

Postgraduate Supervision Relationship: Practices, Challenges, and Strategies of Stakeholders in the Côte d'Ivoire University System

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Abstract : Postgraduate supervision contributes significantly to a student's academic career, a supervisor's promotion, and a university's reputation. Despite this, the length of graduation in the Côte d'Ivoire University system is beyond the normal duration, two years for a master's and three years for a PhD. The paper analyses supervision practices regarding the challenges and strategies mobilised by students, supervisors, and administration staff to manage various relationships. Using a qualitative research design, this study was conducted at three public universities in Côte d'Ivoire. Data were generated from thirty-two postgraduate students, seventeen supervisors, and four administration staff through semi-structured interviews. Data were analysed using content analysis and presented thematically. Findings revealed delegated supervision and co-supervision, two types of supervision relationship practices. Students pointed out that feedback is often delayed from their supervisors in delegation supervision. However, they acknowledged receiving input and scientific guidance. All students believed that their role is to be proactive, not to wait to receive everything from the supervisor, and need to be more autonomous and hardworking. They developed strategies related to these qualities. Supervisors were considered to guide, give advice, control, motivate, provide critical feedback, and validate the work. The administration was rather absent in monitoring supervision delays. Major challenges were related to the supervision relationships and access to the research funds. The study showed that more engagement of the main supervisor, administration monitoring, and secured funding would reduce the time and increase the completion rate.

Keywords : Côte d'Ivoire, postgraduate supervision, practices, strategies

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