Center for Junior Scholars

Round table discussion on good supervision culture, 19.04.2024
Good supervision culture (Gute Betreuung)
project funded by the Berlin University Alliance

Goals:

• Foster and establish a **discussion on the supervision** process at **all BUA institutions**.

• **Doctoral candidates** and the **supervisors** will have the opportunity to **discuss** the topic, both **within** each target group and also **across** the groups. → different formats at all BUA institutions throughout 2024.

• Basis for discussions: **empirical data** from different surveys that were/ are carried out in all BUA universities, targeting both PhD-candidates and the supervisors.

• **Today**: first discussion round at TU Berlin on the basis of survey results from PhD-candidates from TU Berlin.
Why good supervision matters?

➢ Germany has one of the highest number of the doctoral graduates.

➢ Doctoral supervision might impact a future generation of scientist (or professionals) and is therefore extremely important – this is a big responsibility!

➢ Goal for today: to start a discussion on improving the quality of the doctoral supervision in an open-minded atmosphere.
Why good supervision matters?

Both *locally* (Berlin) and *internationally*, several measures are taken to improve the conditions for the PhD students:

**Berliner Hochschulgesetz - BerlHG**

BerlHG, § 35, Absatz 5

(written) **Doctoral agreement between PhD student and supervisor**

TUB includes this in the official doctoral regulations

BerlHG, § 110, Absatz 4, ab Satz 3

Scientific staff in *qualification positions* („Qualifikationsstelle“) should have at least 50% (25% in other positions) time available for further education (e.g. PhD)
Why good supervision matters?

The crucial role of supervision and assessment: in respect of individual doctoral candidates, arrangements for supervision and assessment should be based on a transparent contractual framework of shared responsibilities between doctoral candidates, supervisors and the institution (and where appropriate including other partners).

Promoting human resource development, creating workload models for supervisors and evaluating their dedicated time are possible ways to ensure quality of the supervision.
Empirical Data I: Nacaps-Study

- The National Academics Panel Study - is a longitudinal study of doctoral candidates and doctorate holders in Germany.

- Survey at regular intervals on the study conditions for their doctorates, career aims and professional development, as well as on their general life situation.

- First and second year of the doctorate.

- Questions were asked between 27.02.2023 – 20.04.2023.

- 15,760 participants from over 60 HEIs (response rate: 36.6%).

All BUA institutions are involved in nacaps.
• TU Berlin took part in the nacaps-study in 2023 for the first time.
• All persons who registered their intention to do a doctorate at the faculty.
• Not only TU employees (35.5%), but also people employed at other universities/ research institutes (33%) or with other ways of financing (31.5%).
• Missing is the scientific staff, who have not declared their intention to do a doctorate but are doing so anyway (in the almost parallel WM-Study, 43% stated this).
• 416 participants (response rate – 45.6%)
• 394 persons are still doing doctorate – basis for the figures today
Empirical Data II: „WM-Studie 2022“

- Initiative of TU Berlin
- Since 2002, every 5 years
- This time conducted by Kooperationsstelle Wissenschaft und Arbeitswelt @ ZEWK (Cooperation center for science and the world of work)
- Targeted group: Scientific staff, including people that are not (anymore) doing a PhD or are Post-Docs
- Response Rate: 621 of 2.503 (17.11.22) → 25%
- N for today: 361 who self-reported to do a PhD/doctorate
- Study report can be downloaded [here](#).

We have looked at both studies and what the results say about supervision culture at TU Berlin. We will present similarities and differences in the findings.
Satisfaction with the main supervisor

We are aware how subjective this topic is.

N = 394

WM Studie 2022
How do the doctoral conditions affect the satisfaction?

People doing individual PhD are less satisfied compared to people in structured programs.

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How do the doctoral conditions affect the satisfaction?

- People who are employed at the TU are less satisfied than people with other forms of funding.
- No determination, whether people have a fulltime contract or not.
- Other financing compromises people with scholarships, but also working in other sectors than universities/ RI.

NACAPS, N= 394

- gar nicht zufrieden
- 2
- 3
- 4
- sehr zufrieden
How do other factors of the supervisory relationship affect the satisfaction?

- People with more than one supervisor are more satisfied
- People who see their supervisor more than once a semester or less, are more satisfied
- Whether there was a doctoral agreement (Promotionvereinbarung) or not, does not have a significant impact in both studies
Conclusion

• We see the differences in satisfaction with supervision between different groups (structured programmes vs. individual PhD; type of financing)

• We also see differences according to the number of supervisors and the frequency of meetings

• Still, some questions remain:
  • Is satisfaction a good measure for „good supervision“?
  • Which other factors play a role?

What is your opinion?
Open questions.

Thank you for your attention.