

# Strategic Formulation for Accelerated Fast Track Programs: A Case Study Using SWOT – AHP at Universitas Brawijaya

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## ABSTRACT

Indonesia faces a low number of master's graduates, partly due to implementation challenges in programs like the Fast Track at Universitas Brawijaya's Faculty of Administrative Sciences. This research aims to evaluate the Fast Track program using SWOT (Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities, Threats) analysis and develop strategic plans using the Analytical Hierarchy Process (AHP). A mixed methods approach with a dominant design was employed. Data were gathered through interviews with two Fast Track students, three master's program heads, and the vice dean of academics. Thirteen Fast Track students completed questionnaires. Additionally, direct observations were conducted, and relevant university regulations were reviewed. Data analysis included interactive analysis, SWOT analysis, and AHP to formulate short-, medium-, and long-term strategies. Findings indicate that internal strengths are the primary drivers for program success. Short-term strategies should prioritize improving students' time management and academic readiness. Medium-term strategies must focus on aligning thesis topics with suitable supervisors to facilitate academic progress. Long-term strategies should involve consistent monitoring and evaluation to ensure students complete the program within the designated five years. Strategic improvement relies on enhancing coordination between undergraduate and master's programs. This alignment is essential not only for academic success but also for supporting students' mental well-being throughout the accelerated track.

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## 1. INTRODUCTION

Education plays a vital role in improving the quality of human resources in a country, enabling individuals to think critically and ideally to compete in today's global era (Sanga & Wangdra, 2023; Natalia & Muhtarom, 2024; Kusnandar, 2009). Despite this, Indonesia faces challenges with relatively low percentages of higher education graduates, particularly at the master's (S2) and doctoral (S3) levels. For example, only 4.39% of Indonesians hold a bachelor's degree, 0.31% hold a master's, and 0.02%

hold a doctorate, far behind neighboring countries such as Malaysia and Vietnam, and well below developed countries where S2 and S3 graduates can reach nearly 9.8% (Steph Subanidja, 2024 ; Kemendagri, 2022). This gap signals a national need to accelerate higher education attainment.

In response to the need for a more efficient education system, the Indonesian government introduced the Fast Track Program—an accelerated academic pathway that allows students to complete both their bachelor's and master's degrees within five years, significantly reducing the typical time required and increasing the number of master's graduates (Zumardi Rahman, 2023; Oktiviana & Rossidy, 2024; Sulaiman, Rumini, & Widodo, 2021). The primary goal of this initiative is to enhance Indonesia's global competitiveness by producing younger, highly qualified graduates ready to face national and international challenges.

At Universitas Brawijaya, participation in the Fast Track Program has shown fluctuating trends across faculties over the academic years 2020/2021 to 2022/2023. In 2020/2021, the program saw a total of 217 students enrolled, which decreased to 171 in 2021/2022 before rising again to 234 in 2022/2023. The Faculty of Animal Husbandry (FAPET) consistently had the highest number of participants, with 47 in 2020/2021, 30 in 2021/2022, and 34 in 2022/2023. The Faculty of Agriculture (FP) also recorded high participation rates, maintaining figures close to 30 students each year.

Meanwhile, other faculties demonstrated more varied engagement. The Faculty of Law (FH) experienced significant growth, increasing from 19 students in 2020/2021 to 37 in 2022/2023. A similar upward trend was seen in the Faculty of Social and Political Sciences (FISIP), which more than doubled its participation from 12 in 2020/2021 to 26 in 2022/2023. Conversely, some faculties saw a decline or inconsistent numbers. For instance, the Faculty of Economics and Business (FEB) reported a drop to zero participants by 2022/2023, despite having 16 and 18 students in the two preceding years. The Faculty of Agricultural Technology (FTP) and the Faculty of Fisheries and Marine Sciences (FPIK) also showed declining participation, with no participants recorded in the final year.

Interestingly, the Faculty of Computer Science (FILKOM) saw a sharp increase in participation in 2022/2023, jumping from just 3 in the previous year to 24. Similarly, the Faculty of Engineering (FT) experienced significant growth, from only 4 participants in 2020/2021 to 30 in 2022/2023. Overall, the Fast Track Program has shown promising results, although participation levels differ significantly across faculties, reflecting varying degrees of adaptation and student interest.

Universitas Brawijaya (UB) is recognized as one of the leading public universities in Indonesia, consistently ranking among the top institutions with the highest number of new student admissions nationwide. With a consistently large student population each year, UB holds significant potential to produce high-quality graduates who can pursue postgraduate studies more rapidly through the fast track program. This program serves as a strategic initiative to cultivate younger master's degree holders who are competitive both nationally and internationally. However, participation in the fast track program across faculties at UB has varied considerably. Data from the 2020/2021 to 2022/2023 academic years indicate that the Faculty of Administrative Sciences (FIA) recorded relatively low and inconsistent numbers of student participation compared to other faculties such as the Faculty of Animal Husbandry (FAPET), the Faculty of Agriculture (FP), and the Faculty of Law (FH). During this period, FIA only enrolled 19, 12, and 16 students, respectively. Therefore, the Faculty of Administrative Sciences was selected as the focus of this study to examine the implementation of the fast track program in greater depth and to formulate strategies for its more effective and sustainable development.

The current gaps include academic scheduling conflicts, heavy workloads from managing both undergraduate and graduate courses simultaneously, double tuition fees (UKT), and limited support and information (Sulaiman et al., 2021; Yulinawati, Hartati, & Sawitri, 2020). FIA also faces challenges in managing student dropout flows and lacks clear sanctions or follow-up mechanisms for fast track students who fail. Strategy is important in implementing programs to develop higher education institutions, as strategy guides actions to achieve goals (Jauch & William F. Glueck, 1988; Abin, 2017 ; Faujiah, Syaifudin, & Andriani, 2023). The success of a program depends on maintaining strengths and support from stakeholders (Wati & Trihantoyo, 2020; Aisyah, Aulia, A'yuni, & Mu'alimin, 2024). This

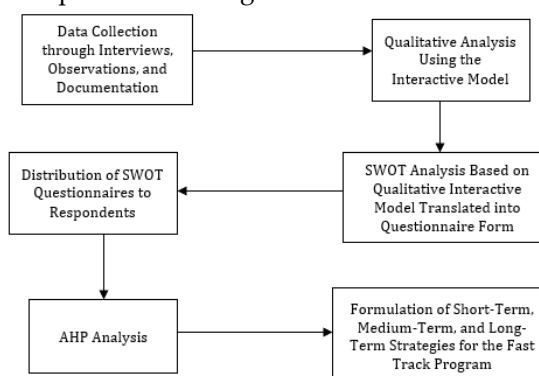
study uses SWOT analysis to examine strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, and threats, followed by the Analytical Hierarchy Process (AHP) to prioritize strategies (Saaty, 1993 ; Rizki et al., 2021). Unlike previous studies that only discuss obstacles or general strategies, this study offers a more systematic and measurable approach through AHP to develop short-, medium-, and long-term strategies for fast track implementation (Sugiyono, 2016 ; Rangkuti, 2016 ; Saaty, 1993).

This study aims to develop strategic recommendations for improving the implementation of the fast track program at the Faculty of Administrative Sciences (FIA), Universitas Brawijaya (UB), using a SWOT-AHP approach to ensure its optimal and sustainable execution. Specifically, the research seeks to answer the question: *What are the appropriate short-, medium-, and long-term strategies that can be implemented to strengthen the fast track program at FIA UB?* By systematically analyzing internal and external factors and prioritizing strategic actions, this research intends to provide evidence-based guidance for institutional decision-making and contribute to enhancing the quality and competitiveness of postgraduate education in Indonesia.

This study holds significant value for both policy and practice in higher education institutions, particularly in the context of academic acceleration programs like fast track. By offering a systematic and prioritized set of strategies—short-, medium-, and long-term—based on SWOT and AHP analysis, the findings can serve as a decision-making framework for faculty and university policymakers. Furthermore, the study contributes to broader educational reform by promoting pathways for younger graduates to obtain master's degrees more efficiently, thereby enhancing the nation's competitiveness through the development of a more qualified and globally competitive workforce.

## 2. METHODS

This study employs a mixed-methods design combining qualitative and quantitative approaches, with qualitative data as the dominant method. (Creswell, 2019 ; Mactavish, B, Schleien, & J, 2000). Data collection involved interviews with 2 fast track students, 3 heads of the master's program, and 1 vice dean of academic affairs at the Faculty of Administrative Sciences. Additionally, a SWOT questionnaire was distributed to 13 fast track students to gather quantitative data. The instruments used include an interview protocol for qualitative data, a structured SWOT survey with a Likert scale, and an Analytical Hierarchy Process (AHP) matrix to prioritize strategies.



**Figure 1.** Research Flow

Based on the research flow diagram, data were collected through interviews with 2 fast track students, 3 program heads, and 1 vice dean, as well as through observation and documentation (Miles et al., 2014). After getting the data, the qualitative data were analyzed by systematically organizing and condensing the information by interactive model. After analyzing the data using the interactive model, key points were identified and formulated into SWOT elements are strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, and threats. These SWOT points were then compiled into a questionnaire and distributed to 13 fast track students of the Faculty of Administrative Sciences (FIA) for completion (Rangkuti, 2016). The results were further analyzed using the Analytical Hierarchy Process (AHP)

method to prioritize short-, medium-, and long-term strategies (Saaty, 1993). This process ensures a structured analysis to support effective decision-making for the program.

### 3. FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

#### 3.1 *Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities, and Threats of the Fast Track Program*

**Table 1.** SWOT

No	Strengths
1	Only 5 years to get 2 degrees
2	50% UKT cut in the first and second semesters of the master's degree.
3	Present the thesis research plan during interview
4	Deeper learning for students to think critically
5	Increased career opportunities in the future
No	Weakness
1	Information on the fast track program is still limited
2	Some lecturers still do not understand the fast track program
3	Working on the thesis at the same time as master's level classes
4	The difference between an undergraduate thesis supervisor and a master's thesis supervisor
5	Limited time for non-academic experience
No	Opportunity
1	Inviting practitioners into the lecture process
2	Periodic monitoring by lecturer
3	Equality of undergraduate thesis supervisor and master's thesis supervisor
4	Graduating master's degree at a fairly young age
5	Possibility of collaboration with lecturers and researchers
No	Threats
1	Heavy academic load for lectures along with the thesis
2	No clear sanctions when this fast track program fails
3	Students do not convey to the supervisor that they are participating in the fast track program
4	Differences in undergraduate thesis supervisor and master's thesis supervisor that cause discussions from the beginning again
5	Academic Adjustment Difficulties

#### 3.2 *Internal Factor Analysis Summary (IFAS) dan External Factor Analysis Summary (EFAS)*

The IFAS (Internal Factor Analysis Summary) matrix is a matrix that outlines a list of internal factors that influence the performance of an organization or company. Internal factors consist of strengths and weaknesses. The EFAS (External Factor Analysis Summary) matrix is a matrix that outlines a list of external factors that influence the performance of an organization or company. External factors consist of opportunities and threats (Riyanto, 2022).

**Table 2.** IFAS and EFAS

No	Strengths	A	B	C	D	E	Weight	Rating	Score
1	Only 5 years to get 2 degrees (A)	1	0.91	1.1	1.17	1.13	0.12	8	0.96
2	50% UKT cut in the first and second semester of the master's degree. (B)	1.1	1	1.11	1.19	1.15	0.12	8	0.96
3	Present thesis research plan during interview (C)	0.91	0.9	1	1.07	1.03	0.1	7	0.7
4	Deeper learning for students to think critically (D)	0.84	0.83	0.92	1	0.95	0.09	6	0.54
5	Increased career opportunities in the future (E)	0.88	0.87	0.96	1.05	1	0.1	7	0.7
Total		4.73	4.51	5.09	5.48	5.26		36	3.86
No	Weakness	A	B	C	D	E	Weight	Rating	Score
1	Information on the fast track program is still limited (A)	1	1.15	1.19	1.33	1.19	0.15	7	1.05
2	Some lecturers still do not understand the fast track program (B)	0.87	1	1.04	1.16	1.04	0.09	6	0.54
3	Working on the thesis at the same time as master's level classes (C)	0.83	0.95	1	1.11	1	0.08	5	0.4
4	The difference between an undergraduate thesis supervisor and a master's thesis supervisor (D)	0.74	0.85	0.89	1	0.89	0.07	5	0.35
5	Limited time for non-academic experience (E)	0.83	0.95	1	1.11	1	0.08	5	0.4
Total		4.27	4.9	5.12	5.71	5.12	1	28	2.74
No	Opportunity	A	B	C	D	E	Weight	Rating	Score
1	Inviting practitioners into the lecture process (A)	1	1.02	0.97	0.97	1	0.11	7	0.77
2	Periodic monitoring by lecturer (B)	0.98	1	0.96	0.96	0.98	0.15	8	1.2
3	Equality of undergraduate thesis supervisor and master's thesis supervisor (C)	1.02	1.03	1	1	1.02	0.11	8	0.88
4	Graduating master's degree at a fairly young age (D)	1.02	1.03	1	1	1.02	0.11	7	0.77
5	Possibility of collaboration with lecturers and researchers (E)	1	1.01	0.97	0.97	1	0.11	7	0.77
Total		5.02	5.09	4.9	4.9	5.02		37	4.39
No	Ancaman (Threats)	A	B	C	D	E	Weight	Rating	Score

1	Heavy academic load for lectures along with the thesis (A)	1	1.03	0.91	0.84	1.26	0.08	5	0.4
2	No clear sanctions when this fast track program fails (B)	0.97	1	0.88	0.82	1.23	0.08	5	0.4
3	Students do not convey to the supervisor that they are participating in the fast track program (C)	1.09	1.12	1	0.92	1.38	0.09	6	0.54
4	Differences in undergraduate thesis supervisor and master's thesis supervisor that cause discussions from the beginning again (D)	1.18	1.21	1.08	1	1.5	0.1	6	0.6
5	Academic Adjustment Difficulties (E)	0.78	0.81	0.72	0.66	1	0.06	4	0.24
Total		5.02	5.17	4.59	4.24	6.37	1	26	2.18

Information :



: Low Rating

Low Rating refers to an assessment that indicates a low level of performance or quality in a specific aspect of fast track program. This rating reflects a clear and urgent weakness that must be addressed promptly to prevent further negative impacts on the overall program or organization.



: High Weight

High Weight refers to the degree of importance or significant influence an aspect has on the overall success of a fast track program. Aspects with high weight contribute greatly to achieving strategic goals, meaning that failure in these areas can have serious consequences for the expected outcomes.



: Strategic

Strategic refers to a condition where an aspect has a combination of rating and weight that reinforces each other, making it a key factor that must be prioritized. A strategic aspect is critical and directly affects the direction, effectiveness, and sustainability of the program in the long term.

3.3 Determining Coordinate Points

**Table 3.** Strategic Positioning of the FIA Fast Track Program Based on SWOT Coordinates

Strenght	3.86
Weakness	2.74
Opportunity	4.39
Threats	2.18
X coordinate	6.6
Y coordinate	2.18
Result	Sel 7, Concentric Diversification

Based on strategic position analysis by (Mc Kinsey Company, 2011 ; Riyanto, 2022), this study, in the coordinates of cell 7, namely authentic diversification, the conditions where the organization has a low-strong situation. Where the opportunities coming from the external environment are so low for the organization but the organization internally has very strong resources. With its position in cell 7, the FIA fast track program is in a strategic position to expand in a broader and more innovative direction, even though external opportunities remain limited. The conglomerate diversification approach serves as a strategic solution: leveraging strong internal resources to create new opportunities that may not naturally arise from the external environment.

### 3.4 Strategic Factors Analysis Summary (SFAS)

The SFAS matrix is an advanced strategic analysis tool that combines the results of the IFAS and EFAS matrices into a single strategic summary table.

**Table 4.** SFAS

No	Strategic Factors Analysis Summary (SFAS)	Weight	Rating	Score
1	Only 5 years to get 2 degrees	0.2	8	1.6
2	50% UKT cut in the first and second semester of the master's level	0.11	8	0.88
3	Increased career opportunities in the future	0.1	7	0.7
4	Information on the fast track program is still limited	0.1	7	0.7
5	Some lecturers still do not understand the fast track program	0.07	6	0.42
6	Periodic monitoring by lecturer	0.12	7	0.84
7	Equality of undergraduate thesis supervisor and master's thesis supervisor	0.11	8	0.88
8	Heavy academic load for lectures along with the thesis	0.07	5	0.35
9	No clear sanctions when this fast track program fails	0.07	5	0.35
10	Academic Adjustment Difficulties	0.05	4	0.2
Total		1	65	6.92

### 3.5 "Time Frame" in SFAS

The time frame in the SFAS matrix defines the strategic planning period, ensuring that internal and external factors are evaluated and prioritized based on their relevance to organizational goals within a specific duration.

$$\text{Highest Value} - \text{Lowest Value} = 1.6 - 0.2 = 1.4$$

$$\text{Difference Result} \div 3 = 1.4 \div 3 = 0.4666$$

$$\text{Lowest Value} + \text{Result} = 0.2 + 0.4666 = 0.6666667 \text{ (Short-Term Result)}$$

$$\text{Highest Value} - \text{Result} = 1.6 - 0.4666 = 1.133333333 \text{ (Long-Term Result)}$$

**Table 5.** Short-Term Strategy ; Medium-Term Strategy ; Long-Term Strategy

Short-Term Strategy	0.26 – 0.4666
Medium-Term Strategy	0.4666 – 1.133
Long-Term Strategy	>1.133

**Table 8.** AHP Result

No	Strategic Factors Analysis Summary (SFAS)	Strategi
1	Only 5 years to get 2 degrees	Long Term Strategy
2	50% UKT cut in the first and second semester of the master's level	Medium Term Strategy
3	Increased career opportunities in the future	Medium Term Strategy
4	Information on the fast track program is still limited	Medium Term Strategy

5	Some lecturers still do not understand the fast track program	Short Term Strategy
6	Periodic monitoring by lecturer	Medium Term Strategy
7	Equality of undergraduate thesis supervisor and master's thesis supervisor	Medium Term Strategy
8	Heavy academic load for lectures along with the thesis	Short Term Strategy
9	No clear sanctions when this fast track program fails	Short Term Strategy
10	Academic Adjustment Difficulties	Short Term Strategy

Based on the AHP (Analytical Hierarchy Process) analysis that has been conducted, the most important strategies that must be implemented by the Faculty of Administrative Sciences (FIA) as the program organizer and by the students as participants of the fast track program are as follows :

### 3.5.1 Short-term Strategy

#### 1. Priority Scale and Study Balance for Fast Track Students

The need for fast track students to manage their time and priorities effectively is not merely a logistical requirement but a critical success factor for the program. The program's condensed timeline increases academic intensity, making it essential that students develop resilience, emotional regulation, and self-confidence. Failure to do so can lead to academic burnout or even program dropout (Yulinawati et al., 2020 ; Qory'ah & Abidin, 2024). As such, universities must integrate mental health support, time management training, and peer mentoring systems to mitigate these risks. Maintaining academic balance and mental well-being is essential for the success of the fast track program, which involves managing emotions and strengthening self-confidence (Ahyani et al., 2024 ; Setyowibowo et al., 2024).

Based on the Self-Regulated Learning Theory (Zimmerman, 2000), successful learners are those who are able to actively manage their behavior, motivation, and cognitive processes in order to achieve academic goals. In the context of the Fast Track program, students are required to take charge of managing a compressed academic workload through adaptive metacognitive and emotional strategies. A study by Kosovo University shows that students experiencing academic stress and anxiety often face barriers in seeking psychological support, which can be addressed through enhanced social support and on-campus mental health services (Duraku et al., 2023). Operationally, the fast track program needs early time management support, accessible mental health services, and ongoing peer mentoring. Students must develop self-regulation skills, while institutions ensure cross-unit collaboration and reduce barriers to psychological support.

#### 2. Sanctions and Consequences for Fast Track Students

Based on research findings indicating that FIA has no written sanctions for students who fail the program, students who do not succeed in the fast track program should be transferred to regular status according to the level they have not yet completed (UII, 2024 ; Universitas Ahmad Dahlan, 2021) Alternatively, their master's level coursework may be recognized within a maximum period of one year (LP2AI Unismuh, 2023). Furthermore, this approach can also be examined through the lens of Constructive Alignment Theory (March & J P Olsen, 1976), which emphasizes the need for consistency between learning objectives, learning activities, and assessment. In the case of the Fast Track program, the absence of a clear evaluation and assessment mechanism for failure weakens the principle of alignment. This can lead to a decline in program quality and student motivation due to the lack of clear academic consequences. In the context of strategic planning in higher education, the implementation of academic sanctions functions as a tool to measure performance and take corrective actions when

necessary, as explained by (Kholis, 2014). Operationally, sanction strategies from other institutions can be used to develop clear policies in the fast track program that define consequences for academic failure. This involves setting measurable performance criteria, establishing procedures for transferring students to regular status or recognizing completed coursework within a set timeframe, and implementing consistent evaluation and follow-up processes. These steps help ensure students remain accountable, maintain motivation, and support the program's overall academic goals and sustainability.

### 3. Academic Adjustment Difficulties

Fast track program participants bear a heavier academic load (Rahman, 2023 ; Hariyadi et al., 2022). Demands high levels of adaptation both academically and psychosocially. Elevated academic stress impacts not only learning performance but also students' mental health and overall well-being. In this context, adapting between two levels of study simultaneously is not merely a technical skill, but a psychological transition process that requires personal resilience and environmental support (Barusi, 2021 ; Erindana et al., 2021). In addition to learning how to adapt, fast track students also need social support from those around them, such as friends, family, and communities (Oktarina & Munir, 2020 ; Li et al., 2020).

This phenomenon can be analyzed using the Theory of Academic Stress (Wilks, 2008) which explains that excessive academic pressure without adequate support and coping mechanisms poses a risk to students' quality of life and increases the likelihood of anxiety, depression, and burnout. Meanwhile, the need for social support can be examined through the Social Support (House, 1981), which emphasizes that emotional, informational, and instrumental support from family, friends, and communities plays a protective role against stress and contributes to academic success. Menurut teori manajemen strategi pendidikan tinggi (Kholis, 2014). Each strategy requires ongoing academic advising, mental health support, and social engagement programs throughout the fast track timeline. This involves trained staff, counseling resources, and collaboration between faculty, student services, and families. Regular monitoring is essential for timely interventions, requiring data systems and dedicated personnel. Overall, effective implementation depends on coordinated institutional roles, adequate resources, and continuous strategic planning.

#### 3.5.2 Medium-Term Strategy

##### 1. Tuition Fee Reduction (UKT)

The fast track program offers a 50% tuition fee reduction (UKT) for the first and second semesters of the master's level. This helps fast track students compared to regular master's students and serves as an attractive feature to encourage students to join the program (Peraturan Rektor Universitas Brawijaya Nomor 45 Tahun 2023 Tentang Tarif Layanan Program Pascasarjana, 2023 ; Sulaiman et al., 2021 ; Ekowati et al., 2021).

From a higher education theory perspective, this policy aligns with Human Capital Theory (Becker, 1975), which emphasizes education as an investment that increases an individual's economic value and productivity. By offering tuition reductions, institutions lower barriers for students to accelerate their skill and knowledge acquisition efficiently. In addition, according to market orientation concepts in higher education as explored by (Dwyer, 2022), universities must understand and respond to the diverse needs and preferences of their student "consumers" to maintain relevance and competitiveness. Tuition fee reductions act as a strategic market-oriented response to financial barriers faced by prospective students, positioning the fast track program as an attractive and economically accessible option. Strategically, financial incentives serve as a differentiation tool that strengthens program appeal and supports institutional goals to increase timely graduation rates. However, it is essential that these incentives do not undermine academic quality or the provision of adequate academic support, ensuring the program's long-term success.

## 2. Academic and Professional Development of Fast Track Students to Support Future Careers

The acceleration program provides significant benefits in various aspects of students' lives, such as shortening graduation time, learning efficiency, time flexibility, and cost-effectiveness (Hertzog & Chung, 2015; Beal University, 2024). With a minimum GPA requirement as an entry condition for the fast track program (UB, 2023), it is expected that fast track students can maintain GPA stability in the future. The fast track program, as an acceleration initiative, aims to support the career paths of its participants, including meeting the expectations of parents by preparing for the future (Leong et al., 2022; Rachman et al., 2025). From a theoretical perspective, the fast track program can be analyzed using Tinto's Model of Student Retention, which emphasizes academic integration and student engagement as key factors in persistence and success (Tinto, 1993). By setting a GPA threshold, the institution promotes academic preparedness, increasing the likelihood of successful adaptation to the accelerated curriculum and thereby reducing dropout risk.

Strategic education management plays a vital role in helping institutions develop systematic plans that support the success of Fast Track programs, including student career development (Jusniati et al., 2022). By establishing clear academic standards and providing adequate support, these strategies empower students to achieve academic success while preparing them for the professional world. Thus, strategic management is essential in ensuring both the sustainability of the program and the long-term career success of Fast Track students.

The Fast Track program sets specific GPA requirements and offers continuous academic support to help students complete their studies within an accelerated timeframe, thereby reducing the risk of dropouts. Institutions are responsible for aligning the curriculum, academic advising, and resource distribution with both academic and career objectives. Continuous monitoring and evaluation further reinforce the program's effectiveness, ensuring student success and long-term viability.

## 3. Socialization of the Fast Track Program by the Faculty to Students

Socializing the fast track program to all students is important to provide a clear overview for potential participants. Additionally, parents should also be involved in this socialization (Mahdiyyah, 2022 ; Universitas Trisakti, 2021). Moreover, socialization is essential to introduce the program to individuals, helping them understand the program and procedures, ensuring positive involvement (Atalay et al., 2022 ; Terziev & Vasileva, 2022). This approach aligns with higher education strategic management strategies that emphasize the importance of effective communication and stakeholder involvement in the planning and implementation of academic programs.

As stated by (Susanto, 2020) a SWOT analysis in higher education strategic management identifies parental involvement as an internal factor that can strengthen the institution's position in facing external challenges. Furthermore, (Direktorat Jenderal Pendidikan Tinggi, 2021) highlights the importance of improving access and quality in higher education through strategies that involve various stakeholders, including students' families. The document states that "increasing community participation in higher education" is one of the strategic goals that can be achieved through the socialization of flagship programs such as the Fast Track. Socializing the Fast Track program to students and parents improves understanding and involvement, boosting program success. Based on these studies, thorough socialization to students and parents is essential to enhance understanding and engagement. This approach strengthens partnerships and supports program success, making it a key higher education management strategy (Cuellar & Taryn Ozuna Allen, 2024). Socializing the Fast Track program requires clear timelines, informational materials, and coordination between faculty and university leadership. Involving students and parents early enhances understanding, engagement, and program success, aligning with strategic goals in higher education management.

#### 4. Socialization of the Fast Track Program to Lecturers

In addition to socializing the program to students, socialization should also be carried out with thesis advisors or lecturers to inform them of the targets and deadlines for fast track students (FISIP Unsri, 2024; Universitas Indonesia Membangun, 2022). This approach aligns with strategic stakeholder engagement theories in higher education management, which emphasize the importance of effective communication and active participation of all stakeholders in program implementation (Bryson, 2021). Communication and stakeholder participation are critical to the successful management of educational programs, as they foster mutual understanding, clarify roles and responsibilities, and enhance accountability. By ensuring that lecturers and supervisors are well-informed and engaged, institutions can better coordinate efforts to meet program goals and support students in adhering to fast track timelines, thus improving academic outcomes and institutional reputation. (Livala et al., 2023).

Role of stakeholder participation in successful program management. These findings underscore the necessity of involving lecturers in program socialization to foster commitment and achieve educational objectives (Bryson, 2021). Operationally, socializing the Fast Track program to lecturers involves providing clear guidelines, timelines, and academic expectations through internal communication channels such as emails, meetings, or academic portals. It requires coordination from faculty leadership to ensure all advisors are informed and aligned with program objectives. Lecturer involvement ensures consistent supervision, timely progress, and supports students in meeting fast track milestones.

#### 5. Regular Monitoring and Communication between Undergraduate and Master's Levels

At the higher education level, graduation is the primary focus of monitoring that needs to be conducted. Monitoring is carried out through programs within the institution (Mandleni, 2023 ; Hosseini et al., 2022). The fast track program in higher education is monitored by the head of the master's program, who also communicates with the head of the undergraduate program (Fakultas Pertanian, 2025; Yani, 2022). Communication between the parties is necessary to achieve the institution's goals (Brinia et al., 2022). This initiative reflects the strategic emphasis in higher education management on cross-functional coordination and stakeholder engagement. According to Freeman et al. (2010), effective strategic planning in universities depends heavily on inclusive communication and collaboration among all academic and administrative units to align institutional objectives and foster shared commitment. In the context of fast track programs, integrating academic supervisors into the program's operational framework is essential to ensure smooth implementation and timely student success.

Furthermore, (Direktorat Jenderal Pendidikan Tinggi., 2021) emphasizes strengthening academic quality and accountability through internal collaboration. One of its key strategies includes improving governance and academic service delivery by encouraging synergy among institutional actors—such as faculty members and program managers—to achieve national education targets. By aligning supervisory practices with fast track program timelines, universities enhance both academic efficiency and student success, supporting broader strategic outcomes such as timely graduation, institutional reputation, and improved resource management. A study by (Aburizaizah, 2022) reveals that the implementation of internal control positively moderates the relationship between internal quality assurance and institutional quality, indicating that harmonizing these internal resources can lead to improved educational outcomes. Operationally, this strategy requires coordination between undergraduate and graduate program heads, regular progress monitoring, and aligned academic timelines. Faculty and managers track student milestones, ensuring timely support and supervision. This promotes efficient implementation, timely graduation, and improved institutional performance.

## 6. Synchronization of Thesis and Dissertation Supervisors to Support Topic Consistency

The commitment of thesis and dissertation supervisors to guide students on their chosen topics, along with the relationship established through individual interaction, is key to the effectiveness of students in completing their final projects (Anderson et al., 2006 ; Grohnert et al., 2024). To facilitate fast track students in completing their studies, the topic chosen for both the thesis and dissertation should align, with the same supervisor or at least within the same field (Fakultas Geografi UGM, 2018 ; Fakultas Farmasi UII, 2025). This is supported by (Heilporn et al., 2024) , who emphasize that student engagement in higher education is deeply influenced by the quality of instructor student interaction. Supervisors who are actively involved and maintain consistent academic guidance across program levels significantly enhance student focus and commitment. Their involvement fosters cognitive, emotional, and behavioral engagement, which is essential in fast track contexts where students face academic pressure and complex tasks in a shorter time frame.

Moreover, (Ismail et al., 2020) highlight how structured and adaptive academic supervision models especially when supported by digital tools can enhance the effectiveness and reach of supervision. In the fast track program, which demands acceleration and efficiency, such an approach ensures that supervision is not only consistent but also responsive and personalized. (Harwood & Petric, 2020). Operationally, fast track supervision requires aligning thesis and dissertation topics with the same or related supervisors to maintain focus and continuity. Supervisors must provide consistent, personalized guidance to support students through the accelerated timeline. Using structured, flexible supervision methods aided by digital tools improves communication and adapts support to student needs. This strategy involves coordinated scheduling, supervisor training, and investing in digital platforms to ensure timely completion and student success.

### 3.5.3 Long-Term Strategy

#### 1. Monitoring and Time Limits for Degree Completion in the Fast Track Program

Program monitoring is necessary to ensure that participants meet the standards set by educational institutions (Isti'anah & Rif, 2023; Aprilianti et al., 2023). Considering that the fast track program is time-bound—requiring students to obtain two degrees within five years (Sulaiman et al., 2021; LP2AI Unismuh, 2023), regular monitoring and evaluation are essential to ensure that fast track students graduate on time from both the undergraduate and master's levels; Unjani, 2022). This monitoring serves as a long-term strategy, as it is carried out throughout the program and requires step-by-step implementation. It also has a significant impact on the institution itself, namely the higher education provider (Setiyati et al., 2024 ; Kautsar & Julaiha, 2023).

Based on the Stakeholder Theory (Freeman et al, 2010) in Higher Education, program monitoring and evaluation should actively involve various stakeholders, such as students, lecturers, and administration, so that program management is responsive to the needs and expectations of all parties. This approach helps maintain the program's relevance and effectiveness while strengthening institutional collaboration, which is key to the success of the Fast Track program. In the strategic management stages of education, evaluation strategy involves monitoring the outcomes of both strategy formulation and implementation, measuring organizational performance, and taking corrective actions if needed (Kholis, 2014). In the fast track program, monitoring serves as an overall evaluation to identify challenges faced by various stakeholders. When compared to monitoring in other programs, monitoring serves as a strategic tool to identify the strengths and weaknesses of a program, ensuring that each initiative aligns specifically with its intended needs. (Saprudin, 2018). Operationally, monitoring in the fast track program must be continuous, structured, and responsive, given its time-bound nature, requiring students to complete two degrees within five years. Higher education institutions are key actors, providing academic supervision, administrative support, and digital tracking systems. Involved resources include lecturers, academic advisors, program coordinators, and

evaluation tools. Active participation from stakeholders—students, faculty, and administrators—is essential to ensure the program stays relevant and aligned with institutional goals. Monitoring helps identify strengths, address challenges early, and ensure the fast track program’s success through timely adjustments.

#### 4. CONCLUSION

This research highlights the importance of the fast track program as a solution for academic acceleration for outstanding students, offering benefits such as completing two degrees in five years and improving future career opportunities. However, challenges remain, including heavy academic loads, limited information, and inconsistent understanding from some lecturers. A comprehensive strategy involving tuition fee reductions, regular monitoring, alignment of supervisors, and clear sanctions is needed to ensure the program runs optimally and sustainably. These findings have important implications for educational reform by promoting younger master’s graduates who can compete nationally and internationally. The study is limited to one faculty, so future research should explore not only the input and process but also the outcomes and long-term impacts of the fast track program to better understand its effectiveness in producing high-quality human resources.

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