



PREFACE

THEME: Language, Communication, and Technology: Crossing Borders, Connecting Minds

It is with great honor and excitement that I introduce this Special Issue, which is published in conjunction with the International Conference on Multidisciplinary Approaches in Language (ICMAL2024) and the Language, Innovation, Invention, and Design (LIID2024) conference. These dynamic events, held under the overarching theme "*Language, Communication, and Technology: Crossing Borders, Connecting Minds*," serve as a vibrant platform for intellectual exchange and innovation in the rapidly evolving fields of language, communication, and technology. The thematic focus of this Special Issue reflects the core mission of ICMAL and LIID: fostering interdisciplinary collaboration and encouraging fresh perspectives in applied language studies and the integration of technology in language education. By bringing together language practitioners, educators, researchers, and postgraduate students from around the globe, this publication seeks to capture the diverse and forward-thinking contributions that were presented at these conferences.

The articles featured in this issue span a broad range of topics, grouped under two significant sub-themes; a) Applied Language Studies which explore various dimensions of language as a tool for professional and intercultural communication, alongside its role in teaching, learning, and assessment. They offer valuable insights into how language can bridge cultural divides, enhance professional practices, and foster global connections, as well as b) Innovation and Technology in Language Learning which reflects transformative potential of technology, this section highlights pioneering research and applications of virtual reality (VR), augmented reality (AR), mobile apps, gamification, and artificial intelligence (AI) in language education. These contributions illustrate how emerging technologies are reshaping the way languages are taught, learned, and experienced.

As a Guest Editor, I am deeply impressed by the diversity and quality of the submissions. The innovative research and creative solutions presented in this issue demonstrate the commitment of our global academic community to addressing the challenges and opportunities at the intersection of language and technology. I extend my heartfelt gratitude to the authors for their outstanding contributions, to the reviewers for their meticulous feedback, and to the organizing committee for their tireless efforts in curating this conference and subsequent publication. I am confident that the articles in this Special Issue will inspire further dialogue, research, and innovation, contributing meaningfully to the advancement of language, communication, and technology.

Thank you for joining us on this intellectual journey.

Dr. Haida Umiera Hashim

Guest Chief Editor

Special Issue: *Language, Communication, and Technology: Crossing Borders, Connecting Minds*

ICMAL2024 & LIID2024

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Aligning Goals: Supervisor-Supervisee's Expectations in Undergraduate Final-Year Project

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ABSTRACT

Communication is one of the essential mediums of interaction towards fulfilling various final-year undergraduate research projects (FYPs) offer valuable opportunities for students to apply conceptual and theoretical knowledge to enhance their scientific reasoning skills. However, as novice researchers, they rely substantially on their supervisors' guidance. Expectations may differ throughout the collaboration process, which can cause frustration and impede progress. Despite the complexity of the undergraduate supervisory relationship, existing research has primarily focused on postgraduate level and qualitative analyses. This study aims to address this gap by investigating the expectations held by both supervisors and undergraduates involved in FYPs. Key areas examined include methodological decisions, references and materials, policies and procedures, study plans and completion of tasks, checking of drafts, and language accuracy and academic tone. Matching sets of questionnaires were administered to undergraduates and supervisors to determine and compare their expectations of each other. Overall, the results reveal that both parties' expectations varied across the areas investigated. This research contributes to a deeper understanding of the dynamics in undergraduate supervisory relationships, shedding light on areas where improvements may be needed to enhance the overall quality of FYPs and supervision.

Keywords: Undergraduate Research; Final-Year Project; Research Supervision; Research Writing; Malaysian Undergraduates

INTRODUCTION

The Final-Year Project (FYP) is a research assignment which undergraduates must complete and submit at the end of an undergraduate programme. It provides them with an opportunity to apply knowledge and skills acquired throughout their studies to produce a research project, all under the guidance of research supervisors. Essentially, the supervisors' role is primarily to maintain the research quality, since the undergraduates are merely novice researchers. The undergraduates, on the other hand, should be dedicated and self-reliant to rightfully claim ownership of the research work. Accordingly, there is scepticism surrounding undergraduate research capability, arising from their lack of experience and limited skills to formulate research designs and analyse findings thoroughly and critically. Nevertheless, this perspective has been challenged by those who have successfully mentored or examined undergraduate academic projects (among others: Buffalari et al., 2020; Kutty & Guzdial, 2020; Yuan et al., 2020). Most importantly, there have been grievances from both factions concerning their mutual disappointment in not meeting each other's expectations. Hence, this study aims to determine and compare the FYP supervisors' and undergraduates' expectations concerning methodological decisions, references and materials, policies and procedures, study plans and completion of tasks, checking of drafts, language accuracy, and academic tone.

PROBLEM STATEMENT

According to Nicholson et al. (2017), undergraduate research is an educational practice that substantially contributes to cognitive development, academic success, and consequently, personal growth. FYP does not only provide undergraduates with research knowledge, skills, and experience, but also prepares them for postgraduate studies (Chamely-Wiik et al., 2023; McInnes, 2016) and career paths (Andrijcic et al., 2017). Nevertheless, many undergraduates encounter difficulties fulfilling the FYP requirements due to their unfamiliarity with the research protocol. Although undergraduates have been exposed to research-based assignments, they are often overwhelmed with the complex methodological concepts introduced to them in their Research Method classes. Apart from that, research-related decisions can be perplexing, as they entail balancing the competing interests of authority and ownership with the supervisor. The undergraduates may also face a challenging dichotomy between the desire to demonstrate respect for their supervisors and the need for independence. These realities underscore the importance of guidance and monitoring. Progress needs to be closely monitored, and drafts should be regularly checked for content, language accuracy, and academic tone and style. Above all, the FYP guideline booklet provided does not account for the change in policies and procedures following, for example, curriculum assessment and ethics application procedures. Thus, important changes are not duly recorded, rendering the booklet neither an up-to-date nor a comprehensive reference.

Research supervision has been a subject of investigation, with a focus primarily on postgraduate studies and supervisors' feedback (Doğan & Bıkmaz, 2015; Jassim et al., 2015; Lee, 2008). However, there are limited comprehensive studies that examine the expectations of both supervisors and undergraduates, as well as the expectations of universities regarding undergraduate research. Existing studies in Australia (Jamieson & Gray, 2006; Stappenbelt & Basu, 2019) have explored these aspects to some extent. In Malaysia, however, there are limited studies that examine the expectations and concerns of undergraduates (Djamila & Makinda, 2016; Mohd Noor et al., 2023; Seri Intan & Seri Bunian, 2017), and supervisors (Mohd Noor et al., 2023), with others focusing on the management system (Kannan, 2019; Sharifah Afifah, 2020). Additionally, there is a qualitative study that investigates the perceptions of Malaysian undergraduates and supervisors (Razali et al., 2020). To address this gap, this study aims to quantitatively determine the expectations of Malaysian undergraduates towards their supervisors and vice versa, and examine the alignment of these expectations. The findings of this study will provide insights to enhance the roles of supervisors and undergraduates, and ultimately improve the quality of FYPs.

LITERATURE REVIEW

The production of FYPs is strongly influenced by the interaction between the supervisors and the students (Razali et al., 2020). DeTrude (2001) states that a successful supervisory relationship requires careful consideration of various factors, including understanding the roles and responsibilities of both the supervisor and the student. Previous studies (Howells et al., 2017; Jamaludin et al., 2021; Razali et al., 2020) have also affirmed the importance of a positive relationship between undergraduates and supervisors in ensuring the quality and success of their

projects. Consequently, it can be expected that the effectiveness of research projects and the undergraduates' ability to grow as researchers greatly depend on the level of supervision they receive.

Challenges Faced by Students in their FYP

FYP supervision can present challenges for both undergraduates and supervisors. The available literature mainly discusses undergraduate responsibilities and the benefits of engaging in undergraduate research from the academic members' perspective. Healey et al. (2013) believe that the FYP is a transition from teacher-directed to self-directed learning that allows for further development of specific graduate attributes and skills. Al Ajmi et al. (2022) agree that through such research, undergraduates can acquire and improve various skills, as well as become active and research-oriented learners. Undergraduates are expected to explore and progress on their projects independently, as well as accept responsibility for their own learning. However, these may pose the biggest challenge for novice researchers, as they create uncertainties among them who doubt their capabilities to conduct independent research.

The initial challenge typically faced by final-year students often revolves around selecting a project topic that is relevant and realistic, as this choice significantly influences every subsequent step of the research endeavour. Given the condition in which the students lack experience and knowledge in their research projects, Lessing (2011) believes supervisors' intervention is necessary as it will help the undergraduates complete their research projects successfully. Although Lessing's (2011) argument is reasonable, Phillips and Pugh (2000), as mentioned in Lessing (2011), stated that undergraduates should not rely on their supervisors' instructions. Instead, undergraduates are expected to start discussions, ask for help when needed, and discuss their research. Most importantly, the guidelines provided for them are perfunctory and do not address the affective aspects of managing the relationship.

Despite having received instruction and guidance in research methodology from their supervisors, students often encounter an array of daunting emotions throughout the research process. They are not only frequently tasked with the responsibility of formulating and carrying out their research autonomously, but the self-directed nature of research (Healey et al., 2013), along with the associated responsibilities and expectations placed on students, creates significant stress (Papanastasiou & Zembylas, 2008). Indeed, the majority of students face difficulty establishing a concise research focus, which can contribute to low motivation for pursuing their FYPs. When students struggle to clearly define the scope and objectives of their research, it can lead to a sense of confusion and eventually make them less enthusiastic about their research. Sometimes, there might be a scarcity of relevant and up-to-date materials or references on the chosen topic (Al-Qaderi, 2016). This is especially true for niche or emerging fields where comprehensive literature may be lacking. Access to certain resources, such as specialised journals or databases, can also pose difficulties. Not all institutions or departments may have subscriptions to these resources, limiting the supervisor's ability to provide comprehensive support. As a result, having a well-defined research focus is not only crucial for the successful completion of the project but also for maintaining the students' motivation and engagement throughout the process.

Challenges and Expectations in the Supervisory Process

Coordinating FYPs is challenging since the proposed topics can cover a wide range of topics and disciplines. This makes it difficult for supervisors to have expertise in all areas, and they may need to adapt to topics and projects that are different from their research interests, which is not ideal (Harwood & Petrić, 2017). On the other hand, considering that the undergraduates are novice researchers, one of the biggest challenges faced is choosing the research topic and designing a sound FYP research methodology (Djamila & Makinda, 2016; Reguant et al., 2018). If the undergraduates choose a research topic and methodology that are based on the research interests of the supervisors, the supervisors will be in a much better position to offer expert advice. In turn, this will all parties in terms of supervision quality, satisfaction and experience (Abdulai & Owusu-Ansah, 2014). However, Abdulai and Owusu-Ansah (2014) also claimed that the situation can lead to other issues, especially when undergraduates are facing challenges when conducting research and tend to use the fact that the topics are not their interest as a justification.

Supervisors should also assist their students in finding relevant references and materials to support their research. Firstly, undergraduates may struggle to perform successful literature searches and assess the relevance and quality of the materials they discover (Mitchell & Rich, 2022). Secondly, deciding whether selected references are suitable and fit within the framework of the study can be challenging. They may also encounter difficulty synthesising information from multiple sources to create a cohesive argument. Moreover, even with access to materials, students may struggle to paraphrase complex materials while maintaining the original content without plagiarising (Fitria, 2022).

Since FYPs are completed during their final year, some undergraduates may lose motivation or face personal challenges. At the same time, both undergraduates and supervisors often have busy schedules. Therefore, scheduling a time for a meeting that works for both parties can be difficult, particularly when supervisors are responsible for multiple students. The short time frame for finishing the FYPs also poses another challenge. While study plans to guide the supervision activities are available, they do not necessarily translate into a successful outcome. Frith (2020) noted that supervisors' expectations to meet regularly need to be measured against their students' differing needs and capabilities, and the supervisors' concerns about their students' progress and wellbeing.

Prior research (e.g., Abdul Halim et al., 2012) has noted that preparing the FYP is demanding, since undergraduates must demonstrate their knowledge of the research, while managing academic writing itself. Along the same lines, Reguant et al. (2018) report that some undergraduates are unable to express ideas in writing and use language correctly in their FYPs. Another challenge is when the undergraduates are not native English speakers (Hamzaoui, 2021). The undergraduates will need more time to accomplish the writing task within the given time. Although the supervisors can provide feedback on the content of the FYPs and the expression of ideas, Frith (2020) highlights that there are concerns over the extent of feedback that should be given to undergraduates. On the one hand, the supervisors can challenge the undergraduates' intellectual development by providing constructive feedback and criticism on their FYP drafts. On the other hand, the undergraduates may have different ways of accepting the feedback, and some supervisors are concerned about potentially discouraging them as they may react negatively.

Being one of the most crucial components of undergraduate studies, the completion of the final-year projects is often seen as a chance for them to demonstrate both skills and knowledge they have learned throughout their studies. Nevertheless, Bikanga Ada (2021) claims that the quality of student learning experience and satisfaction level depend on the amount of support and supervision during their studies. The undergraduates can easily get frustrated when they feel like they do not get the support and feedback they need. It should be noted that this situation is expected to happen when the supervisors are new to or unfamiliar with the research area. Therefore, it is important to ascertain the expectations of both supervisors and undergraduates, as explained by Rowley and Slack (2004) “research supervision, even at the undergraduate level, needs to be a learning process for both the supervisor and the student” (p. 180).

Supervisors’ Roles and Supervisory Styles

According to Frith (2020), supervision is a key pedagogical practice in the final-year project exercise. Past studies have highlighted that supervisors play the roles of facilitator, dictator, friend, counsellor, consultant, and examiner (MacKeogh, 2006; Razali et al., 2020). Additionally, the expectations of supervisor’s roles have been discussed by studies such as Todd et al. (2004), which, in sum, can include: providing support to identify and define the research questions; ensuring that the project is feasible and ethical; advising on appropriate research methodologies; and helping with project planning and meeting deadlines. Derounian (2011) asserts that the supervisor's input and supervisory relationship are crucial to the success of the project. However, despite acknowledging the consensus in terms of the supervisor’s role in the supervision process, Derounian (2011) claims that many supervisors experience tension between the ‘intellectual’ and ‘counselling’ aspects of their roles as supervisors. In turn, many supervisors respond to these challenges differently, as they generally adopt different supervisory styles (Todd et al., 2006).

It is imperative for FYP supervisors to be experts in the field and to be able to advise undergraduates to refine their research, stay focused, and maintain realistic expectations. In addition, the supervisors must provide moral support, useful advice, and constructive feedback to their students (Ishak et al., 2021), assuring them that the project is feasible and manageable within the allocated time frame. Bikanga Ada (2021, p. 54) claims that undergraduates appreciate supervisors who are “accessible and available”. Supervisors should allocate certain time for supervision and other available resources to ensure the completion of the research project. The positive learning environment fostered by supervisors can motivate the undergraduates and enhance their learning, which is crucial for the successful completion of FYPs. Despite the extensive discussion surrounding the roles of supervisors, there remains limited knowledge regarding the responsibilities of undergraduates. Existing literature suggests that undergraduates are generally expected to be self-reliant learners (Anderson et al., 2006; Frith, 2020; Roberts & Seaman, 2018; Todd et al., 2006). While this is the nature of supervision, it is worth noting that Sidhu et al. (2014) assert that in certain cultural contexts, there tends to be greater reliance on supervisors for support in research design and data analysis, as demonstrated in their analysis of Malaysian postgraduate students. Conversely, Malaysian supervisors assume an authoritative role with more pronounced control over their students’ learning (Razali et al., 2020). Due to this power dynamic, undergraduates tend to look up to and defer to their supervisors, as they believe that the success of their projects depends on their supervisors’ intellectual capabilities. This phenomenon is consistent with the Asian learning environment (Hallinger, 2010).

METHODOLOGY

This study employs a quantitative approach through the use of descriptive statistics. Such an approach is deemed advantageous as it can provide statistical evidence on the extent of the issue under investigation (Allen, 2017). Thus, two sets of surveys, matched one-to-one for all items, were generated via Google Form to obtain the expectations of both the undergraduates and supervisors on corresponding domains. These sets are divided into two sections. The first section aims to obtain the demographic data of the respondents. Meanwhile, the second section uses a 5-point Likert scale for the respondents to indicate their responses to a total of 39 statements on 14 themes, ranging from 1 (Strongly Disagree) to 5 (Strongly Agree).

- Communication
- Meeting
- Supervisor Selection
- Topic Selection
- Relationship
- Methodological Decisions
- References and Materials
- Policies and Procedures
- Study Plans and Completion of Tasks
- Checking of Drafts
- Language Accuracy and Academic Tone
- Standard of FYP
- Recognition for Contribution
- Evaluation of FY

The respondents were also allowed to provide overall comments on their expectations in the last section of the survey. Note, however, that this paper only reports on 6 themes (17 statements) - Methodological Decisions, References and Materials, Policies and Procedures, Study Plans and Completion of Tasks, Checking of Drafts, as well as Language Accuracy and Academic Tone due to space limitation. The first five themes investigated were reported in a paper (Mohd Noor et al., 2023). The distribution of the two sets of surveys was carried out via WhatsApp by providing the URL to all 40 supervisors and 176 undergraduates. This method is widely used to increase online survey response rates as reminders can be sent to encourage participation (Nulty, 2008). A total of 123 individuals participated in the survey by the end of the survey period - 96 undergraduates (54.5%) and 27 supervisors (67.5%). Keeter et al. (2006) argue that return rates alone are insufficient indicators of study validity, despite being informative. Hence, researchers must furnish comprehensive information on both their respondents and non-respondents, attempt to boost participation, and specify the denominators used in computing the response rates to meticulously evaluate the validity and relevance of the findings (Morton et al., 2012). The response rate in this investigation can be attributed to the fact that the surveys were disseminated during the semester break. Furthermore, the Google Form was designed to exclusively accept submissions of fully completed responses.

The study employed IBM SPSS Statistics version 26 to analyse the responses. Descriptive statistics were utilised to ascertain the expectations of the participants, which involved computing the frequency, percentage, and mean for all the items across the 6 dimensions. The findings were then tabulated into figures and tables. Note that while the items in Section B of both surveys are complementary, they are presented from opposing perspectives, with the undergraduates responding to "my supervisors should" and the supervisors answering "my undergraduate supervisees should". To ensure an accurate quantitative comparison, the responses of the supervisors were reversed for analysis.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

This section begins by presenting profiles of the two respondent groups: undergraduates and supervisors. Subsequently, it analyses their expectations, comparing and contrasting them based on six key themes: Methodological Decisions, References and Materials, Policies and Procedures, Study Plans and Completion of Tasks, Checking of Drafts, and Language Accuracy and Academic Tone. A total of 27 supervisors participated in the survey. The distribution of respondents' age groups is as follows: 37% are seniors aged over 50, another 37% fall within the 30 to 39 age brackets, and 22.2% fall between 40 and 49 years old, with the remaining respondents being under 30 years old. Furthermore, 81.5% hold a master's degree, while the remainder possess a PhD. The respondents' areas of interest exhibit a diverse range, as indicated in Figure 1:

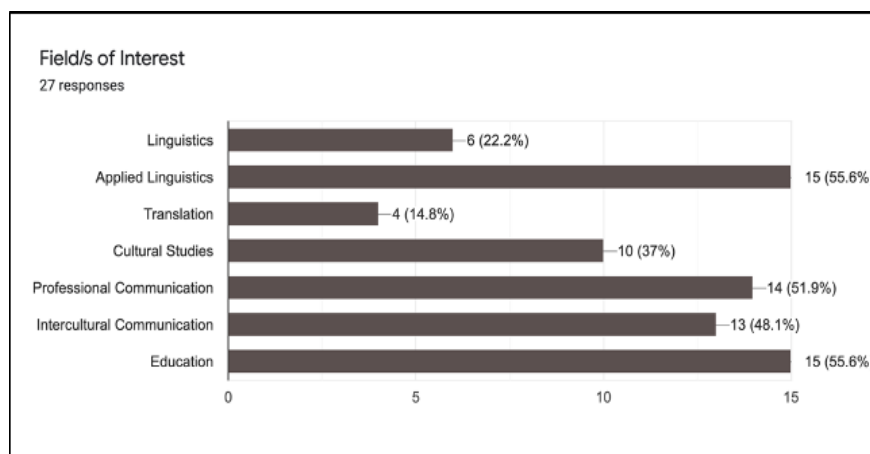


Figure 1. FYP supervisors' fields of interest

Just over half of the supervisors expressed an interest in Applied Linguistics (55.6%), Education (55.6%), and Professional Communication (51.9%). Approximately half of them also have an interest in Intercultural Communication (48.1%), while the rest exhibit enthusiasm for Cultural Studies (37%), Linguistics (22.2%), and Translation (14.8%). Additionally, it is noteworthy that there is a significant disparity in their supervisory experience. A staggering 85.2% of supervisors lack undergraduate supervision experience, and 70.4% have not engaged in postgraduate supervision.

An overview of the demographic traits of the 96 undergraduate participants is shown in Table 1. Their academic status can be broken down as follows: 62.5% are enrolled in Semester 4, 8.3% in Semester 5, and 29.2% in Semester 6. A small fraction, 2.1%, exceeds 25 years of age. The majority, 74.7%, fall within the age range of 20 to 22 years, while the remaining 23.2% are aged between 23 to 25 years. 20 of the respondents are male, while the remaining 76 are female students.

Table 1. Demographic profile of the undergraduates

Total Number of Respondents	96	
Gender	Male	20 students (20.8%)
	Female	76 students (79.2%)

Age	20–22 years old	74.7%
	23–25 years old	23.2%
	> 25 years old	2.1%
Semester of Study	Semester 4	62.5%
	Semester 5	8.3%
	Semester 6	29.2%

Undergraduates and Supervisors' Expectations

Table 2 provides a comparative analysis of the outcomes concerning the examined variables: Methodological Decisions, References and Materials, Policies and Procedures, Study Plans and Completion of Tasks, Checking of Drafts, and Language Accuracy and Academic Tone. It contrasts the mean and standard deviation (SD) of responses from both undergraduates (n=96) and supervisors (n=40) across all six themes. These results were derived from their evaluations of the 5-point Likert scale statements. Subsequently, in the forthcoming subsections, we will comprehensively examine each of the six themes.

Table 2. Overview of undergraduates and supervisors' expectations based on the variables

Themes	Undergraduates' Expectations		Supervisors' Expectations	
	Mean	SD	Mean	SD
Methodological Decisions	4.17	.64704	3.90	.55327
References and Materials	3.93	.75799	4.10	.67187
Policies and Procedures	4.53	.55161	3.78	.88070
Study Plans and Completion of Tasks	3.68	.99731	4.43	.59974
Checking of Drafts	4.48	.55347	4.50	.44398
Language Accuracy and Academic Tone	4.31	.62933	4.31	.63773

Table 2 presents the overview of undergraduates and supervisors' expectations based on the variables. The undergraduates recorded a higher mean score in methodological decisions (M=4.17, compared to M=3.90), and policies and procedures (M=4.53 compared to M=3.78). The supervisors recorded a higher mean score in references and materials (M=4.10 compared to M=3.93), study plans and completion of tasks (M=4.43 compared to M=3.68), and checking on

drafts (M=4.50 compared to M=4.48). The variable of language accuracy and academic tone recorded a similar mean value of M=4.31 for both the undergraduates and supervisors.

Methodological Decisions

Table 3 shows the analysis of the undergraduates' and supervisors' expectations on methodological decisions, featuring 3 items. Based on these items, 67.8% of the undergraduates are in agreement or strong agreement that the supervisors are responsible for deciding the most appropriate methodological framework, compared to only 33.4% of the supervisors who believe that it is the undergraduates who are responsible instead. As for the second item, 88.9% of the supervisors are in agreement that both parties should work together for the best methodological framework, compared to a total of 84.3% of the undergraduates. As for the last item for methodological decisions, an exceptionally high percentage of the undergraduates (91.7%) agree and strongly agree that the supervisors are responsible for the accuracy of the research instruments, while 81.5% of the supervisors believe that the undergraduates are the ones responsible for it.

Table 3. Supervisee-supervisor expectations on methodological decisions

Item [Expectation]		Mean	Response Distribution (%)				
			1 [Strongly Disagree]	2	3	4	5 [Strongly Agree]
Deciding the most appropriate methodological framework	Undergraduate/ Supervisee	3.97	2.1	3.1	27.1	31.3	36.5
	Supervisor	3.26	0	18.5	48.1	22.2	11.2
Working together in deciding the best methodological framework	Undergraduate/ Supervisee	4.22	0	1.0	14.6	45.8	38.5
	Supervisor	4.41	0	0	11.1	37.0	51.9
Ensuring the instruments are accurate	Undergraduate/ Supervisee	4.33	0	0	8.3	50.0	41.7
	Supervisor	4.04	0	0	18.5	59.3	22.2

References and Materials

Table 4 summarises both the undergraduates' and supervisors' expectations concerning references and materials based on 3 statements. 53.1% of the undergraduates agreed or strongly agreed for supervisors to provide a list of references to be reviewed, another 28.1% were unsure, while the remaining 18.8% disagreed or strongly disagreed. On average, the mean for the undergraduates is 3.53, indicating moderate agreement with the statement. A similar trend is observable across the

other 2 items where most of the undergraduates either strongly agreed, agreed, or were not sure that the items are the responsibilities of the supervisors, while a smaller proportion of them either disagreed or strongly disagreed with the statements (supervisors to check the references are situated within the research context, $M = 4.02$, and supervisors to ensure that the APA formatting style is met, $M = 4.25$).

Table 4. Supervisee-supervisor expectations on references and materials

Item [Expectation]		Mean	Response Distribution (%)				
			1 [Strongly Disagree]	2	3	4	5 [Strongly Agree]
Providing list of references to be reviewed	Undergraduate/ Supervisee	3.53	2.1	16.7	28.1	32.3	20.8
	Supervisor	3.85	0	14.8	11.1	48.1	25.9
Being responsible in checking that the references are situated within the context of research	Undergraduate/ Supervisee	4.02	1.0	4.2	20.8	39.6	34.4
	Supervisor	4.00	0	3.7	22.2	44.4	29.6
Ensuring that the formatting style conforms to the latest APA format	Undergraduate/ Supervisee	4.25	1.0	2.1	16.7	31.3	49.0
	Supervisor	4.44	0	0	11.1	33.3	55.6

The supervisors, on the other hand, generally believe that all the responsibilities should be on the undergraduates instead, with 74% either agreed or strongly agreed ($M=3.85$), 74% also either agreed or strongly agreed that the undergraduates are responsible for checking the references are situated within the context of the research ($M=4.00$), and 88.9% agreed or strongly agreed that the undergraduates should check on the formatting style ($M=4.44$).

Policies and Procedures

Table 5 presents the supervisee-supervisor expectations for policies and procedures based on 2 statements. 86.5% of the undergraduates believe their supervisors should be responsible for advising on relevant policies, procedures, and ethical requirements relating to the final year project, as indicated by the mean score of 4.46). Similarly, 94.8% of them expect their supervisors to alert them of changes in policies, procedures, and ethical requirements ($M = 4.60$).

Table 5. Supervisee-supervisor expectations on policies and procedures

Item [Expectation]		Mean	Response Distribution (%)				
			1 [Strongly Disagree]	2	3	4	5 [Strongly Agree]
Supervisor is responsible for advising on relevant policies, procedures, and ethical requirements relating to the final year project / Supervisee is responsible in being updated on the relevant policies, procedures, and ethical requirements relating to the final year project	Undergraduate/ Supervisee	4.46	0	0	7.3	39.6	46.9
	Supervisor	3.74	0	11.1	25.9	40.7	22.2
Being alert on any changes to the policies, procedures, or ethical requirements	Undergraduate/ Supervisee	4.60	0	1.0	4.2	28.1	66.7
	Supervisor	3.81	0	7.4	29.6	37.0	25.9

The supervisors nonetheless expect the responsibility of acquiring the relevant policies and ethical requirements to be held by the undergraduates, as shown by the mean score of 3.74, 62.9% of them agreed and strongly agreed with the statement. Similarly, 62.9% of them believe that the undergraduates should stay updated with any changes to policies and requirements (M=3.81). However, a notable percentage of them are unsure of the responsible party for both statements (25.9% and 29.6% respectively).

Study Plans and Completion of Tasks

Table 6 shows the supervisee-supervisor expectations for Study Plans and Task Completion. Their expectations are strikingly contradictory, with 62.6% of the undergraduates placing the responsibility in initiating checking on the supervisors (M=3.81), while 96.3% of the supervisors believe that the undergraduates should be responsible to initiate it (M=4.44).



Table 6. Supervisee-supervisor expectations on study plans and task completion

Item [Expectation]		Mean	Response Distribution (%)				
			1 [Strongly Disagree]	2	3	4	5 [Strongly Agree]
Supervisor checks on undergraduate / Supervisee to consult regularly to ensure consistency on the project	Undergraduate/ Supervisee	3.81	1.0	10.4	26.0	31.3	31.3
	Supervisor	4.44	0	3.7	0	44.4	51.9
Developing study plans to ensure the project is completed by the deadline	Undergraduate/ Supervisee	3.54	4.2	13.5	33.3	21.9	27.1
	Supervisor	4.41	0	0	7.4	44.4	48.1

Their expectations also differ for the responsible party to develop study plans for the study to be completed as scheduled. 49% of the undergraduates placed the responsibility on the supervisor, another 33.3% were unsure, and the remaining 17.7% believed otherwise ($M = 3.54$). Again, 92.5% of the supervisors agreed that their students themselves should develop the study plans and ensure that they follow them closely, while the remaining 7.4% were not sure ($M = 4.41$).

Checking of Drafts

Table 7 tabulates the findings on the supervisee-supervisor expectations for Checking of Drafts.

Table 7. Supervisee-supervisor expectations on checking of drafts

Item [Expectation]		Mean	Response Distribution (%)				
			1 [Strongly Disagree]	2	3	4	5 [Strongly Agree]
Supervisor to insist on seeing / Supervisee to show all drafts to ensure undergraduate is on the right track	Undergraduate/ Supervisee	4.41	0	0	14.6	30.2	55.2
	Supervisor	4.44	0	0	7.4	40.7	51.9
Providing / Expecting constructive criticisms	Undergraduate/ Supervisee	4.57	0	0	4.2	34.4	61.5

	Supervisor	4.56	0	0	3.7	37.0	59.3
Providing / expecting feedback for improvement	Undergraduate/ Supervisee	4.61	0	0	7.3	24.0	68.8
	Supervisor	4.63	0	0	0	37.0	63.0
Supervisor should be prompt with feedback on submitted drafts / Supervisee to be prompt with submission of drafts	Undergraduate/ Supervisee	4.34	0	2.1	8.3	42.7	46.9
	Supervisor	4.37	0	0	7.4	48.1	44.4

Four responsibilities were listed, and again, the results obtained from both parties were skewed in opposing directions. Across the four items examined, the students expected the supervisors to insist on checking all drafts to ensure they are on the right track (85.4%, $M = 4.41$), provide constructive criticism (95.9%, $M = 4.57$), provide feedback for improvement (92.8%, $M = 4.61$), and provide prompt feedback on their drafts (89.6%, $M = 4.34$). The supervisors, on the contrary, placed the responsibilities on the undergraduates. A staggering number of them believe that their students are responsible to present the drafts to the supervisors (92.6%, $M = 4.44$), to expect constructive criticisms (96.3%, $M = 4.56$), and to be prompt with the submission of drafts (92.5%, $M = 4.37$). In fact, all the supervisors believe that their students should expect feedback for improvement from them ($M = 4.63$).

Language Accuracy and Academic Tone

The results of the supervisee-supervisor expectations on Language Accuracy and Academic Tone are presented in Table 8. The undergraduates expected the supervisors to check on language accuracy, with 80.2% either strongly agreeing or agreeing, 16.7% not sure, and merely 3.1% disagreeing with the statement ($M = 4.19$). The same expectations are observable in achieving academic tone, with 95.8% putting it on the supervisors and the remaining 4.2% were not sure ($M = 4.44$).

Table 8. Supervisee-supervisor expectations on language accuracy and academic tone

Item [Expectation]		Mean	Response Distribution (%)				
			1 [Strongly Disagree]	2	3	4	5 [Strongly Agree]
Checking on language accuracy	Undergraduate/ Supervisee	4.19	0	3.1	16.7	38.5	41.7
	Supervisor	4.37	0	0	7.4	48.1	44.4

Ensuring that project achieves academic tone	Undergraduate/Supervisee	4.44	0	0	4.2	47.9	47.9
	Supervisor	4.26	0	0	14.8	44.4	40.7

However, the supervisors believe that the undergraduates themselves should be held responsible for ensuring language accuracy ($M = 4.37$) and academic tone ($M = 4.26$), with 92.5% and 85.1% agreeing with the statements and 7.4% and 14.8% being unsure, respectively.

Discussion

The analyses reveal marked differences at varying degrees in the undergraduates' and supervisors' expectations across all five investigated themes. These results are contradictory to a study by Jamieson and Gray (2006) but aligned with the findings of Razali et al. (2020).

The undergraduates' high dependency on their supervisors for methodological decisions validates the claim made by Djamila and Makinda (2016) and Reguant et al. (2018) that, as novice researchers, they struggle with designing the research. This explains the undergraduates' dependency on their supervisors, as they believe that the supervisors are the experts (Abdulai & Owusu-Ansah, 2014). However, according to Abdulai and Owusu-Ansah (2014), the supervisors may opt not to make methodological decisions to prevent them from being held responsible for the undergraduates' struggles to complete their FYPs. This explains the incongruent expectations of both parties.

A similar trend is observable for the theme References and Materials, where both parties have conflicting views. The result suggests that, on average, the undergraduates expect their supervisors to provide a list of references to be reviewed, compared to how supervisors themselves perceive this responsibility. The analysis also reveals a significant difference in perception between the two groups concerning the supervisor's responsibility in checking that the chosen references are within the context of the research. A substantial difference in perception between the two groups is also observable in the responsible party's ability to ensure that formatting styles adhere to the latest APA format. The results across the three statements indicate a misalignment of expectations, which may strain their relationship and even the undergraduates' performance. This can be better understood by examining existing literature, which highlights that supervisors expect undergraduates to exhibit greater independence (Anderson et al., 2006; Frith, 2020; Roberts & Seaman, 2018; Todd et al., 2006) by self-reliantly exploring and analysing the available literature. Nonetheless, the undergraduates lack the confidence to spearhead their research endeavours, and this can be due to inexperience. Hence, it is imperative for both parties to discuss their expectations at the outset of the research endeavour to avoid any potential frustrations down the line.

The third theme investigated also shows contradictory expectations between the undergraduates and supervisors regarding the roles of supervisors in advising on policies, procedures, and ethical requirements, and in communicating changes to these requirements. While the undergraduates expect their supervisors to provide guidance on these matters and alert them of any changes, their supervisors expect them to be more independent instead. These are attributed to frequent changes

to policies, procedures, and ethical applications. These marked differences highlight a misalignment in expectations, which calls for both parties to clarify their roles and responsibilities to ensure a smoother academic experience.

The results additionally reveal a difference in expectations between the undergraduates and supervisors regarding the responsibilities of checking on progress and developing study plans for project completion. Generally, the undergraduates expect their supervisors to provide regular guidance and develop study plans. The supervisors, on the other hand, believe that their undergraduates should be in control of managing their goals. Frith (2020) emphasises the importance of aligning supervisors' expectations with individual needs, abilities, and concerns about progress and well-being. It highlights the notion that there is no one-size-fits-all formula for supervising the undergraduates' research work. This mismatch calls for both parties to clarify their expectations from the first meeting itself to ensure effective research management and timely completion.

On the theme Checking of Drafts, the results show a considerable difference in expectations between the undergraduates and supervisors. While the undergraduates expect their supervisors to play an active role in reviewing drafts, providing constructive criticism, and providing timely feedback, their supervisors aim to foster independent critical thinking and research skills in their students. They believe that their students should exhibit a greater degree of independence throughout their research work. Ishak et al. (2021) underscore the importance of supervisors providing constructive feedback to undergraduates. However, Frith (2020) notes the predicament over the extent of feedback that should be given to undergraduates. Detailed feedback may either demotivate them for being insufficient or drive them to be dependent.

Finally, the findings reveal a discrepancy between the anticipated roles of supervisors and the actual beliefs of undergraduates regarding language precision and upholding academic standards in FYP. Although undergraduates expect a high level of engagement from their supervisors in ensuring language accuracy and academic tone, most supervisors hold a contrasting view. While supervisors prioritise ensuring the FYPs meet the standard in terms of academic style and tone, undergraduates often encounter difficulties in this aspect (Abdul Halim et al., 2012). Reguant et al. (2018) further elaborate that some undergraduates struggle to articulate their research in writing while ensuring accurate language use, particularly when the English language is their second language. In such cases, they will need more time to complete the FYPs. These divergent expectations underline the importance of defining their respective roles and responsibilities in this area to enhance the quality of research projects and align them with established academic norms.

Overall, the results confirm the literature on the different expectations between undergraduates and supervisors concerning methodological decisions, references and materials, policies and procedures, study plans and completion of tasks, checking of drafts, as well as language accuracy and academic tone. The contributing factors may include the absence of clear and comprehensive guidelines, novice research skills, and cultural values.

The absence of a clear set of comprehensive guidelines for the undergraduates and supervisors mainly contributes to not only the incongruent expectations between the two parties but also the high level of uncertainty among the undergraduates and supervisors. This concurs with the literature on the importance of clarifying the supervisor's role at the outset, as this can influence

the skills undergraduates develop (Del Río et al., 2018) and avoid undergraduates' frustration with supervisory support (Neupane Bastola & Hu, 2021). During the proposal writing stage, undergraduates are provided with a booklet that serves as guidelines for their FYP. However, the information contained within only provides a surface-level explanation. Briefly, it serves as a general reference for all undergraduate programmes at the faculty. The explanation is also brief, focusing on the process (assignment of supervisor, consultation form, and frequency of meetings), different sections of the FYP, technical specifications, and evaluation and publication of the reports. As a result, there are uncertainties on the part of the undergraduates. Regrettably, supervisors also rely on the same booklet. This explains the incongruent expectations between the supervisors and undergraduates. The FYP is an excellent opportunity for undergraduates to develop related skills and qualities through self-directed learning without relying solely on instruction from their instructors (Healey et al., 2013). However, this shift can be intimidating for novice researchers who may struggle with the idea of conducting independent research. To make this transition smoother, undergraduates should adjust their mindset from guided learning to self-directed learning with guidance (Stappenbelt, 2013). It is crucial for supervisors to recognise this challenging shift and prioritize developing research skills instead of output to support undergraduates (Stappenbelt & Basu, 2019). By aligning expectations, both parties can successfully navigate this transition. The success of this transition can lead to cognitive development, academic success, and personal growth.

Apart from the absence of a comprehensive set of guidelines and novice research skills, cultural background can partly explain the incongruent expectations between supervisors and undergraduates. In particular, undergraduates from cultures that emphasize instructor-directed learning may be more dependent on their supervisors for support and assistance. Malaysians, particularly, come from a high-context culture that values respect, power distance, face, and politeness (Hofstede Insights, 2022). They recognise hierarchical structures that value authority. As a result, undergraduates may feel obligated to show deference to their supervisors and avoid expressing contradicting opinions to maintain a harmonious relationship. This analysis highlights the influence of culture on the expectations of both parties, with undergraduates generally believing that their supervisors are responsible for their research, while the supervisors see themselves as having authority and expect displays of subordination and respect from the undergraduates. The findings also support the idea that Malaysian supervisors tend to take a more authoritative role in guiding undergraduates' learning (Razali et al., 2020). However, by recognising power imbalances and taking corrective actions, supervisors can work to bridge the gap between their expectations and those of their students (Stappenbelt & Basu, 2019). In short, despite coming from similar cultural backgrounds, both parties are culturally influenced by the roles that they hold in research endeavours.

CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATION

The present study extends past work on expectations in research supervision. In general, various aspects of the supervision process are unclear to both supervisors and undergraduates. The incongruent expectations between the two parties can be attributed to incomplete guidelines, limited experience, and the influence of cultural backgrounds. However, we believe that all of these can be overcome by having early discussions regarding supervisory expectations to ensure

successful and favourable outcomes. Articulating expectations as early as possible will assist both undergraduates and supervisors in ensuring a worthwhile research experience. The supervisors may continue to play the role of mentors, but they also need to acknowledge that the undergraduates are novice researchers needing support, guidance, and assurance. In turn, the undergraduates will have to be prepared to direct their own learning and research progress. These imply that the FYP is a shared journey between supervisors and undergraduates from which both parties can learn and benefit. We recommend that future studies employ a mixed-method approach to gain a better understanding of the different aspects and expectations of the undergraduate supervision process.

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Conflict of Interest

The authors have no conflicts of interest to declare.

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Authors' Contributions

Abstract, N.F; Introduction, H.I.; methodology, H.U.; findings and discussion, N.A.; formal analysis, N.A.;resources, A.A.;writing—original draft preparation, N.A., H.I., H.U., and N.F.; writing—review and editing, H.U. and N.F.; project administration, N.A., and H.I. All authors have read and agreed to the published version of the manuscript.