

(Research Article)

Self-Regulated Learning and Time Discipline in Increasing Student Thesis Completion Productivity

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Abstract: Low student thesis completion productivity is a challenge in higher education, particularly at UIN Palangka Raya. Thesis writing requires self-regulation skills and time discipline to enable students to complete their final assignments effectively and on time. This study aims to analyze the role of self-regulated learning and time discipline in improving the thesis completion productivity of final-year students. The study used a qualitative approach with a case study design of five final-year students who were in the process of completing or had completed their theses. Data collection techniques included in-depth interviews, limited observation, and documentation. The data were then analyzed using the Miles and Huberman interactive model through the stages of data reduction, data presentation, and conclusion drawing. The results indicate that self-regulated learning plays a role in helping students plan goals, control motivation and emotions, and conduct consistent self-evaluation. Time discipline has been proven effective in reducing procrastination through the implementation of daily schedules, prioritization, and distraction management. Therefore, the integration of self-regulated learning and time discipline is an important strategy in increasing the thesis completion productivity of students and supporting sustainable academic success.

Keywords: Higher Education; Self-Regulated Learning; Thesis Productivity; Time Discipline; Time Management.

1. Introduction

Writing a thesis is a crucial phase and one of the main requirements for pursuing undergraduate studies at various universities in Indonesia, including the State Islamic University (UIN) Palangka Raya. The thesis not only demonstrates a student's academic competence but also demonstrates critical thinking skills, research skills, and discipline in managing time and study activities. In reality, completing a thesis often presents a significant challenge for many students due to its lengthy and complex process, requiring a high level of commitment to effective time management and study strategies (Wulandari et al., 2025).

In today's increasingly competitive higher education environment, students' self-management skills are a crucial determinant of academic success, particularly in completing final assignments or theses. This ability is known in educational literature as self-regulated learning (SRL), which refers to students' ability to independently plan, monitor, evaluate, and organize learning strategies in accordance with established academic goals. In other words, SRL involves the use of cognitive strategies, strong motivation, and effective self-control in carrying out the learning process. Students with good SRL tend to be able to set priorities, manage time effectively, and reflect on their learning progress. Various studies have shown that SRL has a positive relationship with learning outcomes and skills in completing complex academic tasks such as theses. For example, there is evidence of a positive relationship between time management and self-regulated learning in students writing theses at Semarang State University, indicating that the ability to manage time is a crucial aspect of SRL in final-year students (Sidiq et al., 2024).

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In addition to SRL, good time management is also a crucial variable in the successful completion of a thesis. Time discipline refers to an individual's ability to plan, set targets, and use time consistently according to the priority of tasks to be completed. Discipline in time management is closely related to students' effectiveness in completing each stage of the thesis work, from literature collection, data processing, draft writing, to final revisions before the defense. Without time discipline, students tend to be distracted by internal factors such as procrastination, lack of motivation, and other external distractions that can hinder their academic productivity. Procrastination itself, namely the tendency to delay completing important tasks, has been proven to be a common problem among students, especially when facing major assignments such as a thesis. This shows that good SRL not only helps students with study strategies but also helps reduce procrastination behavior (Budiani et al., 2023).

The campus context of UIN Palangka Raya is highly relevant to discuss in this regard because the conditions of students at this institution reflect a phenomenon that also occurs in students at various other universities. UIN Palangka Raya students come from diverse social, economic, and cultural backgrounds, so the challenges in completing a thesis are not only academic, but also related to other responsibilities such as part-time work, family, and social activities. In a practical study conducted at UIN Palangka Raya, it was found that students—especially those with dual burdens such as marriage or work—often experience obstacles in completing their final assignments. Case studies show that married students at UIN Palangka Raya are often hampered by time constraints between family and academic responsibilities, making SRL a key strategy to help them stay focused on completing their final assignments despite the limited time they have (Wulandari et al., 2025).

This fact strongly indicates that the combination of SRL and time management is not only theoretically relevant but also crucial in the practical context of the UIN Palangka Raya campus environment. Time management is crucial because students not only need to design effective learning strategies but also be able to schedule all their academic activities within the specific timeframes set by the curriculum structure. This skill includes careful planning, breaking down large assignments into smaller parts, and the ability to consistently carry out academic routines. When these skills go hand in hand with strong SRL, students have a greater chance of completing their thesis on time and with good quality (Wulandari et al., 2025).

From a theoretical perspective, SRL is understood as a dynamic learning process involving the planning (forethought), implementation (performance), and reflection (self-reflection) phases. In the planning phase, students must be able to clearly formulate learning objectives, determine the strategies to be used, and estimate the time required for each stage of the thesis work. The implementation phase requires students to implement the planned strategies, monitor the progress of the assignment, and make corrections if there are deviations from the initial plan. Meanwhile, the reflection phase involves evaluating the results achieved, introspecting on mistakes or successes, and replanning for the next phases. Therefore, SRL becomes a comprehensive framework for understanding how students can maximize control over their own learning process (Mustika Dwi Mulyani, 2023).

Specifically, time discipline in the context of SRL serves as a practical bridge connecting the planning and implementation phases of the learning process. Time discipline helps students maintain consistency in implementing planned learning strategies and using their time, thereby reducing the likelihood of procrastination or wasting time on less productive activities. Without time discipline, students may have a good study plan, but fail to execute it due to their inability to manage and prioritize time effectively. This skill ultimately contributes not only to the effectiveness of their thesis completion but also to the quality of the resulting scientific work (Deasyanti & Armeini, 2023).

The relevance of SRL and time discipline is further strengthened when linked to the demands of the academic and professional world in the 21st century. Students are not only required to master academic content but also to develop life skills such as critical thinking, time management, collaboration, and resilience to academic pressure. SRL provides a foundation for students to become independent, adaptable learners. With various academic challenges, while time discipline is a real means of ensuring that the learning process can be carried out consistently in the long term. Both of them together help students achieve their academic goals, such as completing their thesis on time and with high quality standards (Eva Latipah, 2021).

Furthermore, empirical research shows that integrating SRL and time discipline can mitigate the negative impacts of procrastination. Procrastination is often triggered by a lack of

motivation, the inability to organize large tasks into manageable chunks, and the psychological stress arising from academic stress. In this context, students with good SRL tend to have mechanisms for coping with academic stress, setting realistic goals, and implementing systematic study strategies. When these abilities are supported by time discipline—for example, scheduling daily study sessions or setting internal deadlines for completing each component of a thesis—procrastination can be minimized and academic productivity significantly increased (Kholiza et al., 2025).

Thus, the focus of this article is to explore the role of self-regulated learning and time discipline in the context of increasing the productivity of students' thesis completion, particularly at UIN Palangka Raya. This article reflects on how these two variables are interrelated and mutually reinforcing in contributing to students' ability to complete their final assignments effectively, efficiently, and on time. The integration of the SRL concept with time discipline is not only beneficial for academic purposes but also provides important life skills for students as future professional candidates. This study is expected to make a positive contribution to higher education literature and provide practical recommendations for students, academic advisors, and educational administrators at UIN Palangka Raya to develop more effective learning development programs (Wulandari et al., 2025).

2. Research Method

This study uses a qualitative approach with a descriptive research design. The qualitative approach was chosen because this study aims to deeply understand the phenomenon of self-regulated learning (SRL) and time discipline in increasing the productivity of final-year students' thesis completion, particularly at UIN Palangka Raya. This approach allows researchers to explore the subjective experiences, perceptions, strategies, and internal and external dynamics experienced by students during the thesis process. Through a descriptive approach, this research attempts to describe the empirical reality that occurs in the field systematically, factually, and in depth without manipulating variables (Wulandari et al., 2025).

The research used a case study, focusing on final-year students who were in the process of writing or had completed their theses. Case studies were chosen because they provide an opportunity to explore phenomena contextually in specific, real-life situations, thus producing a comprehensive picture of self-regulated learning practices and time management in an academic context. This research positions students as the primary subjects who directly experience the thesis writing process, ensuring that the data obtained is naturalistic and authentic (Kholiza et al., 2025).

The subjects of this study were five final year students who were currently writing or had completed their theses at UIN Palangka Raya. The subjects were selected using a purposive sampling technique, which is a technique for determining informants based on certain considerations relevant to the research objectives. The informant selection criteria included: (1) active final year students, (2) currently or already in the stage of writing their theses, (3) willing to be research respondents, and (4) having a variety of activity backgrounds such as being active in organizations, working, or having additional responsibilities outside of academics. This variety of characteristics aims to obtain rich and diverse data so that it can represent the dynamics that occur in the thesis writing process (Wulandari et al., 2025).

The data collection techniques used in this study were in-depth interviews, limited observation, and documentation. In-depth interviews were the primary technique because they allowed researchers to gather comprehensive information regarding learning strategies, time management, obstacles, and supporting factors experienced by students. Interviews were conducted in a semi-structured manner using pre-designed question guidelines, while still allowing flexibility for informants to develop answers based on their experiences. Interview questions covered aspects of study planning, strategies for dealing with deadlocks, techniques for overcoming procrastination, daily schedule management, and self-evaluation conducted during the thesis writing process (Latipah, 2021).

In addition to interviews, limited observations were conducted to assess students' study habits, such as their use of daily schedules, task management applications, and preferred learning environments. These observations were non-participatory, meaning the researchers were not directly involved in the respondents' activities but simply recorded behaviors or habits relevant to the research focus. Meanwhile, documentation is used to supplement the data, such as daily schedule notes, to-do lists, or screenshots of time management applications used

by respondents. This documentation helps strengthen the validity of the data obtained through interviews (Budiani et al., 2023).

The primary instrument in this study was the researcher herself (human instrument). In qualitative research, the researcher acts as planner, data collector, analyst, and interpreter. To maintain data quality, the researcher used an interview guide as a supporting instrument to ensure the data collection process remained focused and focused on the research. Furthermore, the researcher used tools such as a voice recorder and field notes to ensure no important information was missed during the interview process (Stefany et al., 2022).

The research procedure begins with the preparation phase, which includes developing a research proposal, determining the focus and problem formulation, and developing interview guidelines. Next, the researcher contacts potential respondents and requests their willingness to participate. After obtaining consent, the researcher schedules interviews at a mutually agreed-upon time. The interviews are conducted in person in a comfortable and conducive location so that respondents can share their experiences openly. Each interview lasts between 30 and 60 minutes, depending on the completeness of the information provided (Deasyanti, 2023).

After the data was collected, the researcher transcribed the interview results. The transcription was performed verbatim to maintain the authenticity of the data. The next stage was data analysis using the interactive analysis technique proposed by Miles and Huberman, which includes three main stages: data reduction, data display, and conclusion drawing/verification. In the data reduction stage, the researcher filtered and selected data relevant to the research focus, such as planning strategies, self-control, self-evaluation, and forms of time discipline applied by students. Irrelevant or repetitive data were simplified to make the analysis more focused (Achmad et al., 2022).

The data presentation stage was carried out by grouping information into specific themes, such as self-regulated learning strategies, time discipline in overcoming procrastination, and factors that support and hinder productivity. This data presentation aimed to make it easier for researchers to see patterns, relationships between concepts, and trends that emerged from the interview results. Next, in the conclusion-drawing stage, researchers interpreted the analyzed data by linking it to self-regulated learning theory and the concept of time discipline in educational literature (Stefany et al., 2022).

To ensure the validity of the data, this study uses source triangulation and method triangulation techniques. Source triangulation is carried out by comparing information from the five respondents to determine the consistency and appropriateness of the answers. Meanwhile, method triangulation was conducted by comparing interview results with observational and documentation data. In addition, the researcher also do member Checking, which involves reconfirming the interview results with the respondent to ensure that the researcher's interpretation aligns with the informant's intent. This step is crucial for increasing the credibility and validity of the research findings (Achmad et al., 2022).

This study also considered ethical aspects of research. Prior to the interviews, the researcher explained the research objectives, benefits, and respondents' right to discontinue participation at any time without consequence. Respondents' identities were kept confidential using codes or initials to avoid direct name disclosure. All data obtained was used solely for academic purposes and was not disseminated outside the research context (Deasyanti, 2023).

Using a descriptive qualitative approach, this research is expected to provide an in-depth understanding of how students implement self-regulated learning and time management in their thesis writing process. This method allows researchers to capture the psychological dynamics, cognitive strategies, and social interactions that influence student productivity. The results of the analysis are expected to provide theoretical contributions to the development of higher education studies, particularly regarding self-regulation and time management, as well as provide practical recommendations for students and universities to improve the effectiveness of their final assignment completion (Stefany et al., 2022).

3. Results and Discussion

Students' Self-Regulated Learning Strategies in Maintaining Consistency in Thesis Work

Based on interviews with five respondents, it was found that self-regulated learning (SRL) strategies play a central role in maintaining consistency in final-year students' thesis work. SRL in this context is reflected in students' ability to plan, control, and evaluate their

learning process independently. In terms of planning, most respondents demonstrated an awareness of the importance of dividing targets into smaller, measurable chunks. The second and fifth respondents, for example, stated that the thesis needed to be broken down into weekly and monthly targets to reduce the burden. This approach demonstrates clear goal-setting skills and an orientation toward long-term progress. The third respondent even implemented a detailed daily schedule from waking up until bedtime, complete with allocated time for specific chapters and breaks. This practice reflects strong self-regulation and discipline developed previously, particularly from their boarding-based education experience, which demands strict time management. On the other hand, the first and fourth respondents employed a more flexible approach, working on their thesis whenever they had free time or targeting guidance at least once a week. While less formal than a written schedule, this approach still demonstrates a conscious awareness of planning, albeit in a more adaptive and situational form (Sidiq et al., 2024).

Regarding self-control, all respondents admitted to experiencing writing block or loss of motivation. However, they didn't stop completely, but instead sought alternative strategies to remain productive. Some respondents chose to read previous research for inspiration and broaden their horizons, while others chose to skip to easier sections when facing difficulties in a particular sub-chapter. These strategies demonstrate cognitive flexibility and the ability to manage obstacles constructively. Furthermore, emotional regulation strategies such as taking a break, engaging in self-healing activities, listening to music, or simply calming themselves before resuming work were also used. The second and fifth respondents emphasized the importance of remembering their initial goals, namely, graduating and making their parents happy, as a form of strengthening intrinsic motivation. This suggests that the motivational dimension is a crucial component of SRL, as students with clear goals tend to be more resilient to obstacles. This motivational regulation helps students avoid becoming stuck in a stagnant state for too long (Wangid et al., 2022).

During the monitoring and self-evaluation phase, most respondents demonstrated fairly consistent reflective practices. Some reread their theses regularly, jotting down completed sections, and highlighting revisions for easy correction. A third respondent even made specific notes from the beginning to the end of each chapter as a progress monitoring tool. A fourth respondent used regular tutoring as a quality evaluation indicator, while a fifth utilized a project management application to track assignments. These practices demonstrate that students not only work spontaneously but also monitor the quality and quantity of their work. This self-evaluation is important because it helps students identify weaknesses early and adjust strategies if necessary. Within the context of the learning environment, respondents also recognized the importance of managing distractions. Strategies such as turning off phone notifications, staying away from social media, using the Pomodoro technique, or choosing a quiet study space demonstrate awareness of external factors that can disrupt focus. Some respondents also chose to work on their theses with fellow supervisors to maintain enthusiasm and consistency (Latipah, 2021).

Overall, the research results indicate that students have applied SRL principles in varying degrees of depth and form. Some are highly structured and systematic, while others are flexible yet consistent. Goal planning, emotional regulation, motivational reinforcement, progress monitoring, and learning environment management are key, complementary components. Students who have a detailed planning system and progress recording system tend to demonstrate stronger self-control and greater consistency. Thus, SRL has proven to be a crucial foundation for maintaining the sustainability of their thesis work until the final stage (Istiqama et al., 2023).

Time Discipline as an Effort to Overcome Academic Procrastination

Interview results indicate that time discipline is a key factor in overcoming academic procrastination among final-year students. Procrastination generally stems from internal factors such as laziness, low mood, fatigue, and lack of self-confidence. Several respondents also mentioned external distractions such as social media, organizational activities, and the emergence of other, more interesting ideas. However, students recognize that without good time management, their thesis will be further delayed and potentially extend their study period. Therefore, they strive to develop discipline through various strategies. The second and fifth respondents emphasized the importance of setting priorities and prioritizing their thesis over other activities. Time-blocking techniques and setting specific hours each day

proved quite effective. The third respondent even developed a complete daily schedule with detailed time allocations, indicating that discipline has become an ingrained habit since boarding school. Meanwhile, the first respondent adopted a flexible approach, working on his thesis whenever he had free time, even without a fixed schedule (Jaya et al., 2025).

The most dominant factors causing procrastination are psychological conditions such as laziness and fatigue. Several respondents admitted to sometimes having to "force themselves" to open their laptops. This immediate action strategy demonstrates an effective behavioral approach to breaking the cycle of procrastination. Furthermore, motivational strategies such as visualizing graduation with parents, remembering the goal of graduating on time, and rewarding oneself reinforce commitment. The second respondent emphasized the importance of focusing on the benefits of graduation rather than the burden of writing a thesis. This strategy reflects cognitive restructuring that helps transform negative perceptions into positive motivation (Budiani et al., 2023).

Most respondents acknowledged the effectiveness of daily schedules and to-do lists as tools that help improve focus and productivity. Schedules help break down large projects into smaller, more realistic tasks, reducing feelings of overwhelm. However, there is individual variation in their implementation. Some students are more productive with a structured system, while others remain consistent without a written schedule. Nevertheless, all respondents agreed that the more disciplined they are in their thesis work and revisions, the faster the guidance and approval process from their supervisor. Time discipline also increases self-confidence, reduces stress, and creates a sense of accomplishment when goals are met (Imani et al., 2024).

Thus, time discipline serves not only as a technical management tool but also as a psychological reinforcement mechanism for overcoming procrastination. Students who are able to manage their time and prioritize their thesis demonstrate more stable and focused progress. Therefore, discipline is a crucial variable in the successful completion of a final project (Wahidah et al., 2025).

Supporting and Inhibiting Factors for Thesis Completion Productivity

Thesis completion productivity is influenced by a combination of interacting internal and external factors. Interviews revealed that key supporting factors include family support, fellow students' supervisors, personal motivation to graduate quickly, and the supportive role of the supervisor. Family support is both emotional and moral, providing a sense of calm and confidence that students are capable of completing their studies. Peers serve as discussion partners and sources of motivation, especially during collaborative mentoring sessions or when reminding each other of progress. Furthermore, financial motivation, such as the desire to avoid paying additional tuition fees, also served as a strong driving force for some respondents (Stefany et al., 2022).

However, there are also various obstacles that affect productivity, such as laziness, organizational fatigue, difficult-to-reach supervisors, limited journal access, and social media distractions. Interestingly, supervisors play a dual role as both a supporting factor and a hindering factor. When they provide regular guidance and motivation, productivity increases. However, when access to guidance is limited, progress can be hampered. This situation requires students to be more prepared and alert, such as completing revisions as quickly as possible to avoid missing out on opportunities for guidance (Achmad et al., 2022).

To overcome obstacles, students use various strategies such as positive thinking, identifying the root cause of problems, resting when tired, and reminding themselves of their initial goal of graduating. Some respondents chose to work on their thesis with friends to maintain their enthusiasm, while others chose solitude to focus better. This demonstrates that coping strategies are personal and tailored to each individual's character (Wahidah et al., 2025).

Overall, the productivity of a thesis is determined not only by academic ability, but also by social support, mental readiness, and self-management skills. Support from family and friends is a key psychological booster, while self-regulation and internal motivation are key determinants of ultimate success. This harmonious interaction between internal and external factors ultimately motivates students to complete their thesis optimally and on time (Safitri., 2025).

Table 1. Research Findings on Self-Regulated Learning, Time Discipline, and Student Thesis Completion Productivity.

Research Aspects	Key Findings	Student Practice Examples
Self-Regulated Learning	Students are able to plan their thesis work targets, control their motivation, and evaluate their writing progress.	Divide your thesis targets into weekly or monthly targets, create a daily schedule for working on your thesis, read previous research when you are stuck, and reflect on your writing results.
Time Discipline	Time discipline helps students reduce procrastination and increase consistency in working on their thesis.	Using time-blocking techniques, making daily to-do lists, setting priorities for working on your thesis, turning off cell phone notifications, and using the Pomodoro technique to maintain focus.
Supporting and Inhibiting Factors	The productivity of completing a thesis is influenced by internal and external factors of the student.	Supporting factors include support from family, peers, and supervisors. Inhibiting factors include laziness, fatigue, social media distractions, and limited access to guidance from supervisors.

Based on in-depth interviews with five final-year students, various findings were obtained regarding the application of self-regulated learning, time discipline, and factors influencing the productivity of their thesis completion. A summary of these research findings is presented in Table 1.

In general, research results indicate that self-regulated learning is the primary foundation for maintaining consistency in students' thesis work. Students with self-regulation skills are able to plan their thesis work goals in stages, monitor their progress, and evaluate areas that need improvement. Commonly used strategies include dividing the thesis work into weekly or monthly targets, creating a study schedule, and consulting previous research when experiencing writing difficulties.

Furthermore, time management has been shown to play a significant role in reducing academic procrastination. Students who implement structured time management, such as using time-blocking techniques, creating daily to-do lists, and limiting distractions from social media, demonstrate higher levels of consistency in their thesis writing process. This time management helps students break down large tasks into smaller, more realistic chunks, thus making their thesis work more focused.

4. Conclusion

Based on the research results, it can be concluded that self-regulated learning (SRL) and time discipline play a crucial role in increasing students' thesis completion productivity. SRL enables students to manage their learning process independently through careful planning, self-control when facing obstacles, and continuous evaluation of achieved results. Students who implement SRL effectively tend to be able to set realistic targets, maintain consistency in their work, and effectively manage their motivation and emotions. Time management serves

as a key support in implementing SRL effectively. By organizing daily schedules, setting priorities, and controlling distractions, students can reduce procrastination, which is often a major obstacle to completing their thesis. This discipline helps students maintain a stable work rhythm, improves focus, and expedites the mentoring process and final assignment completion. Thus, the integration of SRL and time management is key to increasing the productivity of thesis completion. Both contribute not only to academic success but also to foster independent learning and student readiness to face future challenges.

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