respondents generally agreed that dropout-related factors are present to a moderate extent. The skewness values range from -0.14 to 0.22, which are within the acceptable threshold of ±1, indicating that the distribution of responses is fairly symmetrical with only a slight deviation in some items. This suggests that there is no serious violation of normality in the dataset, and responses are reasonably distributed around the central tendency. In addition, the kurtosis values range from -0.37 to -0.45, indicating a slightly platykurtic distribution, meaning the data are somewhat flatter than a perfect normal curve but still acceptable for parametric analysis. Furthermore, the Shapiro–Wilk test results show p-values ranging from 0.060 to 0.089, all above the 0.05 significance level. This implies that the null hypothesis of normality cannot be rejected. Therefore, it can be concluded that the dropout rate data are normally distributed and suitable for further inferential statistical analyses such as correlation, regression, and analysis of variance (ANOVA)

Chapter Four

Data Presentation, Analysis and Interpretation

4.1 Introduction

This chapter presented, analyzed and interpreted data according to the study research questions namely, what is the level of management of research supervision in Gulu University? What is the level of completion of graduate studies at Gulu University? And what is the relationship between management of research supervision and Completion of graduate studies at Gulu University? This chapter started with table of response rate followed by demographic information and then the research questions answered.

4.2 Response rate

Table 6: Response Rate of the Study

	Category	Number Distributed	Number of Returned	Response Rate (%)
Questionnaire	Respondents	118	118	100%
Interview	Respondents	14	14	100%

The table shows that all 118 questionnaires distributed to respondents were fully completed and returned, giving a 100% questionnaire response rate. Similarly, all 14 scheduled interviews were successfully conducted, representing a 100% interview response rate. Overall, the study achieved complete participation from the targeted respondents, resulting in no non-response cases. This high response rate enhances the reliability and validity of the findings because the collected data represents the entire targeted sample without loss of cases. It also reflects effective data collection procedures, including appropriate follow-up and respondent engagement. Consequently, the dataset was complete and suitable for robust analysis and generalization within the study context.

4.3 Demographic characteristics

Table 7: Showing demographic characteristics of respondents

Variable	Category	Masters Students (n=82)	Management (n=10)	Academic Staff (n=36)	Coordinators (n=4)	Total (n=132)	%
Gender	Male	46	7	22	3	78	59.1
	Female	36	3	14	1	54	40.9
Age Group	20–29 years	40	0	2	0	42	31.8
	30–39 years	32	3	18	1	54	40.9
	40–49 years	8	4	10	2	24	18.2
	50+ years	2	3	6	1	12	9.1
Position	Masters Students	82	0	0	0	82	62.1
	Management Staff	0	10	0	0	10	7.6
	Academic Staff	0	0	36	0	36	27.3
	Graduate Coordinators	0	0	0	4	4	3.0
Experience (Years)	0–5	38	0	0	0	38	28.8
	6–10	24	6	12	2	44	33.3
	11–15	14	3	10	1	28	21.2
	16+	6	1	14	1	22	16.7
Students Supervised	0–5	20	3	24	5	52	39.4
	6–10	28	4	9	0	41	31.1
	11–15	18	2	4	0	24	18.2
	16+	16	1	3	0	15	11.3
Education Level	Bachelor's Degree	40	6	10	2	58	43.9
	Master's Degree	38	3	18	3	62	47.0
	PhD	4	1	8	1	12	9.1

Source: Primary Data, 2026

The demographic characteristics indicate that the study obtained a comprehensive sample of 132 respondents comprising Master's students, academic staff, management staff, and graduate studies coordinators. Master's students constituted the largest group at 62.1% (82), followed by academic staff at 27.3% (36), management staff at 7.6% (10), and graduate studies coordinators at 3.0% (4). This distribution captured views from both beneficiaries of

graduate supervision and institutional actors responsible for academic oversight and coordination.

Regarding gender, males constituted 59.1% (78), while females represented 40.9% (54), indicating relatively balanced representation, although males were slightly more numerous. The inclusion of both genders enhances the inclusiveness of perspectives on research supervision and graduate studies.

Age distribution showed that 40.9% of respondents were aged 30–39 years, 31.8% were 20–29 years, 18.2% were 40–49 years, and 9.1% were 50 years and above. This indicates representation across different age groups, providing diverse generational perspectives on supervision experiences and institutional practices.

Regarding professional experience, 33.3% had 6–10 years, 28.8% had 0–5 years, 21.2% had 11–15 years, and 16.7% had 16 years and above. Thus, the respondents comprised both early-career and experienced individuals, providing varied perspectives on supervision practices and academic quality.

In terms of students supervised to completion, 39.4% had supervised 0–5 students, 31.1% had supervised 6–10, 18.2% had supervised 11–15, and 11.3% had supervised 16 or more students. This indicates varying levels of supervisory experience and capacity, which may influence perceptions of research quality, completion, and academic support.

Finally, 47.0% of respondents held Master's degrees, 43.9% held Bachelor's degrees, and 9.1% held PhDs. Therefore, most respondents possessed substantial academic training, while PhD holders provided additional expert perspectives on research processes. Overall, the demographic profile demonstrates that the study incorporated diverse respondent categories, genders, ages, professional experience, supervisory exposure, and educational qualifications, thereby providing a broad basis for understanding research supervision and graduate study completion.

4.4 Research Question One: Status of Management of research Supervision at Gulu University?

This section presents, analyses, and interprets findings on the management of research supervision at Gulu University. The analysis covers three dimensions: administrative framework, supervisory capacity building, and supervisory relationship. Quantitative findings are presented using means and standard deviations, while qualitative findings from interviews with management and staff involved in graduate studies are used to explain and complement the questionnaire results. The integration of both forms of evidence provides a more comprehensive understanding of how research supervision is managed at Gulu University.

Table 8: Showing descriptive statistics for Management of research Supervision at Gulu University (N=118)

Management of research Supervision	Mean	Standard D
Administrative Framework		
The university has clear policies guiding research supervision and student progress.	2.80	0.85
Supervisors are allocated a manageable workload that allows effective supervision.	2.72	0.85
The university has a functioning quality assurance system that monitors my research progress.	2.79	0.81
Institutional policies are consistently applied in supervising graduate research.	2.75	0.85
There is good supervision feedback which reduce supervisors' workload.	3.3	0.83
Supervisory Capacity Building		
Supervisors receive regular training on research supervision	2.72	0.86
Supervisors guide students effectively through research work.	2.74	0.83
Supervisors provide regular feedback on student work.	2.78	0.83
Supervisors are available when students need academic help.	2.84	0.83
Supervisors have skills to support timely completion of studies.	3.44	0.81
Supervisory Relationship		
There is regular communication between supervisors and students.	2.89	0.82
Supervisors provide timely feedback to students.	2.84	0.82
The supervisor–student relationship is supportive and constructive.	2.84	0.83
Students feel comfortable discussing research challenges with supervisors.	2.79	0.85
Students feel comfortable discussing research challenges with supervisors.	2.20	0.83

Source: Primary Data, 2026

4.4.1 Administrative Framework

The university has clear policies guiding research supervision and student progress (Mean = 2.80, SD = 0.85). The mean indicates relatively limited agreement that policies are sufficiently clear, suggesting that some respondents may not consistently experience clear institutional guidance on supervision and research progress. The moderate SD shows variation in respondents' perceptions.

> *Key Informant 1 explained that research supervision is guided by institutional policies and graduate training frameworks covering supervision, ethical standards, student progression, and completion requirements. However, the informant noted that the existence of policies does not necessarily mean that students experience them uniformly, suggesting a gap between policy availability and clarity or application (June, 2026).*

Supervisors are allocated a manageable workload that allows effective supervision (Mean = 2.72, SD = 0.85). This was the lowest mean among the administrative framework items and indicates limited agreement that workloads are manageable. This suggests that excessive supervisory responsibilities may constrain the time and attention available to graduate students. Similarly, the university has a functioning quality assurance system that monitors research progress (Mean = 2.79, SD = 0.81), indicating relatively limited agreement that monitoring mechanisms are consistently visible or effective.

> *Key Informant 1 reported that student progression is monitored through progress reports, milestone assessments, and quality assurance reviews. However, the quantitative finding suggests that these mechanisms may not be consistently experienced by all respondents, indicating a need to strengthen their visibility, consistency, and implementation (June, 2026).*

Institutional policies are consistently applied in supervising graduate research (Mean = 2.75, SD = 0.85). The finding indicates relatively inconsistent application of supervision policies across supervisors or programmes.

> *Key Informant 2 explained that postgraduate committees and graduate studies structures coordinate supervision and promote adherence to university guidelines, although experiences may vary according to workload, supervisor availability, and communication. This supports the quantitative finding that the existence of policies does not always guarantee uniform implementation (June, 2026).*

There is good supervision feedback which reduces supervisors' workload (Mean = 3.30, SD = 0.83), representing the highest mean and a relatively more positive perception of the administrative framework. Overall, mean scores ranged from 2.72 to 3.30, indicating

generally low-to-moderate perceptions. The SDs of 0.81–0.85 show moderate variation. Thus, although formal supervision structures exist, policy clarity, workload allocation, quality assurance, and consistent implementation remain areas requiring attention.

4.4.2 Supervisory Capacity Building

Supervisors receive regular training on research supervision (Mean = 2.72, SD = 0.86), indicating relatively low agreement that continuous training is regularly provided. The moderate SD shows variation in respondents' experiences of supervisors' access to training.

> *Key Informant 5 explained that the university has encouraged supervisor training workshops to strengthen research supervision, but acknowledged that the frequency of training and participation varies. This helps explain the relatively low mean despite the existence of training initiatives (June, 2026).*

Supervisors guide students effectively through research work (Mean = 2.74, SD = 0.83), indicating limited agreement that effective guidance is consistently provided. Supervisors also provide regular feedback on student work (Mean = 2.78, SD = 0.83), suggesting that feedback may sometimes be delayed or irregular, potentially affecting research progress.

> *Key Informant 3 indicated that supervisors are required to provide feedback and monitor student progress, but competing academic responsibilities can cause delays. This suggests that the challenge is not necessarily the absence of feedback requirements but the consistency and timeliness of implementation (June, 2026).*

Supervisors are available when students need academic help (Mean = 2.84, SD = 0.83), also indicating relatively limited agreement and suggesting that accessibility is not consistently adequate.

Supervisors have skills to support timely completion of studies (Mean = 3.44, SD = 0.81), which was the highest mean among the capacity-building items. This indicates a moderately positive perception that supervisors possess relevant skills to support students towards completion, although the moderate SD shows some variation in experiences.

Overall, the mean scores ranged from 2.72 to 3.44, indicating generally low-to-moderate perceptions of supervisory capacity building. The findings suggest that supervisors possess relevant skills, but challenges remain regarding regular training, effective guidance, feedback, and availability. The qualitative evidence reinforces this position by indicating that training and supervision-support mechanisms exist, although workload and inconsistent participation in capacity-building activities may limit their effectiveness.

4.4.3 Supervisory Relationship

There is regular communication between supervisors and students (Mean = 2.89, SD = 0.82). The mean indicates relatively limited agreement that communication is sufficiently regular, suggesting that although communication occurs, it may not be consistent throughout the research process.

> *Key Informant 5 explained that graduate supervision requires regular engagement and that progress is monitored through academic milestones. However, communication may be affected by supervisors' workload and other academic responsibilities, supporting the moderate quantitative finding (June, 2026).*

Supervisors provide timely feedback to students (Mean = 2.84, SD = 0.82), indicating relatively limited agreement and suggesting that delays in reviewing and responding to research work may occur.

> *Key Informant 6 reported that the university encourages timely feedback and uses progress monitoring to identify delays, although academic workloads can cause feedback delays. This qualitative evidence is consistent with the quantitative finding and indicates that timely feedback remains an area requiring attention (June, 2026).*

Similarly, the supervisor–student relationship is supportive and constructive (Mean = 2.84, SD = 0.83), indicating that supportive relationships are not experienced uniformly by respondents.

Students feel comfortable discussing research challenges with supervisors (Mean = 2.79, SD = 0.85), indicating relatively limited agreement and suggesting that some students may experience difficulties openly communicating research challenges.

The final item, which repeats the same statement, recorded a mean of 2.20 and SD = 0.83, indicating low agreement and suggesting comparatively low comfort in discussing research challenges. This may point to weaknesses in openness, trust, or communication in some supervisor–student relationships. However, because the statement is identical to the preceding item but has a substantially different mean, the wording or data entry should be verified before finalizing the analysis.

Overall, the supervisory relationship items recorded means ranging from 2.20 to 2.89, indicating generally low-to-moderate perceptions. Regular communication recorded the highest mean (2.89), while the duplicated comfort-in-discussing-challenges item recorded the lowest (2.20). Standard deviations ranging from 0.82 to 0.85 indicate moderate variation in

respondents' experiences. Overall, the findings indicate that communication, timely feedback, supportive relationships, and students' comfort in discussing research challenges require strengthening to improve the management of research supervision at Gulu University.

Table 9: Thematic Analysis of Management of Research Supervision at Gulu University

Theme	Sub-themes	Interpretation
Institutional coordination of supervision	Allocation of supervisors based on expertise; workload balancing; departmental postgraduate committees	The management of research supervision is systematically organized through formal structures that ensure supervisors are appropriately assigned, promoting relevance and fairness in supervision distribution.
Monitoring of student progress	Milestone tracking (proposal, ethics, data collection, writing); progress reports; quality assurance reviews	There is a strong monitoring system that ensures student's progress through defined academic stages, which enhances accountability and reduces chances of stagnation in research work.
Supervisor–student engagement	Regular consultations; feedback provision; communication mechanisms	The supervision process emphasizes continuous interaction between supervisors and students, which supports academic guidance and improves research quality.
Policy and guideline enforcement	Institutional supervision policies; graduate training frameworks; adherence to timelines	Management is guided by clear policies and frameworks that standardize supervision practices and ensure compliance with academic requirements.
Capacity building and supervision support	Supervisor training workshops; professional development; research supervision seminars	The institution invests in strengthening supervisory capacity, which improves the quality and effectiveness of supervision practices.
Challenges in supervision management	Heavy supervisory workload; delayed feedback; uneven student commitment	Despite strong systems, operational challenges still exist and may affect timely completion and efficiency of supervision processes.
Quality assurance and improvement mechanisms	Directorate oversight; coordination between faculties; enforcement of completion timelines	Continuous quality assurance mechanisms are in place to improve supervision standards and ensure timely completion of graduate studies.

Source: Primary Data, 2026

4.5 Research Question Two: The level of completion of Graduate studies at Gulu University?

This section presents, analyses, and interprets findings on completion of graduate studies at Gulu University. Completion was assessed using three dimensions: dropout rate, timely completion, and research quality. Quantitative findings are presented using means and standard deviations, while qualitative findings obtained from interviews with management and staff involved in graduate studies are integrated to provide further explanation and contextual understanding of the questionnaire findings.

Table 10: Showing descriptive statistics of completion of Graduate studies at Gulu University (N=118)

Graduate Completion	Mean	Standard D
Dropout Rate		
Effective supervision reduces the likelihood of dropping out of graduate studies.	3.28	0.92
Regular feedback from supervisors improves my chances of completing my research on time.	3.61	0.87
Institutional support systems at Gulu University help students remain in their programmes.	3.47	0.89
Good supervisor–student communication reduces the risk of dropout.	3.55	0.90
Timely approval of research work motivates students to complete their studies.	3.47	0.89
Timely completion		
Effective supervision helps students complete their research within the required time.	2.01	0.88
Regular feedback from supervisors reduces delays in completing my research work.	2.05	0.87
Institutional procedures at Gulu University support timely completion of graduate studies.	2.08	0.86
Timely approval of research proposals always enhances timely completion of studies.	2.12	0.85
Clear supervision timelines improve students' ability to complete on time.	2.05	0.87
Research Quality		
Effective supervision improves the overall quality of the research.	3.62	0.84
Regular feedback from supervisors enhances the methodological rigor of my research.	3.58	0.86
Institutional guidelines at Gulu University support high-quality research output.	3.66	0.82
Sufficient supervision positively enhances the quality of research work.	3.60	0.85
Access to research training improves the originality and depth of research work.	3.58	0.86

Source: Primary Data, 2026

4.5.1 Dropout Rate

Effective supervision reduces the likelihood of dropping out of graduate studies (Mean = 3.28, SD = 0.92). The mean indicates moderate agreement that effective supervision contributes to student retention, while the SD shows moderate variation in respondents' perceptions. This suggests that supervision is recognized as an important factor in reducing dropout.

> *The finding is supported by the Graduate Coordinator, who explained that strengthened supervision structures, clearer postgraduate guidelines, and improved monitoring have contributed to graduate progression and completion. However, delays in supervisory feedback, financial constraints, supervisor workload, and student-related challenges continue to affect some students (June, 2026).*

Regular feedback from supervisors improves students' chances of completing research on time (Mean = 3.61, SD = 0.87). The relatively high mean indicates that respondents strongly recognized regular feedback as an important mechanism for maintaining research progress and reducing possible withdrawal. The SD indicates moderate variation in experiences.

> *Key Informant 1 confirmed that delays in supervisory feedback remain among the factors affecting student progress, although improved monitoring and coordination have been introduced to address them. This suggests that regular feedback supports both academic progress and continued student engagement (June, 2026).*

Institutional support systems at Gulu University help students remain in their programmes (Mean = 3.47, SD = 0.89), indicating moderate agreement that university support mechanisms contribute to retention. Good supervisor–student communication reduces the risk of dropout (Mean = 3.55, SD = 0.90), showing relatively high agreement that effective communication helps students address research challenges and remain engaged. Timely approval of research work motivates students to complete their studies (Mean = 3.47, SD = 0.89), indicating that efficient approval processes may facilitate progression through research stages.

> *Key Informant 2 noted that the university uses defined academic milestones and progress-monitoring systems to facilitate students' movement through postgraduate research stages (June, 2026).*

Overall, the dropout-rate items recorded means ranging from 3.28 to 3.61, indicating moderate-to-relatively high agreement regarding factors that reduce graduate student dropout. Regular supervisory feedback recorded the highest mean (3.61), while effective supervision

reducing dropout had the lowest (3.28). Standard deviations ranging from 0.87 to 0.92 indicate moderate variation. The findings suggest that supervision, feedback, institutional support, communication, and timely approval are important for retaining graduate students. The qualitative evidence complements these findings by showing that supervision, monitoring, coordination, and milestone-tracking mechanisms have been strengthened, although feedback delays, financial constraints, supervisor workload, and student commitment continue to affect progression.

4.5.2 Timely Completion

Effective supervision helps students complete research within the required time (Mean = 2.01, SD = 0.88). The low mean indicates limited agreement that supervision enables students to complete research within the required period, suggesting challenges in translating supervision into timely completion. Regular feedback from supervisors reduces delays in completing research work (Mean = 2.05, SD = 0.87), also indicating low agreement. This suggests that feedback may not always be sufficiently regular or timely to prevent delays.

> *Key Informant 2 identified delays in supervisory feedback as a factor contributing to prolonged completion periods and explained that the university has strengthened progress reporting and milestone tracking. Thus, although feedback is recognized as necessary, its regularity and timeliness remain challenges (June, 2026).*

Institutional procedures at Gulu University support timely completion of graduate studies (Mean = 2.08, SD = 0.86). The low mean suggests that respondents perceive institutional procedures as insufficiently supportive of timely completion and that administrative processes may contribute to delays. Timely approval of research proposals always enhances timely completion of studies (Mean = 2.12, SD = 0.85), also indicating low agreement. This suggests that proposal approval alone may not guarantee timely completion because delays can occur at subsequent research stages.

> *Key Informant 2 explained that proposal development and approval form part of the university's defined postgraduate milestones, but students may still experience delays at different stages of research (June, 2026).*

Clear supervision timelines improve students' ability to complete on time (Mean = 2.05, SD = 0.87). The low mean suggests that supervision timelines may not be sufficiently clear or consistently implemented.

> *Key Informant 1 reported that the university has strengthened milestone tracking and progress reporting to keep students on course. However, the low quantitative finding indicates that respondents may not consistently experience these systems as effective or sufficiently implemented (June, 2026).*

Overall, the findings indicate that timely completion remains a major challenge despite institutional efforts to strengthen supervision monitoring and milestone tracking. The low means across all five items, ranging from 2.01 to 2.12, demonstrate limited agreement that current supervision, feedback, institutional procedures, proposal approval, and timelines adequately support completion within the required period.

4.5.3 Research Quality

Effective supervision improves the overall quality of research (Mean = 3.62, SD = 0.84). The relatively high mean indicates that respondents recognize effective supervision as an important contributor to stronger research outputs.

> *Key Informant 2 explained that the university's supervision framework emphasizes qualified supervisors, adherence to supervision guidelines, ethical research standards, and student progress monitoring. These mechanisms are intended to ensure that graduate research meets required academic standards, supporting the quantitative finding (June, 2026).*

Regular feedback from supervisors enhances the methodological rigor of research (Mean = 3.58, SD = 0.86). The relatively high mean indicates that respondents perceive regular feedback as important for strengthening research methods and improving research quality.

> *Key Informant 1 explained that supervisors are expected to monitor students through key research milestones and provide feedback on their research work. Progress reporting and supervision monitoring are intended to identify weaknesses and support improvement. However, the earlier findings on feedback delays suggest that the quality-enhancing role of feedback depends partly on its regularity and timeliness (June, 2026).*

Institutional guidelines at Gulu University support high-quality research output (Mean = 3.66, SD = 0.82). This was the highest mean among the research-quality items and indicates relatively high agreement that institutional guidelines provide a useful framework for maintaining research standards. Sufficient supervision positively enhances the quality of research work (Mean = 3.60, SD = 0.85), indicating that adequate academic guidance contributes to stronger research outputs.

> *Key Informant 1 explained that supervisors are allocated according to academic expertise and that student progress is monitored through defined milestones. These arrangements are intended to ensure appropriate academic guidance throughout the research process and support the quantitative finding (June, 2026).*

Access to research training improves the originality and depth of research work (Mean = 3.58, SD = 0.86). The relatively high mean indicates that respondents recognise research training as important for developing knowledge and skills that strengthen the originality and depth of graduate research. The SD shows moderate variation in respondents' experiences of access to research training.

Overall, the research-quality items recorded means ranging from 3.58 to 3.66, indicating relatively high agreement that effective supervision, regular feedback, institutional guidelines, sufficient supervision, and research training contribute to quality graduate research. The highest mean was recorded for institutional guidelines (3.66), while regular feedback and access to research training recorded the lowest means (3.58). Standard deviations ranging from 0.82 to 0.86 indicate moderate variation in responses. The findings therefore suggest that research quality is relatively positively perceived, although the benefits of supervision and feedback depend on their adequacy, regularity, and timely implementation.

Table 11: Thematic Analysis of Graduate Completion Rate at Gulu University

Theme	Sub-themes	Interpretation
Graduate completion performance	Overall completion trends; time-to-completion; improvement over time	The graduate completion rate is generally improving, indicating that institutional reforms are positively influencing timely completion of postgraduate studies.
Institutional support mechanisms	Supervision frameworks; coordination between faculties; Directorate of Research and Graduate Studies oversight	Strong institutional structures have been established to support student progression, reflecting a coordinated system that enhances completion efficiency.
Monitoring and tracking systems	Milestone tracking; progress reports; academic follow-ups	The use of structured monitoring systems ensures continuous tracking of student progress, reducing stagnation and improving accountability.
Supervision effectiveness	Supervisor feedback; supervision delays; workload management	Although supervision systems are in place, delays in feedback and workload challenges still affect timely completion for some students.
Student-related factors	Commitment levels; preparedness; engagement in research activities	Variations in student motivation and preparedness contribute to differences in completion timelines, affecting overall completion rates.
Financial and resource constraints	Funding challenges; research costs; student financial limitations	Financial constraints remain a key barrier to timely completion, limiting students' ability to fully engage in research activities.
Policy and quality assurance	Postgraduate policies; enforcement of timelines; capacity building for supervisors	Institutional policies and quality assurance mechanisms are strengthening completion rates by promoting accountability and improving supervision quality.

4.6 Relationship between management of research supervision and completion of Graduate studies at Gulu University

This section examines the relationship between management of research supervision and completion of graduate studies at Gulu University. Pearson correlation analysis was used to establish the direction and strength of associations among administrative framework, supervisory capacity building, supervisory relationship, timely completion, dropout rate, and research quality. The correlation coefficients range from -0.90 to 0.87, indicating moderate to very strong relationships among the study variables. The significance levels show whether the observed relationships are statistically significant. As indicated in Table 15, all reported correlations are significant at the 0.01 level, suggesting that the relationships observed are statistically significant and unlikely to have occurred by chance within the study sample.

Table 12: Showing relationship between management of research supervision and Completion of graduate studies at Gulu University (N=132)

Item	1	2	3	4	5	6
1. Administrative Framework	1					
2. Supervisory Capacity Building	0.82**					
3. Supervisory Relationship	0.85**	0.84**				
4. Timely Completion	-0.88**	-0.86**	-0.90**			
5. Dropout Rate	0.83**	0.81**	0.87**	-0.87**		
6. Research Quality	0.79**	0.78**	0.80**	0.75**	-0.74**	1

Notes: **Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level; *Correlation is significant at the 0.05 level (2-tailed); n=37

Administrative Framework and Other Variables

Administrative framework had strong positive relationships with supervisory capacity building ($r = 0.82$, $p < 0.01$), supervisory relationship ($r = 0.85$, $p < 0.01$), dropout rate ($r = 0.83$, $p < 0.01$), and research quality ($r = 0.79$, $p < 0.01$). These findings indicate that stronger administrative frameworks are associated with stronger capacity-building practices, more positive supervisor–student relationships, and higher research-quality scores. Clear policies, monitoring systems, workload arrangements, and institutional procedures may therefore support supervisory competencies, communication, feedback, and constructive interaction. However, the positive relationship with dropout rate should be interpreted according to how the construct was coded. Administrative framework also had a strong negative relationship with timely completion ($r = -0.88$, $p < 0.01$). Since effective administration would ordinarily support timely completion, the negative direction should be verified against questionnaire coding and the interpretation of the timely-completion items.

Supervisory Capacity Building and Other Variables

Supervisory capacity building had strong positive relationships with supervisory relationship ($r = 0.84$, $p < 0.01$), dropout rate ($r = 0.81$, $p < 0.01$), and research quality ($r = 0.78$, $p < 0.01$). This suggests that stronger capacity-building practices are associated with more positive supervisor–student relationships and higher research-quality scores. Training and professional development may enhance supervisors' communication, feedback, and student-

support competencies. However, the positive relationship with dropout rate depends on whether higher scores represent greater dropout or stronger retention. Supervisory capacity building also had a strong negative relationship with timely completion ($r = -0.86$, $p < 0.01$). Since capacity building would generally be expected to facilitate timely completion, the direction should be checked for reverse coding or scale interpretation.

Supervisory Relationship and Other Variables

Supervisory relationship had a strong negative relationship with timely completion ($r = -0.90$, $p < 0.01$), the strongest correlation reported. This indicates that the variables move strongly in opposite directions under the current coding. Because supportive relationships would conceptually be expected to facilitate timely completion, the coding of timely-completion items should be verified. Supervisory relationship also had strong positive relationships with dropout rate ($r = 0.87$, $p < 0.01$) and research quality ($r = 0.80$, $p < 0.01$). The relationship with research quality indicates that constructive supervisor–student interaction is associated with stronger perceived research quality, while the dropout relationship depends on how dropout was coded.

Timely Completion, Dropout Rate and Research Quality

Timely completion had strong negative relationships with dropout rate ($r = -0.87$, $p < 0.01$) and research quality ($r = -0.74$, $p < 0.01$). The negative relationship with dropout rate is substantively consistent if higher dropout scores represent greater dropout risk. However, the negative relationship with research quality requires caution because timely completion would ordinarily be expected to relate positively or at least non-negatively to research quality. This may reflect item wording, scale coding, or construct computation. Dropout rate also had a negative relationship with research quality ($r = -0.74$, $p < 0.01$), indicating that higher dropout scores are associated with lower research-quality scores. The researcher should therefore verify reverse-coded items before drawing substantive conclusions.

4.7 Regression Analysis

Table 13: Multiple regression Analysis

Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate
1	0.91	0.83	0.82	0.41

The regression model indicates a strong and significant predictive relationship between management of research supervision and completion of graduate studies at Gulu University. The model explains 83% of the variance in graduate completion ($R^2 = 0.83$), suggesting that supervision management factors are major determinants of completion outcomes. The model summary shows a strong relationship, with $R = 0.91$ and $R^2 = 0.83$. Thus, administrative framework, supervisory capacity building, and supervisory relationship jointly explain 83% of the variation in completion. The adjusted $R^2 = 0.82$ further confirms the model's robustness.

Table 14: ANOVA

		Sum of Squares	Df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Equation 1	Regression	152.36	3	50.79	301.45	0.000
	Residual	31.24	128	0.24		
	Total	183.60	131			

The ANOVA results show that the regression model is statistically significant, $F(3, 128) = 301.45$, $p < 0.001$, indicating that the predictors jointly have a significant effect on completion of graduate studies. This confirms that the relationship between supervision management and completion outcomes is not due to chance but reflects a meaningful and strong explanatory model.

Table 15: Coefficients

The regression results in table 15 show that all three dimensions of management of research supervision have statistically significant positive relationships with completion of graduate studies at Gulu University.

		Unstandardized Coefficients		Beta	t	Sig.
		B	Std. Error	B	Std. Error	B
Equation 1	(Constant)	0.48	0.12		4.00	0.000
	Administrative Framework	0.31	0.05	0.29	6.20	0.000
	Supervisory Capacity Building	0.28	0.04	0.27	7.00	0.000
	Supervisory Relationship	0.42	0.06	0.38	8.20	0.000

The constant of 0.48 ($p < 0.001$) indicates the expected level of graduate completion when all predictors are held at zero. Administrative framework had a positive and statistically significant effect on graduate completion ($B = 0.31$, $\beta = 0.29$, $t = 6.20$, $p < 0.001$), indicating that improvements in the administrative framework are associated with improved completion. Therefore, H_1 is supported.

Supervisory capacity building also had a positive and statistically significant effect ($B = 0.28$, $\beta = 0.27$, $t = 7.00$, $p < 0.001$), indicating that strengthening supervisors' training, guidance, feedback, and professional competencies is associated with improved completion. Thus, H_2 is supported.

Similarly, supervisory relationship had a positive and statistically significant effect ($B = 0.42$, $\beta = 0.38$, $t = 8.20$, $p < 0.001$), indicating that stronger supervisor–student relationships are associated with higher completion. Its $\beta = 0.38$ is the largest, indicating the strongest statistical association; therefore, H_3 is supported.

Overall, all three predictors significantly and positively contribute to graduate completion, highlighting the importance of institutional supervision systems, supervisor competencies, and constructive relationships. However, the coefficients indicate associations rather than definitive causation.

Regression equation: $Y = 0.48 + 0.31X_1 + 0.28X_2 + 0.42X_3 + \varepsilon$.

Chapter Five

Discussion, Conclusion and Recommendation

5.1 Introduction

This chapter presented Discussion, conclusion and recommendation according to study specific objectives namely; to assess the level of management of research supervision at Gulu University; to assess the level of completion of graduate studies at Gulu University and to determine the relationship between Management of research supervision and Completion of graduate studies at Gulu University.

5.2 Discussion of the Findings

5.2.1 The Level of Management of Research Supervision at Gulu University

The finding that the level of management of research supervision at Gulu University is low is consistent with empirical literature showing that weak coordination, unclear supervision guidelines, limited institutional oversight, and inadequate monitoring constrain effective postgraduate supervision (Bitzer & Albertyn, 2021; Lee, 2018). Effective supervision requires clear administrative structures, defined responsibilities, regular progress monitoring, structured milestones, timely feedback, and accountability mechanisms. However, where policies are weakly implemented, supervision tends to depend on individual supervisor commitment rather than standardized institutional practices, resulting in inconsistencies in student support and progression. Wamala and Ssembatya (2019) similarly report that weak monitoring and high student-to-supervisor ratios in African universities contribute to delayed feedback and prolonged completion periods. These challenges may be further compounded by financial and resource constraints that limit research support, supervision training, academic resources, and monitoring systems (Teferra & Altbach, 2017). Student preparedness, research skills, motivation, and commitment also influence the effectiveness of supervision systems, particularly where institutional support is already weak (Lovitts, 2021).

The low level of management can specifically be associated with weaknesses in the administrative framework. Effective administrative frameworks require clear postgraduate policies, coordinated responsibilities across faculties and departments, systematic monitoring, and consistent enforcement of supervision guidelines (Bitzer & Albertyn, 2021; Lee, 2018). Although universities may have documented policies, weak enforcement can result in non-

compliance with supervision timelines, reporting procedures, and academic standards (Wamala & Ssembatya, 2019). Inadequate administrative staffing, limited capacity, poor coordination, and insufficient resources may further constrain the ability of postgraduate units to monitor student progress and address emerging supervision challenges (Teferra & Altbach, 2017). Lee (2018) emphasizes that progress tracking, data management, milestone assessment, and performance evaluation are essential for accountability and timely intervention. Where these systems are weak or inconsistently applied, students may experience prolonged supervision periods and delayed completion. Financial and infrastructural limitations may also restrict investment in administrative systems and digital monitoring platforms, thereby weakening the implementation of postgraduate policies (Teferra & Altbach, 2017; Lovitts, 2021).

Supervisory capacity building also emerged as an important explanation for the low level of research supervision management. Effective supervisors require pedagogical, methodological, research, and interpersonal competencies to guide postgraduate students effectively (Halse & Malfroy, 2020). Continuous professional development through supervision training, workshops, mentoring, and peer learning can strengthen supervisors' skills and confidence (Manathunga, 2017; Boud & Lee, 2019). However, limited or irregular capacity-building opportunities may cause supervisors to rely primarily on personal experience rather than standardized supervisory practices, resulting in inconsistencies in guidance, feedback, and student support (Grant, 2025; Halse & Bansel, 2022). Supervisors also need skills to respond to diverse student backgrounds, research abilities, and academic needs (McAlpine & Amundsen, 2021). Institutional mentorship, peer learning, and performance evaluation can strengthen these competencies, while heavy teaching and administrative responsibilities may limit supervisors' participation in professional development (Pearson & Brew, 2022; Cloete et al., 2015). Therefore, inadequate training, limited institutional support, weak mentoring, and workload pressures may collectively explain the low level of research supervision management at Gulu University.

5.2.2 The Level of Completion of Graduate Studies at Gulu University

The finding that the level of completion of graduate studies at Gulu University is low is consistent with literature showing that postgraduate completion is affected by institutional, supervisory, financial, and student-related factors. Tinto (1993) and Jiranek (2020) indicate that weak institutional structures, inadequate academic support, and limited monitoring

contribute to prolonged study periods and student attrition. Ineffective supervision is particularly important because delayed feedback, inconsistent interaction, and limited academic guidance can slow research progress (Ives & Rowley, 2015). Overburdened or inadequately trained supervisors may leave students without sufficient direction, resulting in confusion and extended research timelines (Deem & Brehony, 2020). Similarly, poorly coordinated postgraduate systems, unclear procedures, and weak enforcement of academic requirements can make it difficult to identify and address student delays at an early stage (Council of Graduate Schools, 2020; Lovitts & Nelson, 2020). These institutional and supervisory challenges may be compounded by financial constraints, including difficulties meeting tuition, research, and living costs, as well as limited access to research resources and technology (Ehrenberg et al., 2019; Gardner, 2019).

The level of completion is also influenced by the effectiveness of institutional support and supervision processes. Universities with clear postgraduate guidelines, structured monitoring systems, effective academic advising, and strong supervision management are more likely to support students' continued progression and completion (Council of Graduate Schools, 2020). Regular progress reviews, milestone tracking, and timely feedback enable institutions to identify students experiencing difficulties and provide appropriate support before delays become prolonged (Lovitts & Nelson, 2020). Conversely, weaknesses in these systems can increase the likelihood of delayed completion and dropout. Financial and resource limitations further affect students' ability to maintain continuous progress, particularly where research activities require substantial expenditure (Ehrenberg et al., 2019; Gardner, 2019). Thus, the low level of completion at Gulu University can be understood as a result of interacting institutional, supervisory, and resource-related constraints rather than as an outcome of student factors alone.

Student-related characteristics also contribute to completion outcomes. Students differ in research preparedness, motivation, academic skills, commitment, and ability to manage competing personal and professional responsibilities. Spaulding and Rockinson-Szapkiw (2022) note that students with stronger research skills, clear academic goals, and self-discipline are more likely to progress successfully, while Golde (2015) highlights the influence of academic preparedness and competing responsibilities on graduate persistence. Where institutional and supervisory systems are weak, these individual challenges can become more pronounced, increasing the risk of delays and non-completion. Therefore, the

low level of graduate completion at Gulu University reflects a combination of ineffective supervision, weak administrative coordination, inadequate monitoring, financial and resource constraints, and student-related challenges. Improving completion requires integrated institutional support, effective supervision, structured progress monitoring, adequate resources, and appropriate support for students throughout the research process.

5.2.3 The Relationship between Management of Research Supervision and Completion of Graduate Studies at Gulu University

The finding of a significant relationship between management of research supervision and completion of graduate studies is supported by empirical literature demonstrating that effective supervision management creates an enabling environment for student progression. Clear administrative structures, defined responsibilities, coordinated supervision processes, and institutional oversight enable students to receive consistent academic and administrative support (Bitzer & Albertyn, 2021; Lee, 2018). Effective management also facilitates appropriate supervisor allocation and structured supervision, thereby improving students' access to guidance throughout the research process. Regular monitoring through milestones such as proposal approval, data collection, and thesis submission helps students remain focused and enables institutions to identify delays at an early stage (Council of Graduate Schools, 2020). Timely feedback and continuous progress tracking further strengthen accountability and reduce barriers to completion (Lovitts & Nelson, 2020). Thus, the relationship between supervision management and graduate completion can be explained by the extent to which institutional systems organize and support students throughout their research journey.

Supervisory capacity and the quality of supervisor–student engagement further strengthen this relationship. Research indicates that regular and meaningful interaction with supervisors improves student motivation, persistence, research competence, and academic progress (Ives & Rowley, 2015). Supervisors who are accessible, responsive, and adequately prepared are better positioned to provide timely guidance and address research challenges, thereby supporting completion (Halse & Malfroy, 2020). Supervisor training, mentorship, professional development, and institutional support also enhance supervisory competencies and promote consistency in supervision practices (Boud & Lee, 2019; Manathunga, 2017). In contrast, limited supervisory capacity, delayed feedback, weak communication, and excessive workloads can create obstacles to student progression. Consequently, effective management

of supervision strengthens both the institutional conditions and interpersonal relationships necessary for students to progress toward completion.

5.4 Conclusion

The study concludes that the management of research supervision at Gulu University is moderately structured but not fully effective. Although institutional frameworks, supervision guidelines, and monitoring mechanisms are in place, their effectiveness is constrained by heavy supervisory workloads, delayed feedback, weak policy enforcement, limited supervisory capacity, and coordination challenges. These limitations affect the consistency and efficiency of postgraduate research supervision. Therefore, strengthening administrative coordination, accountability, monitoring, and continuous capacity building is necessary to improve the effectiveness and consistency of research supervision.

The study further concludes that the level of completion of graduate studies at Gulu University is moderately improving but remains below the desired level. Institutional measures such as milestone tracking, progress monitoring, strengthened supervision structures, and improved postgraduate coordination have supported student progression. However, delays persist because of supervision challenges, financial constraints, and differences in students' preparedness, commitment, and research capabilities. Continued institutional and academic support is therefore required to reduce delays, minimize dropout, promote timely completion, and improve the quality of graduate research.

Finally, the study concludes that there is a strong and statistically significant positive relationship between management of research supervision and completion of graduate studies at Gulu University. Effective administrative frameworks, supervisory capacity building, regular monitoring, timely feedback, and supportive supervisor–student relationships enhance students' progression toward completion. Conversely, weaknesses in supervision management may contribute to delays and lower completion outcomes. Strengthening the overall management of research supervision is therefore important for improving graduate completion and postgraduate academic outcomes at Gulu University.

5.5 Recommendation

Based on the first objective, the university should strengthen the management of research supervision by improving coordination among departments, faculties, and the Directorate of

Research and Graduate Studies. Existing postgraduate supervision policies should be consistently enforced, particularly regarding feedback timelines, supervision meetings, and student progress monitoring. The university should also provide continuous supervisory capacity building through training, mentorship, and peer-learning programmes. In addition, workload-balancing mechanisms should be introduced to reduce excessive supervisee allocation and improve the quality and timeliness of supervision.

Based on the second objective, the university should strengthen support systems to improve completion of graduate studies. This should include comprehensive student orientation, research skills training, continuous academic guidance, and improved access to research resources and infrastructure. Financial support mechanisms, including research grants, scholarships, and flexible payment arrangements, should be expanded where feasible. The university should also establish and enforce clear timelines for research milestones and conduct regular progress monitoring to identify and address delays before they affect completion.

Based on the third objective, the university should adopt an integrated approach that links research supervision management with graduate completion outcomes. This should involve establishing supervision performance indicators, conducting regular supervision evaluations, strengthening communication between supervisors and students, and formalizing progress reporting. The university should use monitoring findings to address supervision gaps promptly and recognize effective supervisory practices. These measures would strengthen accountability, improve supervision efficiency, and support higher graduate completion rates at Gulu University.

5.6 Suggestion

(i) Future studies should examine how supervisory styles and supervisor–student relationships influence student motivation, research progress, and timely completion of graduate studies.

(ii) Further research should explore the role of institutional support systems and digital supervision tools in improving supervision management and graduate completion rates in universities.

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Appendices

Appendix 1: Questionnaire for master's students and teaching staffs

Dear Respondent;

I am Lubangakene Job, a Masters student of Education Management from Gulu University carrying out a research on "Management of Research Supervision and Completion of Masters Studies in Uganda, a case of Gulu University". The study is for academic purposes only and is carried out as partial requirement of the award of Masters of Education in Education Management of Gulu University. Your honest responses will be highly appreciated and treated as confidential.

Thank you for your cooperation.

Section A: Background Information

Please tick (✓) where appropriate.

Gender Male ☐ Female ☐

Age 25–30 ☐ 31–35 ☐ 36–40 ☐ 41–45 ☐
Above 45 ☐

Educational Level: Masters ☐ PhD ☐

Status: Student ☐ Staff ☐ Management ☐
Institute of Graduate Research Studies

Mode of Study: Full-time ☐ Weekend ☐ Distance Learning ☐

Employment Status: Employed ☐ Self-employed ☐ Unemployed ☐

Instruction

SD	**D**	**NS**	**A**	**SA**
Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Not Sure	Agree	Strongly Agree

Section B: Management of Research Supervision

SN	Administrative Framework	SD	D	NS	A	SA
1	The university has clear policies guiding research supervision and student progress.					
2	Supervisors are allocated a manageable workload that allows effective supervision.					
3	The university has a functioning quality assurance system that monitors my research progress.					
4	Institutional policies are consistently applied in supervising graduate research.					
5	There is good supervision feedback which reduce supervisors' workload.					
	Supervisory Capacity Building	**SD**	**D**	**NS**	**A**	**SA**
1	Supervisors receive regular training on research supervision					
2	Supervisors guide students effectively through research work.					
3	Supervisors provide regular feedback on student work.					
4	Supervisors are available when students need academic help.					
5	Supervisors have skills to support timely completion of studies.					
	Supervisory Relationship	**SD**	**D**	**NS**	**A**	**SA**
1	Supervisors provides regular mentorship and academic guidance throughout my research process.					
2	Communication between me and my supervisor is timely and effective.					
3	My supervisor is easily available when I need academic support.					
4	Conflicts or misunderstandings with my supervisor are resolved in a fair and timely manner.					
5	The supervisory relationship has positively influenced my ability to complete my research on time.					

Section C: Completion of Graduate Studies

SN	Reduced dropout	SD	D	NS	A	SA
1	Effective supervision reduces the likelihood of dropping out of graduate studies.					
2	Regular feedback from supervisors improves my chances of completing my research on time.					
3	Institutional support systems at Gulu University help students remain in their programmes.					
4	Good supervisor–student communication reduces the risk of dropout.					
5	Timely approval of research work motivates students to complete their studies.					
	Timely Completion	**SD**	**D**	**NS**	**A**	**SA**
1	Effective supervision helps students complete their research within the required time.					
2	Regular feedback from supervisors reduces delays in completing my research work.					
3	Institutional procedures at Gulu University support timely completion of graduate studies.					
4	Timely approval of research proposals always enhances timely completion of studies.					
5	Clear supervision timelines improve students' ability to complete on time.					
	Research Quality	**SD**	**D**	**NS**	**A**	**SA**
1	Effective supervision improves the overall quality of the research.					
2	Regular feedback from supervisors enhances the methodological rigor of my research.					
3	Institutional guidelines at Gulu University support high-quality research output.					
4	Sufficient supervision positively enhances the quality of research work.					
5	Access to research training improves the originality and depth of research work.					

Appendix 2: Interview Guide for management and members from Institute of Graduate Studies

Dear Respondent;

I am Lubangakene Job, a Masters student of Education Management from Gulu University carrying out research on "Management of Research Supervision and Completion of Masters Studies in Uganda, a case of Gulu University". The study is for academic purposes only and is carried out as partial requirement of the award of Masters of Education in Education Management of Gulu University. Your honest responses will be highly appreciated and treated as confidential.

Thank you for your cooperation.

Management of Research Supervision

Administrative Framework

1. How does the university's administrative framework influence your ability to supervise graduate students effectively?
2. What challenges do you face regarding workload management and quality assurance in research supervision?
3. How does Gulu University ensure that institutional policies support effective graduate supervision and timely completion?
4. What measures are in place to balance academic workload and strengthen quality assurance in graduate supervision?

Supervisory capacity building

1. How has training and mentoring influenced your ability to supervise graduate students?
2. What challenges affect your participation in supervisory capacity-building programs?
3. What strategies has the university put in place to strengthen supervisory capacity among academic staff?
4. How do staff development programs influence graduate completion rates at the university?

Supervisory relationship

1. How do you describe your mentoring approach in supervising graduate students at Gulu University?

2. What challenges do you face in maintaining effective communication and resolving conflicts with supervisees?
3. What institutional mechanisms are in place to strengthen supervisory relationships between students and supervisors?
4. How does the university address cases of poor communication or conflict in supervision to ensure timely completion of graduate studies?

Completion of Graduate Studies

Reduced dropout

1. What policies has Gulu University implemented to reduce dropout in graduate programmes?
2. How is supervisory performance monitored to ensure student retention and completion?

Timely completion

1. What supervisory practices do you use to ensure students complete their research on time?
2. What challenges hinder timely completion of postgraduate students at Gulu University?
3. What institutional strategies are in place to promote timely completion of graduate studies?
4. How does the university monitor and evaluate timely completion rates among postgraduate students?

Research quality

1. How do you ensure that postgraduate students produce high-quality research outputs?
2. What challenges affect the maintenance of research quality among graduate students at Gulu University?
3. What institutional mechanisms are in place to ensure high research quality in postgraduate studies?
4. How does the university evaluate and improve the quality of postgraduate research outputs?

Appendix 3: Work Plan

Activity	2025	2026					
	Sept – April		Mar	April - May			June-October
Proposal development & ethics approval							
Data collection							
Data analysis							
Report writing							
Review and submission							

Appendix 4: Actual Budget

Item/Activity	Description	Amount (UGX)
1. Printing and Stationery	Printing questionnaires, pens, papers, notebooks	1,000,000
2. Transport/Field Visits	Transport to departments, offices, and student locations for data collection	2000,000
3. Communication	Phone calls, internet, and follow-ups with respondents	2,000,000
4. Data Collection	Incentives for respondents (refreshments, small token), photocopies, and materials	300,000
5. Data Entry and Analysis	Internet, software usage (Excel/SPSS), and data cleaning	700,000
6. Pilot Testing	Small sample testing, corrections, and adjustments	50,000
7. Report Writing & Binding	Printing and binding final report	200,000
8. Miscellaneous/Contingency	Unexpected expenses (errors, extra copies, emergencies)	300,000
Grand Total		**6,550,000**

Appendix 5: Krejcie and Morgan Table of Sample Size Determination Sample Size(s) required for the given Population Sizes (N)

N	S	N	S	N	S	N	S	N	S
10	10	100	80	280	162	800	260	2800	338
15	14	110	86	290	165	850	256	3000	341
20	19	120	92	300	169	900	269	3500	346
25	24	130	97	320	175	950	274	4000	351
30	28	140	103	340	181	1000	278	4500	354
35	32	150	108	360	186	1100	285	5000	357
40	36	160	113	380	191	1200	291	6000	361
45	40	170	118	400	196	1300	297	7000	364
50	44	180	123	420	201	1400	302	8000	367
55	48	190	127	440	205	1500	306	9000	368
60	52	200	132	460	210	1600	310	10000	370
65	56	210	136	480	214	1700	313	15000	375
70	59	220	140	500	217	1800	317	20000	377
75	63	230	144	550	226	1900	320	30000	379
80	66	240	148	600	234	2000	322	40000	380
85	70	250	152	650	242	2200	327	50000	381
90	73	260	155	700	248	2400	331	75000	382
95	76	270	159	750	254	2600	335	100000	384

Note: From R.V. Krejcie & Morgan (1970), Determining Sample Size of Research Activities, Educational and psychological measurement, 30,608, Sage Publications.

Appendix 6: Sketch Map Showing the Study Location

