



Student Voices in Teacher Evaluation: The Role of Students in Assessing Student Teachers' Soft Skills on Asistensi Mengajar Program

Sriyani Mentari¹

Umi Nuraini²

Mohd. Rizal Palil³

Virut Kitnuntaviwat⁴

^{1,2}Department of Accounting Education, Faculty of Economics and Business, Universitas Negeri Malang, Indonesia

³Department of Accounting, Faculty of Economics and Business, Universiti Kebangsaan Malaysia, Malaysia

⁴Faculty of Education, Chulalongkorn University, Thailand

email: sriyani.mentari.fe@um.ac.id

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Abstract: The development of future teachers is not only determined by their mastery of pedagogical competencies, but also by soft skills. However, the evaluation of soft skills in teacher education in Indonesia is still dominated by self, peer, and supervising teacher assessment, while the voices of students are often neglected. This study aims to analyze the differences of soft skills assessment of student teachers participating in the Asistensi Mengajar (AM) program based on a 360-degree feedback approach, as well as to examine the differences between student teachers and students in each dimension of soft skills. This study uses a comparative quantitative design involving 66 student teachers, 198 students, 198 peers, and 66 supervising teachers. Data were collected using a 5-point Likert scale-based soft skills instrument that had been tested for validity and reliability. Data analysis was performed using the Kruskal-Wallis test and Dunn's post hoc test to examine differences between assessor groups (H1), as well as the Wilcoxon Signed-Rank test to compare self-student assessments (H2a–H2d). The results showed a significant difference between the groups of assessors ($p < 0.05$), particularly between student teachers and students, and between student teachers and their peers. In addition, all dimensions of soft skills showed significant differences between self-assessment and student assessment. Students rated student teachers' communication, problem-solving, and moral attitudes lower, but gave higher scores on adaptability. This study concludes that student voice is a valid and authentic component of evaluation that needs to be integrated into the teacher education assessment system.

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INTRODUCTION

The professional preparation of teachers increasingly emphasizes not only pedagogical knowledge and technical competencies but also soft skills such as communication, adaptability, problem solving, and moral attitude. Soft skill competency is one of the most important parts for teachers to adapt and interact for their successful careers and work, with research estimating that up to 85% of career achievements depend on mastery of soft skills rather than hard skills alone (Macqual et al., 2021). Soft skills supplement

hard skills and have a substantial effect on the capability of teachers to organize their work (Tang, Hashim, et al., 2015) and to overcome various problems that occur during the learning process (Elisa et al., 2020). In teacher education, the ability to demonstrate effective communication, adapt to diverse learning environments, and exhibit fairness and integrity are not supplementary attributes but essential elements of professional identity formation (Tang, Yie, et al., 2015). By acquiring these soft skills, teachers can elevate their overall effectiveness and adaptability in the ever-changing educational landscape.

Despite this recognition, evaluating soft skills remains a persistent challenge. Teacher education assessments often rely on self-evaluation or supervisor observations, which risk producing biased and incomplete pictures of competence (Gibb, 2014). In Indonesia, traditional evaluation systems in teacher education tend to prioritize teaching performance and technical competencies, with minimal attention to soft skills development (Mentari & Nuris, 2024). One prominent example is the Asistensi Mengajar (AM) program, introduced as part of the Merdeka Belajar–Kampus Merdeka (MBKM) policy, which allows university students to participate directly in teaching activities in schools. The program aims to provide authentic teaching experiences and to develop both pedagogical competencies and professional skills among preservice teachers. However, the evaluation mechanisms within the program primarily emphasize teaching performance reports and supervisor observations. Such approaches may not fully capture the relational and interpersonal aspects of teaching practice, particularly soft skills such as communication, adaptability, and responsiveness to student needs. Moreover, the perspectives of students who directly experience the teaching process are rarely incorporated into the evaluation system. As key participants in the learning process, students are highly sensitive to the opportunities for participation provided by student teachers, the quality of communication, and the relevance of the tasks carried out (Wallace et al., 2016). Consequently, the existing evaluation framework may provide an incomplete understanding of student teachers' professional competencies in real classroom contexts.

Recent international research highlights the importance of involving student voice in teacher evaluation. Students' voices are beginning to be recognized as an important source of data for finding out what is really happening in the classroom (Fauth et al., 2020). Finefter-Rosenbluh et al. (2023) argues that student feedback provides critical, experience-based insights that are often absent from peer or supervisor evaluations. Similarly, Biscaldi (2020) and Zu et al. (2022) demonstrate that students tend to hold higher expectations of fairness and communication clarity compared to peers or supervisors, making their assessments uniquely valuable for evaluating soft skills competencies. Furthermore, student perception survey have been proven to be valid and reliable tools for evaluating teacher performance (Wallace et al., 2016), prompting nations like Australia, the United Kingdom, and the United States to implement them in their schools (Steinberg & Donaldson, 2016; UK Department of Education, 2019; VicDET, 2019). These findings emphasize the importance of incorporating student perspectives alongside the other assessors, such as peers and supervising teachers, in student teacher evaluations.

One promising approach to integrate student perspectives is the 360-degree feedback model, which is widely used in organizational and educational contexts (Ginting et al., 2022; Jones et al., 2019; Modise & Vaughan, 2024; Sabitah & Susilo, 2017). The 360 degree feedback provides a comprehensive evaluation of target objects, including the individual (self-evaluation), superiors, peers, subordinates and other evaluators, and supplies feedback to the target objects after evaluation (Cheng & Wu, 2020). This feedback method is considered to offer more advantages compared with single-source evaluations, for instance, by providing new angles of judgment for individual behaviors or performances and mitigating the shortages of up-todown, single-source evaluations, and captures the multidimensional nature of performance (Jones et al., 2019). In teacher education, this approach has the potential to uncover hidden competency gaps, such as overestimation in self-ratings or underestimated adaptation skills due to impostor feelings (Talsma et al., 2019).

Despite the growing recognition of student voice and multisource feedback in teacher evaluation, empirical studies integrating these approaches in the context of teacher education remain limited. In particular, research examining how student perspectives compare with other evaluators in assessing preservice teachers' soft skills is still scarce, especially in developing educational contexts such as Indonesia. Previous studies on the Asistensi Mengajar program have largely focused on program

implementation and its benefits for student participants, rather than examining how student teachers' competencies are evaluated from multiple perspectives within classroom environments. This limitation highlights the need for empirical evidence that integrates student voice with a multisource evaluation framework to provide a more comprehensive understanding of student teachers' professional competencies. This study therefore aims to examine the evaluation of student teachers' soft skills within the Asistensi Mengajar program using a 360-degree feedback framework. Specifically, the study investigates (1) whether differences exist in the assessment of student teachers' soft skills among different evaluator groups (self, peers, supervising teachers, and students), and (2) whether significant differences occur between student teachers' self-assessments and student evaluations across the dimensions of communication, adaptability, problem solving, and moral attitude.

LITERATURE REVIEW AND HYPOTHESES

Student Voice

The concept of student voice positions students as active social actors who can provide unique and valuable perspectives on education (Cook-Sather, 2020), highlighting the various ways in which students can engage—with the help of educators—in shaping the educational process (Baroutsis et al., 2016). Student voice practices can include efforts by teachers or principals to seek feedback and ideas from students; partnerships between students and adults to design and implement reforms; or student-led campaigns to create school change (Conner et al., 2022). Listening to students can be a contested process, but including their perspectives ensures a better representation and understanding of the educational picture.

Recent studies show that research on student voices has broadened its scope, exploring not only how students express their perspectives but also how schools follow up on them. A 2024 systematic review of student voice and autonomy found that although practices are becoming more diverse, there are still gaps in systematically integrating them into everyday school activities (Schaefer et al., 2024). Similarly, Finefter-Rosenbluh et al. (2021) emphasizes both the potential and challenges of student voice in teacher evaluation, noting that while student perception surveys are valid and reliable, it raises questions about teacher professionalism, power dynamics, and the ethics of care. Furthermore, empirical study by Conner et al. (2025) demonstrate that student voice practices positively influence outcomes such as engagement, agency, and attendance. These findings affirm earlier claims that student reports of classroom processes are not only valid but also predictive of learning outcomes, offering unique insights into the quality of teacher–student interactions.

Taken together, recent literature conceptualizes student voice as a well-established framework that integrates principles of democratic engagement with demonstrated practical benefits for teaching and learning. It recognizes students not as passive recipients, but as rightful stakeholders in evaluating and improving teaching quality. In the context of teacher education and programs such as Asistensi Mengajar, the integration of student voice ensures that soft skills such as communication, adaptability, problem solving, and moral attitudes are evaluated not only by peers or superiors, but also by those most directly affected, that is, the students themselves.

Sociocultural Theory

Sociocultural theory holds that knowledge and learning are products of social construction as individuals engage and interact in social activities with other people, objects, and events (Vygotsky, 1978). Learning is seen as the changes that occur from participation in socially organized activities and individuals' use of that knowledge from learning as an aspect of their participation in social practices (Abakah, 2023). When applied to teacher evaluation, sociocultural theory emphasizes that students' perceptions of teaching do not simply reflect teaching techniques, but also the social relationships and cultural expectations that shape the learning environment. Student evaluation, therefore, does not only capture the technical delivery

of a lesson; it also reflects the quality of relationships in classroom interactions, including fairness, respect, and the moral attitudes conveyed by the teacher (Wallace & Chhuon, 2014). In this way, student voice captures dimensions of teaching that extend beyond technical delivery and resonate strongly with the social-emotional climate of the classroom.

Recent scholarship confirms that variance in student perceptions exists. Although student surveys are widely used in secondary and higher education, the influence of cultural and individual factors on these perceptions requires further exploration. For instance, André et al. (2020) suggest that measurement invariance should be considered when comparing students' perceptions of teaching behavior across groups, underlining the role of context in shaping evaluations. Similarly, Fernández-García et al. (2019) showed that students' perceptions of secondary school teachers are influenced not only by pedagogical practices but also by relational and personal characteristics, highlighting the sociocultural relevance in evaluation.

In a collective society such as Indonesia, sociocultural perspectives are highly relevant. Students often assess teaching quality not only based on cognitive effectiveness, but also in relation to values such as harmony, mutual respect, and moral integrity. Rather than treating student feedback as neutral and context-free, sociocultural theory positions it as socially mediated and value-laden (Elwood & Murphy, 2015), offering authentic reflections of how teaching practices are experienced in specific cultural settings. Through this lens, student teachers can identify aspects of their practice that are recognized or undervalued in a particular cultural context, thereby supporting their professional growth. Ultimately, recognizing the sociocultural determinants of student perceptions can strengthen teacher development and contribute to improving the overall quality of education (Gencoglu et al., 2021).

360-Degree Feedback Model

The 360-degree feedback model, also known as multisource feedback, is an evaluative approach that gathers assessments from multiple perspectives, including self, peers, supervisors, and subordinates or clients (Berk, 2009). The strength of the 360-degree feedback model lies in its ability to capture a comprehensive view of professional practice by integrating perspectives that each provide unique insights. Self-assessments may reveal individuals' reflective awareness but are often prone to bias and overestimation. Peer evaluations capture collaborative and collegial competencies, while supervisor assessments focus on formal pedagogical standards. Perhaps most importantly, student evaluations provide direct evidence of how teaching is experienced in practice, particularly with respect to relational and communicative dimensions that are less visible to supervisors or peers (Wallace et al., 2016).

Recent research highlights the growing importance of 360-degree feedback in teacher education and professional development. In higher education and medical education, feedback from multiple perspectives has been shown to be effective in identifying perception gaps, guiding reflective practice, and enhancing professional growth (Bartman et al., 2025). Similarly, innovative approaches such as e-portfolios combined with 360-degree evaluations have been explored as holistic tools in pre-service teacher education, providing formative and summative insights into competencies (Modise & Vaughan, 2024). These studies suggest that 360-degree feedback can bridge the gap between theory and practice by making the evaluation process more participatory, transparent, and contextually relevant.

In the context of the Asistensi Mengajar Program in Indonesia, the 360-degree feedback framework is invaluable. This framework allows student teachers' soft skills, such as communication, adaptability, problem solving, and moral attitude, to be evaluated from various perspectives: their own self-assessment, peer observation, formal assessment from supervising teachers, and most critically, student experience. By revealing the alignment and misalignment between these perspectives, this model not only supports the individual development of teachers but also strengthens accountability and authenticity in teacher preparation programs.

Significant Difference in the Assessment of Student Teachers' Soft Skills among Assessors

The 360-degree feedback model emphasizes that teaching performance should be evaluated from various perspectives (Berk, 2009), where each assessor brings a different frame of reference. Self-assessment is influenced by personal reflection and potential bias, peers and supervising teachers emphasize pedagogical standards and professional norms, while students observe classroom interactions directly. This diversity of perspectives often results in inconsistencies in evaluation results, revealing gaps in perception among assessors. When connected with sociocultural theory, these divergences can be understood as the product of different social roles and cultural expectations embedded in the classroom context (Mercer & Dörnyei, 2020; Vygotsky, 1978) that shape evaluative judgments. For example, while supervising teachers may prioritize adherence to instructional design, students may place greater emphasis on relational qualities values emphasized in collectivist cultures such as Indonesia. Thus, the theoretical integration of 360-degree feedback and sociocultural perspectives suggests that variance across assessor groups is inherent and meaningful.

Recent empirical studies have shown that multisource evaluations frequently produce discrepancies between evaluator groups. For example, research in teacher and medical education contexts indicates that self-assessments often differ from external evaluations due to differences in perspective, evaluative standards, and social roles (Bartman et al., 2025; Modise & Vaughan, 2024). Similarly, studies on student perception surveys demonstrate that students may prioritize relational and communicative aspects of teaching, which are not always emphasized in peer or supervisor evaluations (Witter & Rowe, 2024). These findings suggest that perceptual variation among evaluator groups is a natural outcome of multisource evaluation systems. Based on this reasoning, the following hypothesis is proposed:

H1: There are significant differences in the assessment of student teachers' soft skills between self-assessments, peer, supervising teacher, and student assessments.

Significant Difference between Student and Self-Assessment of Student Teachers' Soft Skills

The student voice concept posits students as legitimate stakeholders in evaluating the teaching process, because they directly experience classroom interactions and learning processes. This perspective emphasizes that students' feedback provides authentic insight into the effectiveness of teaching, particularly regarding communication, engagement, and fairness in classroom interactions (Cook-Sather, 2020). From a sociocultural theory, learning and evaluation are socially constructed through interactions among individuals within specific cultural and classroom contexts (Vygotsky, 1978). Students' perceptions of teaching behavior are therefore shaped not only by instructional techniques but also by relational dynamics, communication patterns, and social expectations within the classroom environment (Wallace & Chhuon, 2014). As a result, students' evaluations of teachers reflect their lived experiences of teaching practices, which may differ from teachers' own perceptions of their performance.

Empirical studies have consistently shown discrepancies between teachers' self-assessments and student evaluations. Teachers tend to evaluate their teaching based on intentions, lesson planning, and professional standards, while students evaluate teaching based on the clarity of explanations, responsiveness, and relational aspects of classroom interaction (Fauth et al., 2020). Research on student perception surveys also indicates that students' feedback provides valuable information about teaching quality that may not be captured through teacher self-evaluation (Witter & Rowe, 2024). Furthermore, studies on student voice initiatives demonstrate that student evaluations often highlight aspects of teaching effectiveness related to communication, fairness, and responsiveness that teachers may overlook when evaluating their own performance (Finefter-Rosenbluh et al., 2023). These findings suggest that perceptual differences between student and teacher evaluations are common, particularly in dimensions of teaching that involve interpersonal interaction. Based on these theoretical perspectives and empirical findings, differences between student teachers' self-assessments and student evaluations are likely to occur in several

dimensions of soft skills. Because students evaluate teaching practices based on their direct classroom experiences, their perceptions may differ from student teachers' self-evaluations, which are often influenced by intentions, reflection, and professional expectations. Therefore, the following hypotheses are proposed:

H2a: Student evaluations of student teachers' communication skills significantly differ from self-assessments.

H2b: Student evaluations of student teachers' adaptability significantly differ from self-assessments.

H2c: Student evaluations of student teachers' problem solving skills significantly differ from self-assessments.

H2d: Student evaluations of student teachers' moral attitude significantly differ from self-assessments.

METHODS

Research Design and Sample Data

This study employed a quantitative comparative design using a 360-degree feedback approach. The purpose was to examine perceptual gaps in the evaluation of student teachers' soft skills (H1) and to compare self-assessments with student evaluations across four dimensions, that is communication, adaptability, problem-solving, and moral attitude (H2a–H2d). The study population comprised all participants of the 2025 Asistensi Mengajar (AM) program from the Faculty of Economics and Business, Malang State University (N = 395), along with vocational students and supervising teachers from partner schools. A purposive sampling technique was employed, using the following criteria: (1) accounting department students from the Faculty of Economics and Business, Malang State University, who took part in the AM program; (2) high school students enrolled in partner schools of the university and taught by the AM participants; and (3) high school teachers appointed as supervisors for those AM participants. Based on these criteria, 66 AM participants were selected. Each AM participant was matched with three peer assessors, three student assessors, and one supervising teacher, resulting in a dataset of 66 self-assessments, 198 peer assessments, 198 student assessments, and 66 supervising teacher assessments.

Instruments and Data Collection Procedures

The instruments used in this study were adapted from Fitriah's (2017) soft skills scale and incorporating two refinements, that is contextualization with AM program behaviors and adoption of a 5-point Likert scale. Prior to use, the instrument underwent pilot testing with 60 respondents, comprising 15 individuals from each of the four AM assessor groups outside the main sample. Validity was examined using Corrected Item-Total Correlation, with items retained if the coefficient exceeded the r-table critical value (Hair et al., 2022). For N = 60 and $\alpha = 0.05$, the critical value was 0.214, items below this threshold were removed. Reliability was assessed using Cronbach's alpha for each soft skill dimension, with a threshold of $\alpha \geq 0.70$ indicating acceptable reliability (Nunnally & Bernstein, 1994). A complete list of items and their corresponding dimensions is presented in Appendix A for transparency. Between April and May 2025, data were gathered through a phased protocol designed to safeguard the independence of assessors. To balance traceability and confidentiality, each student teacher (n = 66) received a unique alphanumeric code linking their self-assessment with peer, student, and supervising teacher assessments. Four dedicated Google Form links were distributed, ensuring that responses from each assessor group remained distinct yet systematically connected.

Data Analysis

The collected data were analyzed in several stages. First, descriptive statistics were used to summarize the level of achievement for each soft skill dimensions across respondent groups. This descriptive stage provided an overview of how student teachers' communication, adaptability, problem-

solving, and moral attitude were evaluated from multiple perspectives. To address Hypothesis 1, which examined differences in assessments across self, peer, supervising teacher, and student assessors, a one-way ANOVA was conducted. When assumptions for ANOVA were not met, the Kruskal-Wallis test was applied as a nonparametric alternative, followed by Post Hoc Dunn tests to identify specific perceptual gaps. To test Hypothesis 2 (H2a–H2d), which compared self-assessments and student assessments on each soft skill dimension, paired-sample t-tests were employed. Where normality assumptions were not met, the Wilcoxon signed-rank test was used as a nonparametric substitute. To complement significance testing, effect sizes (Cohen’s d) were calculated to assess the magnitude of differences.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Before testing the hypotheses, the instrument used in this study was validated and assessed for reliability to ensure its psychometric soundness. Item validity was analyzed using item-total correlation, where items were considered valid if the correlation coefficient (r) exceeded the critical value of 0.214 (for $N = 60$, $\alpha = 0.05$; Hair et al., 2022). All retained items met this criteria, indicating adequate construct validity. This confirms that each item effectively measures the intended dimension within the overall structure of the instrument. Reliability testing was then conducted using Cronbach’s alpha. The results showed strong internal consistency: communication skills ($\alpha = 0.729$), problem solving skills ($\alpha = 0.892$), adaptability ($\alpha = 0.858$), moral attitude ($\alpha = 0.863$). All alpha values exceeded the 0.70 threshold recommended by Nunnally & Bernstein (1994), confirming that the instrument is highly reliable for evaluating soft skills from multiple perspectives. These results support the use of the adapted questionnaire for any future analysis involving comparisons between groups of assessors.

Descriptive analysis was conducted to summarize the overall performance of student teachers’ soft skills as assessed by four groups, that is self, peer, supervising teachers, and students.

Table 1. Descriptive Statistics of Soft Skills Scores by Assessor Group

Descriptive Statistics	Student Teachers	Students	Peers	Supervising Teacher
Mean	3.93	3.71	4.13	3.92
Standar Deviation	0.51	0.39	0.35	0.29
Median	4.00	3.80	4.10	3.90
Skewness	-0.60	-0.48	-0.18	0.19
Minimum	2.70	2.70	3.40	3.40
Maximum	4.60	4.40	4.80	4.50

Notes: Scale: 1 = Very Poor, 5 = Excellent.

Based on Table 1, across all dimensions, mean scores were above 3.5 on a 5-point scale, indicating that the overall level of student teachers’ soft skills was considered good to excellent by all assessors. Among the assessor category, peers provided the highest overall assessment, while student provided the lowest assessment. Student teachers and supervising teachers gave relatively similar score, suggesting consistent judgments among them. Median values were consistent with the mean, suggesting that the distribution of scores across all groups was symmetric and concentrated in the good to excellent range. However, the minimum and maximum values (ranging from 2.70 to 4.80) show that while the majority of assessments were high, some assessors still provided moderate evaluations, reflecting a realistic spread of perceptions. Overall, these descriptive findings indicate that although student teachers are considered to have strong soft skills, there are still subtle perceptual differences between self-assessment and external assessment. These differences provide an empirical basis for testing Hypothesis 1 through ANOVA procedures.

Hypothesis Testing

Normality tests were conducted prior to analysis. Using Kolmogorov–Smirnov and Shapiro–Wilk, the result showed that the data from the four groups of assessors were not normally distributed ($p < 0.05$). Given this, Kruskal-Wallis H test was used as a nonparametric alternative of ANOVA.

Table 2. Kruskal-Wallis H Test Result

Kruskal-Wallis H	df	p-value	Effect size (ϵ^2)
31.312	3	0.000	0.11

Table 3. Dunn's Post Hoc Test Result

Assessor Group 1	Assessor Group 2	Mean Rank Difference	Z-Value	Sig. (p)	Effect Size (r)
Student teacher	Student	38.939	2.938	0.003**	0.26
	Peer	-34.258	2.585	0.009**	0.22
	Supervising teacher	6.197	0.468	0.64	-

Note: Dunn's post hoc test; $p < 0.05$ indicates significant difference.

**Significant at 0.05 level.

The Kruskal-Wallis H test result (Table 2) revealed a significant difference among the four assessor groups ($p=0.00$, $\epsilon^2=0.11$). The effect size calculation using epsilon-squared yields a value of $\epsilon^2 = 0.11$, which indicates a moderate effect. This means that approximately 11% of the variation in soft skills assessment is explained by differences between assessor groups, which is practically significant. The Dunn's post hoc test (Table 3) revealed that the statistically significant difference occurred between student teachers and students ($\Delta M= 38.939$, $p = .003$, $g = 0.26$) and peers ($\Delta M= -34.258$, $p = .009$, $g = 0.22$), both indicating a small effect size. No significant mean differences were found between student teachers and supervising teachers ($p > .05$). These findings indicate that students evaluate student teachers more favorably than the student teachers evaluate themselves, while peers are more critical, and supervising teachers' evaluations were statistically similar to self-assessments. Thus, Hypothesis 1 is supported, confirming that perceptual differences exist among assessor groups.

Moving on to hypothesis 2, the Wilcoxon signed rank test was used to compare self-assessment with student assessment on the four dimensions of soft skills due to the normality assumption was not met ($p < 0.05$).

Table 4. Wilcoxon Signed-Rank Result for Self-Student Assessments

Soft Skill Dimension	Z-value	p-value	Effect Size (r)
Communication	-4.615	0.000**	0.40
Adaptability	2.631	0.009**	0.23
Problem-solving	-3.008	0.003**	0.26
Moral attitude	-2.572	0.010**	0.22

**Significant at 0.05 level.

As shown in Table 3, the Wilcoxon Signed-Rank test revealed significant differences between self- and student-assessment for all soft skill dimensions. The effect size (r) for each dimension ranged from 0.22 to 0.40, which falls into the small to moderate category, indicating that the differences were practically significant. Negative Z scores for communication, problem solving and moral attitude indicate that students tend to give lower assessments to student teachers than the assessments given by student teachers to themselves. However, positive Z scores for adaptability show the opposite, where student evaluate student

teachers more highly than students teachers do. Therefore, hypothesis 2 (H2a, H2b, H2c, H2d) is accepted. Perceptual discrepancies exist between self and student evaluations in all dimensions of soft skills.

Perceptual Difference between Assessor Groups

The results of Kruskal-Wallis H test revealed significant differences in perception among the assessor groups in evaluating the soft skills of student teachers. This finding supports hypothesis 1 and the premise of the 360-degree feedback model, which emphasizes that multiple evaluators bring distinct perspectives to performance appraisal (Berk, 2009; Jones et al., 2019). This pattern underscores that each assessor group has unique observation stances and judgment standards for soft skill assessments. Student teachers assess based on intention, planning, and internal feelings. Their assessments are prone to biases, such as imposter syndrome (Hawley, 2019) or performance anxiety, which may lead to lower self-assessments. The peer assessment provided a more critical and comparative standard based on shared pedagogical knowledge and expectations of professional competence (Hendry & Oliver, 2012). The supervising teachers, acting as mentors, may focus on growth and alignment with formal teaching standards (Lisa et al., 2016), resulting in assessments that balance encouragement with professional judgment, thus aligning more closely with the student teachers' own perceptions. Finally, the students' assessment focus on learning experiences and relational interactions. For them, a teacher's effectiveness is measured by the extent to which the teacher makes them feel understood, valued, and able to engage in the learning process. Therefore, the variation between groups reflects authentic diversity of perception rather than inconsistency.

The specific pattern of differences where students assess significantly higher than the student teachers themselves, while peers were significantly more critical, is a powerful demonstration of how these distinct social roles within educational environment shape judgement. Peers, as fellow participants in the AM program, may expect high, sometimes idealistic, standards of professional competence from each other (Huxham et al., 2017), which can lead to more strict evaluation. Students, however, evaluate teaching quality not only based on technical skills but also on inclusivity, fairness, and empathy (Wallace & Chhuon, 2014). When viewed through sociocultural theory (Vygotsky, 1978), this discrepancy arises from the nature of evaluation, which is influenced by the social context, where class norms, role hierarchies, and communication patterns shape the interpretation of "good teaching". The evaluation of soft skills is not a neutral, objective measurement but a socially and culturally mediated process. Students interpret soft skills through the lens of classroom harmony and relational trust, value highly emphasized in Indonesia's collectivist culture (Maulana et al., 2014). Their more favourable ratings suggest they may value the effort and openness of student teachers differently than peers who are participated in the same program. However, peers and supervising teachers, as the part of education community, their judgment shaped by shared professional norms and pedagogical standards (Kennedy, 2016). The supervising teachers' alignment with self-assessments suggests that student teachers have internalized their mentors' professional framework, making their self-perceptions more aligned with this expert view than with the peer or student perspectives. These observed differences reflect contextual interpretations of teaching effectiveness, confirming that perception gaps are socially constructed (André et al., 2020; Elwood & Murphy, 2015).

Empirically, these results are consistent with the findings of Bartman et al. (2025) and Modise and Vaughan (2024), which showed that multi-source assessments in teacher and medical education consistently produce perception disparities, particularly between self-assessments and external assessors. These findings are also consistent with the study of Huxham et al. (2017) who found that students gave significantly more positive comments than academic peers as evaluators of teaching. Thus, the acceptance of Hypothesis 1 supports the theoretical expectation that assessment diversity increases evaluative validity. By capturing various social perspectives, 360-degree feedback provides a more comprehensive and reliable overview of soft skill competencies. In the context of the Asistensi Mengajar program, this approach not

only enhances fairness and authenticity but also strengthens accountability and reflection in teacher preparation.

Discrepancies between Self and Student Assessments in Each Dimension of Soft Skills

The Wilcoxon test results show that there is a significant difference between self-assessment and student assessment in all dimensions of soft skills. This confirms H2a–H2d, while reinforcing the assumption that student teachers' perceptions of their abilities are not entirely consistent with the actual experiences of students in the classroom. This finding is in line with student voice theory, which positions students as a legitimate, valid, and experience-based source of data in assessing teaching quality (Cook-Sather, 2020; Witter & Rowe, 2024). The results showed that students gave lower scores on the communication, problem-solving, and moral attitude dimensions compared to the student teacher's self-assessment. When students evaluate a teacher's communication skills (H2a), they do not assess lesson plans, they assess whether they feel listened to, understood, and able to ask questions. When they evaluate teacher's problem solving skills (H2c), they value teacher's solutions that are immediate, clear, and directly helpful for their own understanding (Carpenter et al., 2020). When assessing moral attitudes (H2d), students view teachers as role models in behavior, making their assessments stricter than those of other assessors (Biscaldi, 2020). Therefore, lower student ratings on these dimensions are not a sign of failure, but rather realistic feedback on how the intentions and perceptions of student teachers are actually manifested in the learning experiences of their students.

Conversely, students' higher ratings of adaptability (H2b) are an insightful illustration of the role of student voice in practice. Student teachers, facing the immense pressures of a new environment, may focus internally on their struggles and moments of inflexibility, which can lead to critical self-assessment. However, students witness and appreciate their efforts to adapt, trying to adjust their lessons, methods, or strategies when classroom conditions change, or responding to their questions. Students see and appreciate adaptability in ways that overly self-conscious student teachers cannot. This is in line with the findings of Finefter-Rosenbluh et al. (2023) that student assessments often capture relational aspects and responsiveness of teachers that are not recognized by the teachers themselves. The finding of H2, which seemingly contradicts H1, whereby students overall gave positive but critical assessments in the three dimensions of soft skills, is not a contradiction but rather shows a meaningful dynamic of perception. The high overall score likely reflects a positive holistic experience, where students felt respected and valued by a student teacher who was clearly trying their best. An overall positive assessment does not necessarily negate specific and constructive criticism.

Finally, sociocultural theory (Vygotsky, 1978) contextualizes these gaps by framing them as products of different social positions and cultural mediations. In a collectivist culture that highly values harmony, respect for authority, and relational trust (Maulana et al., 2021), students' judgments are deeply embedded in these contextual values. The lower communication score of students can be understood from this perspective, in which clarity and openness are not only technical skills, but also fundamental to maintaining relational harmony and mutual understanding that is expected in a collectivist educational environment (Triandis, 2018). Students may view ambiguity not only as a pedagogical failure, but also as a teachers' failure to fulfill their responsibility to create a collaborative learning environment. Conversely, students' higher ratings of adaptability likely reflect high cultural values of responsiveness and flexibility in social interactions. In cultures that prioritize harmony, a teacher's willingness to adjust their teaching methods is seen as dedication to student needs and a commitment to maintaining positive classroom dynamics (Hofstede, 2011).

The difference in problem solving may reflect cultural expectations of teachers, as authority figures, to proactively maintain classroom harmony and resolve problems effectively (Garcia & Pantao, 2021). When student teachers experience difficulties in this regard, it may be viewed not only as a lack of

individual competence, but also as a failing to fulfill the expected role of maintaining a harmonious learning environment. Lastly, a teacher's moral attitude is assessed through a cultural lens that prioritizes consistency, fairness, and ethical modeling. In the context of Indonesian collectivism, where teachers are expected to be moral role models, perceived inconsistencies in terms of fairness or integrity are particularly noticeable to students, resulting the stricter assessment in this dimension (Zu et al., 2022). In synthesis, these findings demonstrated that student voices are a crucial element that grounds the 360-degree feedback model in the real circumstances of the classroom, while sociocultural theory provides the context for interpreting their meaning. This is an important mechanism to help future teachers bridge the gap between how they perceive themselves and how they are perceived by others, thereby encouraging teaching practices that are more responsive, empathetic, and culturally sensitive.

Based on the findings of this study, there are several important implications that need to be considered. Theoretically, this study successfully integrates three conceptual frameworks, that is student voice theory, the 360-degree feedback model, and sociocultural theory, which can provide a foundation for the development of a more comprehensive teacher education evaluation model in the future. Practically, these results show the importance of developing clear communication, effective problem solving, and consistent moral attitudes for student teachers, as these aspects are highly valued by students. These findings also suggest the need for formal integration of student feedback into the Asistensi Mengajar program evaluation system, both as a tool for reflection for student teachers and as material for consideration by the LPTK in developing a more responsive curriculum. Furthermore, the results of this study can be used as consideration for creating national guidelines that recommend the use of 360-degree evaluations based on student voice in teaching practice programs.

CONCLUSION

This study successfully demonstrates the critical importance and unique perspective of integrating student voice into the evaluation of student teachers' soft skills within the Asistensi Mengajar program, using a 360-degree feedback framework. The findings confirm that significant perceptual gaps exist among different assessor groups. Specifically, students provided overall more favorable judgments than the student teachers' self-assessments, while peers were the most critical. This pattern validates the core principle of the 360-degree model that multiple perspectives are essential to capture the multifaceted nature of teaching competence. Furthermore, the research reveals that while students evaluated adaptability more highly than the student teachers themselves, they were more critical in their assessments of communication skill, problem-solving skill, and moral attitude. This confirms that students' perceptions are a direct reflection of social relations, clarity of interaction, and the pedagogical sensitivity of student teachers. These findings not only reinforce the validity of students' perspectives as an authentic and experience-based source of evaluation, but also highlight the importance of a sociocultural framework in interpreting such feedback, particularly in the context of Indonesia's collectivist culture that emphasizes harmony, relational trust, and respect for authority. Student voice, therefore, provides authentic insights into how teaching practices are actually experienced within this specific cultural setting.

Despite all of the finding, this study also acknowledges several limitations. First, the findings should be generalized with caution, given the limited sample size from one faculty at Malang State University. Second, although the instruments have been contextualized, adaptations from previous studies may not fully capture the nuances of the AM program in Indonesia. Third, self-report and perception-based measures may be influenced by social desirability or power dynamics. Finally, this study has not investigated mediating factors such as gender, previous teaching experience, or personality type that may influence the dynamics of perception between student teachers and students. Based on these limitations, several future research agendas can be recommended. First, comparative studies between several universities will enrich our understanding of variations in perception in different contexts. Second, in-depth qualitative research is needed to explore the reasons behind the pattern of higher student assessment of adaptability but lower assessment of other soft skills dimensions. Third, there is a need to develop specific instruments to assess

the soft skills of student teachers in the Indonesian cultural context. Finally, experimental studies to test the effectiveness of specific interventions in reducing the perception gap between teachers and students can make a significant contribution to the development of teacher education in Indonesia.

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APPENDIX**Appendix A. Questionnaire Items for Soft Skills Evaluation**

The following table presents the complete set of questionnaire items used in this study to measure the four dimensions of soft skills among Asistensi Mengajar participants. The instrument was adapted from Fitriah (2017) and contextualized for the AM program, with modifications aligned to Permendikbudristek No. 16 of 2022. Each item was assessed on a 5-point Likert scale (1 = Very Poor to 5 = Excellent). Providing the full list of items ensures transparency and replicability for future research.

Dimension	Item Code	Item Statement
Communication	C1	I can explain learning material clearly to vocational students.
	C2	I listen actively and respond appropriately to students' questions.
	C3	I use both verbal and non-verbal communication effectively in class.
	C4	I provide constructive feedback to students during learning activities.
Problem Solving	P1	I can identify problems that arise during teaching sessions.
	P2	I develop alternative solutions when encountering teaching difficulties.
	P3	I apply creative and innovative strategies to overcome classroom challenges.
	P4	I make justified decisions to handle unexpected situations.
	P5	I evaluate the effectiveness of the solutions I have implemented.
Adaptation	A1	I can adjust to different classroom dynamics and student needs.
	A2	I adapt quickly to curriculum or lesson plan changes.
	A3	I manage stress and pressure effectively during teaching.
	A4	I remain flexible when facing diverse learning conditions.
	A5	I integrate feedback from teachers and students into my teaching practices.
Moral Attitude	M1	I act responsibly as a role model for students.
	M2	I demonstrate honesty and integrity in carrying out teaching tasks.
	M3	I respect the values and norms of the school environment.
	M4	I treat all students fairly and without discrimination.