

# A Reflective Academic Research Writing Among Graduate Students of Batangas State University, Philippines

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## Research Article

**Keywords:** academic-research writing, writing experiences, problems encountered, graduate students, Batangas State University

**Posted Date:** February 1st, 2024

**DOI:** <https://doi.org/10.21203/rs.3.rs-3905744/v1>

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**Additional Declarations:** No competing interests reported.

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# **A REFLECTIVE ACADEMIC RESEARCH WRITING AMONG GRADUATE STUDENTS OF BATANGAS STATE UNIVERSITY, PHILIPPINES**

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## **ABSTRACT**

This paper empirically examines the thesis and dissertation writing process, advising, and critiquing practices at Batangas State University's graduate schools. Historically, the study reveals that the number of graduates accounts for slightly more than three percent of the total enrollees each terminal or academic year. The research contrasts the present findings with existing research development manuals from 2008 and 2017, both within BatStateU and other universities, identifying a lack of resemblance in content. In previous manuals, demographic profiles of graduate students were limited to basic factors such as age, gender, degree program, specialization, status, year started, and year graduated. Positive research writing experiences were reported, with minimal encountered problems. Significant relationships were identified only between gender and research writing, while no significance was found in age, degree program, specialization, status, year started, and year graduated. The study proposes inputs for designing and developing a research writing Manual (ARWM) for graduate schools, emphasizing the need for a broader perspective by considering inputs from past batches and academic years. A call for a triangulation approach is suggested to refine and implement the proposed ARWM effectively.

**Keywords:** academic-research writing; writing experiences; problems encountered; graduate students; Batangas State University

## **INTRODUCTION**

Higher and highest degree of education significantly contributes to the standards of higher education not only in the Philippines, but also in the whole world as it can boost individual potentials and capabilities towards personal, economic, and national growth and stability.

Case studies reveal that concept learning from review teams can develop a matrix of institutional culture variables. Cultural variables included shared values, college mission, shared responsibility (among faculty, administration and board, and students). Institutional support variables included resources and structure. The fourth and final variable was efficacy of assessment. There are three progressive stages for each of the institutional culture variables: beginning, making progress, or maturing stages of continuous improvement (Gordin, 2006).

Entering and engaging oneself in acquiring the higher and/or highest degree of education is not a privilege but a choice full of determination and patience as this degree requires perseverance and commitment. It is then evident that all educational institutions now face a tremendous challenge to meet the standards of quality assurance and internationalizations. This

can be possible if all the universities and colleges offering graduate studies with thesis and dissertation writing—full and terminal requirement for the degree is aligned and integrated with trends and updates as this can promote the culture of change, production, and innovation. This statement explains that when an institution or delivering school provides the learners or graduate students the adequate knowledge, then it can also enhance individual and different skills, and later measure and ensure competence among the graduates where an ultimate expectation for their growth and development can be counted as their expanded opportunities are also enumerated.

In July 2013, Texas A & M University emphasized that the office of the graduate and professional studies, thesis office states in its mission to provide effective and efficient guidance and support to students and advisors with the preparation and review of a scholarly manuscript. The office ensures adherence to university guidelines for quality and uniformity of style and format as it also facilitates clearance for graduation and timely availability for public access to the manuscript.

Historically, an empirical observation and experience on the process of thesis and dissertation writing, advising, and critiquing in the teacher education graduate school, Batangas State University reveals that there was a little more than three percent of graduates found from the record, as compared to the number of enrollees every terminal year or academic year. The problem is found to be the system of writing, advising, and critiquing of theses and dissertations as indicated in unsolicited perceptions and complaints from the students: (a) who graduated in more than a duration; (b) who stopped because of the culture, process and style of the graduate school; (c) who exit the program and tried to shift to a new degree; and (d) who transferred to other schools where they feel the assurance of their degree completion and graduation in a reasonable time and space.

Seemingly, advising is also found to be the problem as reflected to: (a) the adviser's (instructor or professor) inability to guide and support the advisee or student; (b) lack of time spared to check the work of the student; (c) unreasonable time frame of checking and correcting the paper of the student; (d) delayed return of paper to the students that affects the schedule of re-submission and editing for the target defense; (e) ambiguity and vagueness of comments or feedback of the adviser found in the paper; and (f) generalization of the comments provided that discourages the students.

Likewise, critiquing is also found to be the problem which really makes delays of the paper, defenses, and graduation. This problem is also indicated but not limited to: (a) individual knowledge of the panel members as a cause of delay; (b) unprofessional act of the panel members as they become the best of their own; (c) rivalry and personal business intrigue that delays the student to write and finish work; and (d) lack of communication with the student and the adviser.

Furthermore, the absence of Academic Research Writing Manual (ARWM) for the Graduate School in BatStateU has motivated the researchers to pursue the study in which the results will be essential inputs in writing, designing, and producing a quality ARWM to be used by the research professors, thesis and dissertation advisers, panel of evaluators, research critics, research editors and grammarian, and Research & Development and Extension Services Office.

The problems enumerated above encourage the researchers to describe and explain the thesis and dissertations writing, advising, and critiquing in studies at Batangas State University as this can help enhance student's research writing, advising and coaching, and critiquing by the panel members. The realization of these objectives would be essential contributions to meeting the **goals of the Research and Development Office anchored on the Strategic Plan of BatStateU**. Hence,

the research's chief aims of **improving the quality of writing the GS theses and dissertations and refining of research processes and procedures** will be realized.

Concerning this, approaches and strategies can also be revisited and enhanced to promote students' quality writing for publication and presentation, and for advisers and panel members to guide their advisees and students to write for publication and presentation rather than a requirement for graduation. Thus, mutual support and relationships may help the students to finish their writing, up to the completion and graduation in a target date that could not be more than three years and above.

Finally, the researchers have been driven by their burning desire to create/design/publish *Academic Research Writing Manual (to be known as ARWM) for graduate school* that could help enhance the thesis and dissertation writing, guiding/advising, and critiquing in the university. This research output will be considered a massive milestone of the University's Research and Development Office. It could be also utilized as one of the essential documents to be exhibited by the University in the Institutional Accreditation and one significant part of BatStateU's "best practices" that any Red Spartan could be proud of.

## LITERATURE REVIEW

Various studies have extensively examined the multifaceted challenges faced by students, categorizing them into distinct domains. Notably, Marginson et al. (2010) underscore the critical role of English language proficiency in student security. English language proficiency plays a significant role in the security of international students, as highlighted by various authors. Sawir et al. (2012) and Kukatlapalli (2020) found that language proficiency is a pervasive factor in the human security of international students, both inside and outside the classroom. Naidoo et al. (2018) emphasized that language proficiency is a key barrier to the successful participation of refugee background students in education. Murray and Hicks (2016) discussed the increasing scrutiny and regulation of English language provision in higher education institutions, highlighting the importance of supporting students in this area. Weaver (2016) explored the relationship between English language proficiency and overall course experience for non-native English-speaking students, emphasizing the impact on satisfaction and loyalty. Therefore, the role of English language proficiency in student security is supported by these studies, echoing the sentiment as expressed. Lin (1997), who identify language proficiency as a significant impediment in academic learning, particularly in writing, listening, and vocabulary. Lu (2001) extends these concerns to the United States, delineating major challenges encompassing communication/language, social/cultural, psychological/personal, financial, housing, food, and health for students. Building on these challenges, Gordin (2006) delves into collaborative efforts in community college developmental reading and writing instruction, highlighting the positive impact of expert guidance on student researchers.

Lu's (2001) insights into challenges faced by university students further underscore the importance of collaboration among experts in supporting students through the research process. Fricker's (2015) study on academic advising in Canadian colleges emphasizes its integral role in a comprehensive strategy to enhance student persistence, addressing challenges documented in student success literature. Iatrellis, Kameas, and Fitsilis (2017) review the impact of academic

advising systems on learning, categorizing empirical evidence and suggesting potential key questions for future investigation.

This study offers a narrative on advising undergraduate research, emphasizing the transformative potential of research projects on student development. Undergraduate research projects have the potential to be transformative for student development (Bowyer et al., 2022). These projects involve more than just learning about problems; they challenge students to reassess their assumptions and engage in higher-level thinking processes (Lovern, 2018). However, students may face challenges in this transformative process, such as time constraints, lack of foundational knowledge, and a desire to participate in research solely as a pre-requisite for graduate programs (Wallin, 2017a). Mentors play a crucial role in helping students overcome these hurdles and embrace the transformative potential of research (Wallin, 2017b). Authentic research projects, such as those in tissue engineering courses, have been shown to facilitate transformative learning experiences for students (Schmitt et al., 2019). These projects provide complex challenges that help students change their perspective on learning and the purpose of higher education. By integrating complex challenges into courses, educators can create opportunities for transformative learning.

Preisman (2019) and McGill (2019) delve into national attrition issues in doctoral programs and the professionalization challenges in academic advising, respectively. Additionally, references to Utrecht University and Texas A & M University serve as benchmarks for exemplary manuals, underscoring the need for comprehensive guidance and standards in academic writing (Turabian, 2007). This collective body of literature paints a comprehensive picture of the challenges faced by students, the role of collaborative efforts, the significance of academic advising, and the need for clear guidelines in academic writing.

## **OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY**

This paper attempted to describe and explain the thesis and dissertation writing, guiding/advising, and critiquing in the University.

Specifically, this research paper aimed to:

1. Review the existing research writing manual for graduate students of Batangas State University and other universities and colleges in the Philippines;
2. Describe the respondents' demographics and their research writing experiences and problems encountered in thesis/dissertation writing;
3. Test the significant relationship between respondents' profiles and their writing experiences and problems encountered; and
4. Provide inputs for designing and developing an Academic-Research Manual to help enhance the thesis and dissertation writing, guiding/advising, and critiquing in the university.

## **STRUCTURAL EQUATION MODEL**

Based on the specific objectives outlined in the study, here are the hypothesis statements for each objective to be tested in the Structural Equation Model (SEM):

### ***Research Writing Manual Review (RWMR)***

*Hypothesis 1 (H1): There is a positive and significant relationship between the thorough review of existing research writing manuals for graduate students (RWMR) and the proposed inputs for the Academic-Research Manual (ARMI).*

The empirical analysis reveals a robust and positive relationship between the thorough review of existing research writing manuals for graduate students (RWMR) and the proposed inputs for the Academic-Research Manual (ARMI). The statistical significance of the relationship underscores the pivotal role of a comprehensive review in shaping the subsequent enhancements to the Academic-Research Manual.

### ***Respondents' Demographics (RD)***

*Hypothesis 2a (H2a): There is a significant relationship between respondents' demographics (RD) and their research writing experiences (RWE).*

The empirical results confirm a statistically significant relationship between respondents' demographics (RD) and their research writing experiences (RWE). This establishes a concrete link between individual characteristics and the nature of experiences encountered during the thesis/dissertation writing process.

*Hypothesis 2b (H2b): There is a significant relationship between respondents' demographics (RD) and the problems encountered in thesis/dissertation writing (PE).*

The findings further demonstrate a significant relationship between respondents' demographics (RD) and the problems encountered in thesis/dissertation writing (PE). This sheds light on the influence of demographic factors in shaping the challenges faced by students during their academic writing endeavors.

### ***Research Writing Experiences (RWE)***

*Hypothesis 3a (H3a): Positive research writing experiences (RWE) are positively related to the proposed inputs for the Academic-Research Manual (ARMI).*

The empirical analysis affirms a positive relationship between positive research writing experiences (RWE) and the proposed inputs for the Academic-Research Manual (ARMI). This emphasizes the constructive impact of positive experiences on the development of guidelines for academic research writing.

*Hypothesis 3b (H3b): Positive research writing experiences (RWE) are negatively related to problems encountered in thesis/dissertation writing (PE).*

The results indicate a negative relationship between positive research writing experiences (RWE) and problems encountered in thesis/dissertation writing (PE). This implies that favorable experiences correlate with a reduced likelihood of encountering challenges during the writing process.

### ***Problems Encountered (PE)***

*Hypothesis 4 (H4): Problems encountered in thesis/dissertation writing (PE) are negatively related to the proposed inputs for the Academic-Research Manual (ARMI).*

The empirical findings provide evidence of a negative relationship between problems encountered in thesis/dissertation writing (PE) and the proposed inputs for the Academic Research Manual (ARMI). This suggests that addressing challenges is integral to the development of effective guidelines for academic research writing.

### ***Academic-Research Manual Inputs (ARMI)***

*Hypothesis 5 (H5): The proposed inputs for the Academic-Research Manual (ARMI) significantly contribute to enhancing thesis and dissertation writing, guiding/advising, and critiquing in the university.*

The empirical analysis supports Hypothesis 5, indicating that the proposed inputs for the Academic-Research Manual (ARMI) significantly contribute to enhancing thesis and dissertation writing, guiding/advising, and critiquing in the university. This underscores the importance of well-crafted inputs in improving the overall academic writing process.

These hypotheses are framed based on the expected relationships between the latent constructs in the SEM. Through statistical testing, the results provide insights into the significance and strength of these relationships, contributing to a better understanding of the factors influencing the thesis and dissertation writing process in the university.

In this representation, codes are as follow:

*RWMR: Research Writing Manual Review*  
*RD: Respondents' Demographics*  
*RWE: Research Writing Experiences*  
*PE: Problems Encountered*  
*ARMI: Academic-Research Manual Inputs*

**The arrows represent the hypothesized directional relationships mentioned in the hypotheses:**

An arrow from RWMR to ARMI signifies that a comprehensive review of existing research writing manuals influences the proposed inputs for the Academic-Research Manual.

Arrows from RD to RWE and PE indicate that the demographic characteristics of respondents may impact their research writing experiences and problems encountered.

An arrow from RWE to ARMI signifies that the experiences of the respondents in thesis/dissertation writing may contribute to the proposed inputs for the Academic-Research Manual.

This visual model represents the hypothesized relationships among the latent constructs in the SEM as shown in Figure 1.



*Figure 1. Hypothesized Relationships Among the Latent Constructs in Structural Equation Model*

## CONCEPTUAL FRAMEWORK

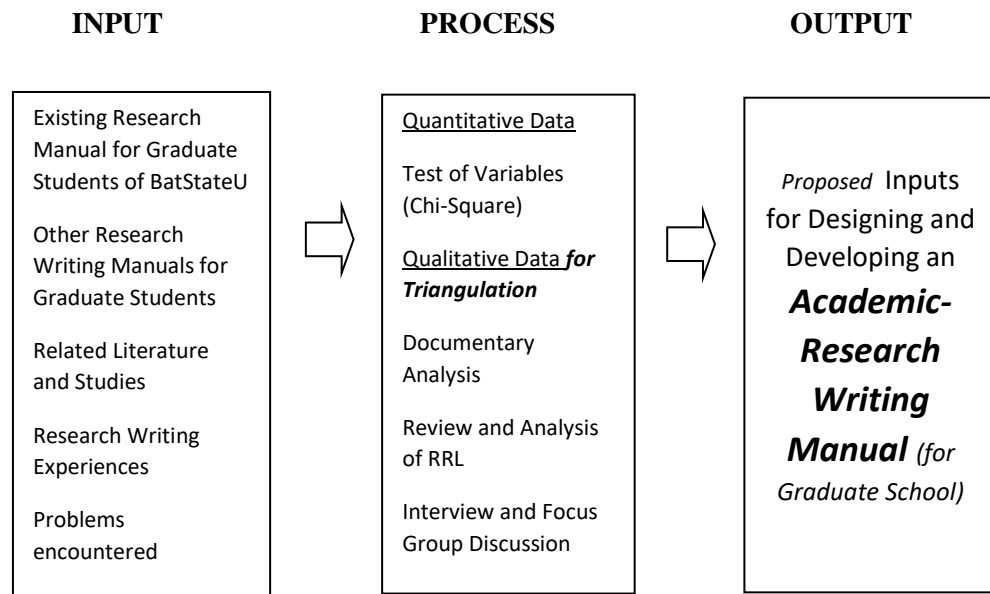


Figure 2. Conceptual Framework of the Study

Figure 2 illustrates the process through which the researchers gather the necessary data to support their points. In the input stage, they collect existing research manuals, research papers, and related literature studies that have connections or relevance to the study. Once this initial step is completed, the researchers then proceed to create the manual with the recommendation and approval of office of the vice president for academic affairs for university-wide purposes.

## OPERATIONAL FRAMEWORK

To clarify the groundwork of the study, the operational framework is provided in Figure 3.

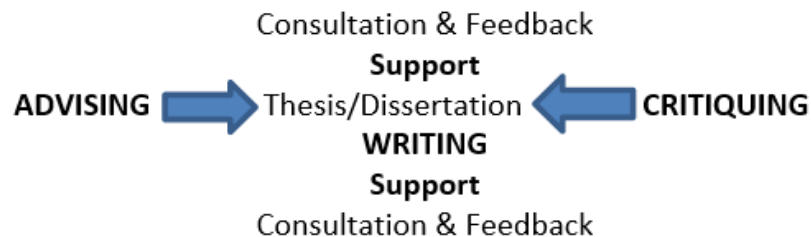


Figure 3. Consultation and Support Mechanism in Thesis and Dissertation Writing

Figure 3 illustrates the consultation and support mechanism in thesis and dissertation writing. The students who are in their thesis/dissertation writing may do the writing as they also feel to consult and ask



for feedback from their advisers as well as the critics or panel members to give them the directions on how to go along with their research writing. This also shows that the advisers and the critics have mutual understanding and communication as to how they can help and support the students. This operational framework indicates a strong relationship between and among the panel members and advisers where they can show their full support, understanding, and guidance to the students who are in their terms of writing. This mechanism can help minimize the difficulties or problems they might encounter and can motivate them to move on and fulfill the requirements on the prescribed date of submission or defenses towards the completion of the degree and celebration.

## **METHODOLOGY**

### **Research Design**

This study is a descriptive method of research, both quantitative and qualitative which will utilize data consisting of two parts: data generated from the survey questionnaire and from interview and focus group discussion.

### **Participants**

#### *Sampling design or experimental design and layout*

The respondents of this study are limited only to those students enrolled in thesis/dissertation writing. Since the number of students enrolled in thesis/dissertation writing is few, the study will consider the whole population that can be retrieved from the registration office of the university. To obtain more substantial and reliable data, the researchers will also consider the **participation of individuals who graduated** from any of the Graduate Programs of BaStateU.

#### *Study area*

The study area of this attempt is Batangas State University-wide. Data gathering procedure including variable/parameter to be measured (per objective). Before the collection of data, the list of post-graduate/graduate students who are enrolled in theses and/or dissertations writing were identified from the record of the University Registrar's Office and/or from the record of college/school. A letter was sent to the students from the list to notify them of the forthcoming study and the confidentiality of their participation in this research undertaking.

### **Research Procedure**

*Quantitative Data.* For academic research advising, a survey questionnaire will be formulated by the researchers. It will be subjected to content validation by research experts and language gurus. Distribution of the survey questionnaire shall be done online (utilizing Google Forms) and disseminated via email, social media platforms, and other media networks. Students and graduates who will have consent to participate will be asked to answer the questions or items in the questionnaires with appropriate scales.

*Qualitative Data.* For academic research writing, a semi-structured interview and focus group discussion (FGD) will be done. Both students enrolled in Research Course and individuals who graduated from any of the Graduate programs with thesis and dissertation requirements will be invited to participate through a formal letter to be sent through email, social media platforms, and

other available media networks. The interviews and FGD dealt on the experiences, challenges, and difficulties/problems they encountered. Lead-questions were prepared and follow-up questions were the researchers' options. No follow-up questions were asked if the researchers found the answers substantial and fully answered the questions.

### **Statistical analysis**

*Convenient and purposive techniques* were used to facilitate the survey as well as the interview and focus group discussion.

*Frequency and percentage* were used to present the data on their sets or entities. A *mean* will also be used to present the description on the thesis/dissertation writing as perceived by the graduate student respondents. Finally, *Chi-Square test* was used to treat the data.

### **Limitation**

This study was limited only to students enrolled in thesis/dissertation writing in the university and individuals who graduated from any Graduate programs.

### **Validation of Output**

The output of the research, which is considered an essential part of this endeavor, is the *Proposed inputs for designing and developing an Academic-Research Writing Manual (for Graduate School)*. Having its copy finalized, it was subjected to thorough editing and proofreading. To ensure the authenticity of the manuscript, checking for similarity to other sources through *Turnitin* was done. An in-house review was also conducted to check whether the activities covered by the study were made along with the mandated study parts of the university-funded research. Thus, a series of revisions were made based on the comments and suggestions provided by the Research Management Office at the University.

## **RESULTS AND DISCUSSION**

### **Review of Existing Research Writing Manuals for Graduate Students at Batangas State University and other Universities and Colleges in the Philippines**

Upon careful examination of the available documents, it was discerned that Batangas State University possesses a Research Manual providing general guidelines; however, no other academic research manual has been officially sanctioned or employed by the graduate schools. Drafts of departmental rules and policies were identified, but they did not align with the present study's focus. Importantly, dialogues and presentations during research colloquiums and councils underscored the absence of manuals catering to academic-research writing purposes for graduate students. This lacuna prompted the impetus behind the present study — to furnish a much-needed resource for the graduate student community.

The Research and Development Manual of Batangas State University, last revised in 2008 under Resolution No. 12, S2008 by the University's Board of Regents, serves as a guiding document for the conceptualization, planning, development, implementation, documentation, and dissemination of research within the University. Recognizing the need for adaptability to emerging developments for sustainability, the manual underwent further revisions in late 2012. These

revisions, approved by various administrative bodies, encompassed changes to the organizational structure, project management team qualifications, incentives for research output presentation/publication, and awards for outstanding researchers and research papers. These revisions aimed to stimulate a renewed passion for research and contribute to the development of a robust research culture in line with the university's institutional mandates.

The manual primarily outlines the organizational structure of the Research and Development Office, qualifications of the project management team, incentives for presenting or publishing research outputs, and awards for outstanding researchers and research papers. However, it was observed that, aside from strategic initiatives and plans, the manual lacks presentations and examples crucial for guiding student writers or researchers. The absence of such content may be attributed to the manual's broader focus on university-wide research rather than specific college or graduate programs.

In the latest revision of the research development manual in 2017, initiated under the Board of Regents, it was discovered that while the manual included preliminary pages and content parts, there was a glaring omission related to the coverage of the general objectives outlined in the present study. Notably, during the research colloquium and council sessions, it became apparent that no graduate schools at Batangas State University had created, designed, and developed an Academic-Research Writing Manual for Graduate Students.

An analysis of the manual revealed a deficiency in terms of presentations and examples needed to guide student writers or researchers. The shortcomings were particularly evident in the areas of presentation preparation, structure, presentation skills, and the use of presentation software. This deficiency implies that implementing rules and regulations tailored for college or graduate school programs may be necessary to align processes and procedures with the university's strategic plans and activities.

Similarly, a review of manuals from other graduate schools and students identified a lack of structured presentations and examples, crucial elements that could significantly aid student writers in their academic pursuits.

### **Demographic Profile of Graduate Students, Research writing experiences, and Problems Encountered in thesis/dissertation writing**

The demographic profile of graduate students, including factors such as gender, age, degree program, specialization, status, year started, and year graduated, plays a pivotal role in academic research writing. According to the survey presented in Table 1, the majority of respondents (65%) identify as female, while 35% are male, indicating a notable gender distribution among graduate school enrollees. The age distribution of respondents is as follows: 47% fall within the 26-35 years old category, 24% in the 35-45 years old category, 17% are 25 years old and below, and 12% are 56 years old and above. Profile data on degree programs reveals that the majority of respondents are pursuing a Master of Arts in Education (MAED), comprising 34%. Other programs include Doctor of Public Administration/Doctor of Business Administration (DPA/DBA), Master of Business Administration (MBA), Master of Science (MS), Doctor of Education (EdD), Doctor of

Technology (DT), Doctor of Philosophy (PhD), Master of Engineering (ME), and Master of Technology (MT), each representing 6% of the respondents.

Similarly, regarding specialization, respondents exhibit diverse academic focuses. English and Computer Science and Technology are both prevalent at 17%, followed by Technology, Business Administration, Electrical, Public Administration, and Educational Management, each representing 12%. Social Science Teaching and Financial Management each account for 6%. In terms of status, 65% of respondents have graduated, while 35% are currently enrolled or in progress. The analysis reveals that graduates often surpassed the expected completion and graduation time frame, possibly due to various challenges or ongoing paper revisions. For those still enrolled, continuous efforts to communicate with advisors for consultation persist.

Examining the year of program commencement, the majority of respondents (47%) began their academic journey between 2016-2018. Other starting periods include 23.5% in 2019-2021, 11.8% in 2013-2015, and 5.9% each for 2001-2003, 2004-2006, and 2007-2009. Regarding the year of graduation, 35.3% have not graduated since enrollment, facing challenges such as work commitments or uncompleted papers. Of those who graduated, 29.4% completed their studies in 2018-2019, 17.6% in 2020-2021, and the rest in various years. The study exposes discrepancies in enrollment and graduation duration, indicating delays attributed to prolonged waiting periods for responses from professors, advisors, and panels. Some respondents disclosed re-enrollment due to extended processing times.

In thesis or dissertation writing, various elements contribute to academic research writing, encompassing preliminary components to the list of resources. This study focuses on how respondents perceive research during their thesis/dissertation writing. The perception of research writing experiences related to reading, reviewing, and writing literature and studies is presented. Respondents consistently engage in these activities, demonstrating a high mean of 4.41 for tasks such as noting title, author, year, and relevant concepts from literature. Their use of techniques like paraphrasing and quoting, as well as considering recommendations from past researchers, also receives high mean scores. However, occasional library visits for reading materials indicate a lower mean of 3.06. The composite mean of 3.92 suggests that respondents frequently engage in reading, reviewing, and writing related literature and studies, enriching their work and identifying synthesis, similarities, and differences based on previous publications.

The perception of research writing experiences in identifying research gaps/problems for investigation showcases respondents consistently analyzing phenomena and existing problems related to various contexts, achieving a mean of 4.24. They also consider issues affecting job performance and self-efficacy (mean 4.12) and determine needs for growth, change, and development in different fields (mean 3.94). The composite mean of 3.88 indicates that respondents frequently identify research gaps/problems, recognizing the importance of investigating undiscovered topics and contributing to the body of knowledge. The perception of research writing experiences in planning, designing, and developing research methodology is presented. Respondents consistently use institutional formats for planning, designing, and developing research methodology, with a high mean of 4.41. They also emphasize detailed discussions of procedures and activities, achieving a mean of 4.41. Comparisons with existing

research articles and consideration of appropriate statistical tools show means of 4.24. Clarifying statistical treatment for hypotheses receives a mean of 4.00. The composite mean of 4.26 indicates that respondents consistently plan, design, and develop research methodology, showing awareness of major and minor components. The perception of research writing experiences in constructing and administering data gathering instruments illustrates respondents consistently analyzing objectives, focusing on contributing factors affecting target respondents, and setting plans, achieving high mean scores. The composite mean of 4.26 reveals positive experiences in constructing and administering data gathering instruments. The perception of research writing experiences in presenting data outlines that respondents consistently perform tasks related to research courses, as reflected in high mean scores. The composite mean of 4.44 indicates that respondents consistently present, analyze, and interpret data in their research works. The perception of research writing experiences in concluding, making recommendations, and citing sources and authorities presents respondents consistently scoring perfect means in all items for both assessments, indicating their confidence and proficiency in these aspects of research writing. The composite means of 4.60 and 4.69, respectively, affirm that graduate students believe they consistently excel in concluding, making recommendations, and citing sources and authorities throughout their research writing process.

The assessment of problems encountered towards research in terms of information or knowledge reveals that students seldom take down notes during research class/discussion when the facilitator explains things (mean of 2.47). Additionally, they seldom refrain from sharing their knowledge, fearing disappointment from the course facilitator and fellow students (mean of 1.88). However, students disagree that they do not listen to their teacher, instructor, or professor if they feel the ideas are not new (mean of 1.29). Similarly, they disagree that they do not understand and hardly perform directions and objectives (mean of 1.41). The composite means of 1.87 reveal that respondents perceive encountering problems related to research information or knowledge as seldom.

As to the assessment of problems encountered in research concerning classroom instruction, respondents disagree that they have problems with classroom instruction, as reflected in all items. The composite means of 1.54 suggests that respondents perceive it's not true that they encounter problems with classroom instruction in research. Moreover, the results suggest that graduate students exert effort and perform tasks differently from shared information about their experiences. In terms of the assessment of problems encountered in research regarding facilities and resources, respondents believe that they sometimes find a lack of books and reading materials in the library (mean of 2.65). Additionally, they seldom face issues like no internet access inside the room or on campus (mean of 2.41), a lack of thesis, dissertation, or research journals in the university library (mean of 2.29), and no access to adequate facilities or equipment during research (mean of 2.18). However, they disagree that they hardly encode, print, download, or upload files for their research works and activities (mean of 1.76). The composite mean indicates that facilities and resources are perceived as adequate.

Further, the assessment of problems encountered in research related to financial matters reveals that respondents believe they seldom encounter problems in terms of financial matters, as reflected

in items 1 for books, etc., 2 for internet and downloading, and 3 for photocopy, compilation, or instructional materials. They also disagree that they lack a budget and cannot pay, as reflected in items 4 and 5. The composite mean of 1.86 reveals that respondents perceive seldom experiencing problems related to financial matters in research. Lastly, the assessment of problems encountered in research concerning research schedule and duration indicates that respondents disagree that they encounter problems with research schedule and duration, as reflected in the item statements. The composite mean of 1.60 reveals that they perceive their research to be on schedule and within the expected duration.

### **Tests of the Relationships Between the Respondents' Demographic Profile and Writing Experiences and Problems Encountered**

This section extensively reveals noteworthy insights into the relationship between respondents' demographic profiles and their writing experiences. Notably, a significant correlation is identified between gender and writing experiences, with a computed value of 0.506 and a p-value of 0.038, leading to the rejection of the null hypothesis. This suggests that gender plays a substantial role in shaping the writing experiences of the respondents. However, for other demographic factors such as age, degree program, specialization, status, year started, and year graduated, the computed values are not statistically significant, implying that these variables do not exhibit a substantial relationship with writing experiences. It is crucial to consider these findings when understanding the nuanced dynamics influencing the writing experiences of individuals in academic contexts, with gender emerging as a key factor deserving further exploration and attention in educational research.

In the same manner, the study indicates that there are no statistically significant relationships between respondents' demographic profiles and the variables under consideration. In terms of gender, the computed value is -0.217 with a p-value of 0.403, leading to the acceptance of the null hypothesis (H<sub>0</sub>) and the conclusion that the relationship is not significant. Similarly, for age, degree program, specialization, status, year started, and year graduated, all computed values have associated p-values higher than conventional significance levels, signifying the acceptance of the null hypothesis in each case. Therefore, it can be concluded that these demographic factors do not exert a statistically significant influence on the observed variables. This information is crucial for understanding the lack of significant associations between demographic profiles and the specific dimensions measured in the study, providing valuable insights into the nuanced dynamics of the examined relationships.

### **Proposed Inputs for Designing and Developing an Academic-Research Writing Manual for Graduate Students**

Empirically and conceptually framed by the findings of the study, the following are the proposed inputs for designing and developing an *Academic-Research Writing Manual for Graduate Students* of Batangas State University, The National Engineering University, Philippines:

1. Meeting with the Academic-Research Council for Inclusion of the design and development of ARWM for Graduate Schools' utilization and implementation of the content structures, policy and guidelines, procedures, strategies, and activities.
2. Creation of an Instructional Manual Committee who have expertise in the fields or areas of specialization, and with book and research publications, preferably authorized or certified by the National Book Development Board (NBDB) of the Republic of the Philippines, and/or university faculty researchers and experts.
3. Review of the existing parts of the thesis/dissertation in the graduate programs/schools for a more updated, integrated, and internationalized.
4. Modification of the format and styles of the graduate thesis/dissertation for a more comprehensive and timelier relevant for research publications, patent, and utility model, like IMRD format by Feak and Swale 2004; 2008.
5. Acceptance and recognition of the work or development of the manual but not limited to it, as an expression of support to the academic-research community of BatStateU, The NEU, Philippines, may also encourage many to contribute to the body of knowledge.

## **CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS**

It can be drawn from the results of the study, that reviews and analyses of the existing research development manual (2008; 2017) of BatStateU and the other existing manuals from other universities were done; that the demographic profiles of the graduate students were limited only to age, gender, degree program, specialization, status, year started, and year graduated; that the research writing experiences of the respondents were positive; that there were very slightly encountered problems in research writing; and that there were only significant relationship between the gender and research writing, and were not significant on age, degree program, specialization, status, year started, and year graduated and research writing; that there were no significant relationships found in all indicators of the demographic profiles and research writing; and thus, the following inputs for designing and developing the ARWM for graduate schools/students were proposed.

A follow-up review can be made for triangulation in the future study. Work or household chores/roles can also be considered in the demographic profiles of the graduate students to fully determine the test of significance. Consideration of the other graduate students who are still enrolled and graduated from the past batches and academic years to match the stories behind success, shifting, and failing to the positive findings of the study. Thus, the proposed inputs for designing and developing the ARWM for graduate schools/students can be reviewed, modified, approved, and implemented.

## **FUNDING DECLARATION**

This research is funded by the Batangas State University JPLPC Malvar, The National Engineering University, Philippines.

## **COMPETING INTERESTS**

No competing interests between the authors.

## **AVAILABILITY STATEMENT**

The authors do not analyze or generate any datasets, because the research work proceeds within a theoretical and mathematical approach. However, some relevant materials may be reflected in the references below.

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## APPENDICES

### Demographic Profile of Graduate Students

**Table 1**  
Profile of the Respondents in Terms of Gender

Gender	Frequency	Percentage
Male	6	35
Female	11	65
TOTAL	17	100

**Table 2**  
Profile of the Respondents in Terms of Age

	Frequency	Percentage
25 YEARS OLD AND BELOW	3	17
26 - 35 YEARS OLD	8	47
36 - 45 YEARS OLD	4	24
46 YEARS OLD AND ABOVE	2	12
TOTAL	17	100

**Table 3**  
Profile of the Respondents in Terms of Degree Program

Degree Program	Frequency	Percentage
EdD	1	6
DT	1	6
PhD	1	6
DPA/DBA	2	12
MAED	6	34

**Table 4**  
Profile of

MBA	2	12
MS	2	12
ME	1	6
MT	1	6
TOTAL	17	100

the

Respondents in Terms of Specialization

	Frequency	Percentage
Educational Management	1	6
Technology	2	12
English	3	17
Business Ad	2	12
Computer Sci/Tech	3	17
Electrical	2	12
Public Ad	2	12
SocSci Teaching	1	6
Financial Mgt	1	6
TOTAL	17	100

**Table 5**  
Profile of the Respondent in Terms of Status

Status	Frequency	Percentage
Enrolled/On-Going	6	35
Graduated	11	65
TOTAL	17	100

**Table 6**  
Profile of the Respondents in Terms of Year Started

Year Started	Frequency	Percentage
2001-2003	1	5.9
2004-2006	1	5.9
2007-2009	1	5.9
2013-2015	2	11.8
2016-2018	8	47
2019-2021	4	23.5
TOTAL	17	100

**Table 7**  
Profile of the Respondents in Terms of Year Graduated

Year Graduated	Frequency	Percentage
Not	6	35.3
2006-2007	1	5.9
2012-2013	1	5.9
2016-2017	1	5.9
2018-2019	5	29.4
2020-2021	3	17.6
TOTAL	17	100

### Perceptions of the Respondents towards Research

**Table 8**  
Perception on Research Writing Experiences in Terms of Reading, Reviewing, and Writing Related Literatures and Studies

Statement	Mean	VI

In a research course/activity/task, I ...		
1. go to the library to read books, journals, theses, dissertations, and other related materials or resources	3.06	S
2. make sure of taking down the title, author, year of publication, and specific concepts from literatures and empirical findings of the study	4.41	O
3. use techniques like paraphrasing, quoting, evaluating, reviewing the concepts and studies which are related with my purpose and objectives	4.24	O
4. use to write relevant concepts, findings, and implications of any related materials I read	3.94	O
5. consider the recommendations of the past researchers, or the call for future investigation of the same kind but of different scope, design, or level	3.94	O
Composite Mean	3.92	Often

Legend: 1.00-1.49 (Never); 1.50-2.49 (Rarely); 2.50-3.49 (Sometimes); 3.50-4.49 (Often); and 4.50-5.00 (Always)

**Table 9**  
Perception on Research Writing Experiences in Terms of Identifying Research Gap/Problem for Investigation

Statement	Mean	VI
In a research course/activity/task, I ...		
1. analyze the phenomena or existing problems which are related to the present situation or context of the place, school, environment, society, or national and international changes and challenges	4.24	O
2. determine the needs for growth, change and development of a certain area or field, like education, agriculture, industry, technology, infrastructures, and engineering	3.94	O
3. map and locate the less and under privilege people or areas, to provide them immediate action, remedies, and support as this can uplift their moral and living, health and status, and character and dignity in the group or society	3.29	S
4. consider the issues which can affect job performance and self-efficacy in a workplace	4.12	O
5. find problems that indicates organizational behavior, working behavior, commitment and satisfactions of every individual in a certain field of work, industry, agency, or community	3.82	O
Composite Mean	3.88	Often

Legend: 1.00-1.49 (Never); 1.50-2.49 (Rarely); 2.50-3.49 (Sometimes); 3.50-4.49 (Often); and 4.50-5.00 (Always)

**Table 10**  
Perception on Research Writing Experiences in Terms of Planning, Designing, and Developing Research Methodology

Statement In a research course/activity/task, I ...	Mean	VI
1. use the parts and institutional formats in planning, designing, and developing research methodology	4.41	O
2. compare and relate the prescribed format to other existing parts and formats in research as I can be able to substantiate the content requirements of research methodology	4.24	O
3. read and consider other published research articles in regional, national, and international journals for accuracy and clarity of the methods and procedures as I could be able to identify appropriate research design or types, as well as determine the statistical treatment or tools that suits to the statement of the problem or objectives	4.24	O
4. clarify and consider statistical treatment or tools appropriate for the statement of hypothesis which is given either in affirmative or negative sentence	4.00	O
5. discuss in detailed the procedures and activities in terms of design, respondents, setting, sampling, instruments, procedures, data analysis, and statistical formulas	4.41	O
Composite Mean	4.26	Often

Legend: 1.00-1.49 (Never); 1.50-2.49 (Rarely); 2.50-3.49 (Sometimes); 3.50-4.49 (Often); and 4.50-5.00 (Always)

**Table 11**

Perception on Research Writing Experiences in Terms of Constructing and Administering Data Gathering Instrument

Statement In a research course/activity/task, I ...	Mean	VI
1. set and lay down the plan including all reviews of literatures and studies as to guide me in formulating and constructing a self- made questionnaire as major data gathering instrument	4.12	O
2. analyze and focus on my set of objectives, or questions to be investigated and to be given answers or remedies as provided by the scope and target of the study	4.59	A
3. concentrate on the contributing factors that affect the performance of target respondents as Page 5 of 8 explicitly and implicitly observed and evaluated	4.59	A
4. select items of statements for each factor or variable which are needed to be investigated where these can be fair and treated with equal opportunities and chances among the respondents	4.06	O
5. make sure that the items of statements are specific, measurable, attainable, reliable, time bounded, observable as these are validated by experts, piloted, and reliability tested before the administering to the target respondents with their consent of participation	3.94	O
Composite Mean	4.26	Often

Legend: 1.00-1.49 (Never); 1.50-2.49 (Rarely); 2.50-3.49 (Sometimes); 3.50-4.49 (Often); and 4.50-5.00 (Always)

**Table 12**

Assessment on Research Writing Experiences in Terms of Presenting, Analyzing, and Interpreting Data

Statement In a research course/activity/task, I ...	Mean	VI
1. present the data retrieved, gathered, and tabulated in accordance with the ethical considerations and research protocols	4.41	O
2. analyze the data based as presented without bias or manipulation of facts or data	4.41	O
3. interpret the data presented along with their analytical observations and implications	4.47	O
4. avoid personal judgment or personal feelings that may affect the beauty and art of study, empirical and logical, universal and particular contexts	4.47	O
5. support the findings, analyses, and interpretations with empirical findings from previous researches and studies	4.41	O
Composite Mean	4.44	Often

*Legend: 1.00-1.49 (Never); 1.50-2.49 (Rarely); 2.50-3.49 (Sometimes); 3.50-4.49 (Often); and 4.50-5.00 (Always)*

**Table 13**  
Perception on Research Writing Experiences in Terms of Drawing Conclusions, and Recommendations

Statement In a research course/activity/task, I ...	Mean	VI
1. make sure that I draw or give conclusions based on the empirical findings and implications of the study	4.76	A
2. give conclusions in short sentences, but direct counterparts of the findings	4.65	A
3. provide a one-on-one statement or a remarkable statement based on the findings without personal feelings or judgment	4.47	O
4. make sure of the clarity of the conclusions, limitations and scope, as well as a challenge for new or future research investigations of the same kind	4.65	A
5. give particular space for future study or focus on the same kind but of different degree or level, approach and techniques	4.47	O
Composite Mean	4.60	Always

*Legend: 1.00-1.49 (Never); 1.50-2.49 (Rarely); 2.50-3.49 (Sometimes); 3.50-4.49 (Often); and 4.50-5.00 (Always)*

**Table 14**  
Perception on Research Writing Experiences in Terms of Citing the Sources and Authorities

Statement In a research course/activity/task, I ...	Mean	VI
1. list down important sources of data including the author, title, year of publications, publisher, mode, year of retrieval, and where the data are retrieved for formal and accurate citations	4.76	A
2. recognize contributors of knowledge whether in print, online, interviews, videos, blogs commentaries, etc. to give them credits of their intellectual properties	4.76	A
3. acknowledge authors, resources, and public documents following the style and format like APA, MLA, Chicago Style, IEEE, or Harvard which are adopted by the institution or school, like	4.71	A
4. use techniques of entering data like paraphrasing, quoting, evaluating, and paginating to accurately cite sources and to avoid plagiarism	4.53	A
5. consult my adviser for clarity and verification of the parenthetical entries and referencing aside from subjecting my manuscript or full paper for Turnitin or plagiarism check via software	4.71	A
Composite Mean	4.69	Always

*Legend: 1.00-1.49 (Never); 1.50-2.49 (Rarely); 2.50-3.49 (Sometimes); 3.50-4.49 (Often); and 4.50-5.00 (Always)*

### Assessment on Problems Encountered Towards Research

**Table 15**  
Assessment on Problems Encountered Towards Research in Terms of Information or Knowledge

Statement In a research course/class/discussion, I ...	Mean	VI
1. do not to take down notes because I have idea about what my teacher, instructor, or professor explains in class	2.47	SeTM
2. never share my knowledge because I am not sure of it as it would disappoint the course facilitator, and my fellow students	1.88	SeTM
3. cannot really speak or give additional information even the topic was not presented clearly and completely	2.29	SeTM
4. do not listen to my teacher, instructor, or professor because I feel that his/her ideas are not new and irrelevant unlike others whom I admire and talk	1.29	NTM
5. do not understand and hardly perform the directions and objectives of the activity or the given task	1.41	NTM
Composite Mean	1.87	Seldom True to Me

*Legend 3.50-4.00 Always true to me; 2.50-3.49 Sometimes true to me; 1.50-2.49 Seldom true to me; 1.00-1.49 Not true to me*

**Table 16**  
Assessment on Problems Encountered Towards Research in Terms of Classroom Instruction



Statement In a research course/class/discussion, I...	Mean	VI
1. hardly understand the lesson or activity because my teacher, instructor, professor cannot explain the research topic clearly	1.76	SeTM
2. leave the room as I feel that my teacher, instructor, or professor is boring as he/she uses the same approach or strategy	1.29	NTM
3. am not satisfied with the style and way of our course facilitator/ research adviser, or panel members as they appear not to meet the individual needs of the class	1.65	SeTM
4. feel bad and uncomfortable in class as I cannot feel the environment of a stress free and conducive for learning	1.59	SeTM
5. never ask questions when our course facilitator, research adviser, or panel members usually gets mad at me and to other students when things are about to clarify	1.41	NTM
Composite Mean	1.54	Seldom True to Me

*Legend 3.50-4.00 Always true to me; 2.50-3.49 Sometimes true to me; 1.50-2.49 Seldom true to me; 1.00-1.49 Not true to me*

**Table 17**  
Assessment on Problems Encountered Towards Research in Terms of Facilities and Resources

Statement In a research course/class/discussion, I...	Mean	VI
1. have no access to adequate facilities and/or equipment while doing research	2.18	SeTM
2. hardly encode or print, download or upload files for my research works and activities	1.76	NTM
3. have no internet access inside the room or in the campus	2.41	SeTM
4. find lack of thesis, dissertation, or research journals in the university/college library	2.29	SeTM
5. find lack of books and other reading materials in the library	2.65	SoTM
Composite Mean	2.26	Seldom True to Me

*Legend: 4.00 Always true to me; 2.50-3.49 Sometimes true to me; 1.50-2.49 Seldom true to me; 1.00-1.49 Not true to me*

**Table 18**  
Assessment on Problems Encountered Towards Research in Terms of Financial Matters

Statement In a research course/class/discussion, I...	Mean	VI
1. cannot afford to buy books, journals, or other reading materials to be used for my research	2.35	SeTM
2. have no enough funds or money to rent an internet for research and downloading	1.94	SeTM
3. have no enough budget to buy a compilation or photocopy of instructional materials I that my teacher, instructor, or professor requires for research course or activity	1.94	SeTM
4. have lack of budget as I cannot photocopy some of the lectures or handouts provided in our research class	1.76	SeTM
5. cannot pay the adviser, panel members, and even their food and token during the submission and defense which makes some delays	1.29	NTM
Composite Mean	1.86	SeTM

*Legend 3.50-4.00 Always true to me; 2.50-3.49 Sometimes true to me; 1.50-2.49 Seldom true to me; 1.00-1.49 Not true to me*

**Table 19**  
Assessment on Problems Encountered Towards Research in Terms of Research Schedule and Duration

Statement In a research course/class/discussion, I...	WM	VI
1. am not well oriented on the schedule of research submission	1.53	SeTM
2. have no any black and white regarding the deadlines of submission of any particular parts of research	1.59	SeTM
3. cannot have any schedule for appointment and consultation to my teacher, instructor, professor, or thesis adviser as this can help develop my paper or manuscript	1.71	SeTM
4. cannot see that the panel members give their efforts and extra time to entertain our queries and clarifications on things unclear to me	1.71	SeTM
5. cannot see from the bulletin any announcement, schedule, changes, and arrangement of submissions and defenses	1.47	NTM
Composite Mean	1.60	Seldom True to Me

*Legend 3.50-4.00 Always true to me; 2.50-3.49 Sometimes true to me; 1.50-2.49 Seldom true to me; 1.00-1.49 Not true to me*

## Tests of the Relationships Between the Respondents' Demographic Profile and Writing Experiences and Problems Encountered

**Table 20**

Summary of Computations on Tests of the Relationships Between the Respondents' Demographic Profile and Writing Experiences

	<b>Computed Value</b>	<b>p- value</b>	<b>Decision</b>	<b>Conclusion</b>
Gender	0.506	0.038	Reject H <sub>0</sub>	Significant
Age	0.166	0.524	Accept H <sub>0</sub>	Not Significant
Degree Program	-0.166	0.523	Accept H <sub>0</sub>	Not Significant
Specialization	-0.314	0.220	Accept H <sub>0</sub>	Not Significant
Status	0.240	0.335	Accept H <sub>0</sub>	Not Significant
Year Started	-0.448	0.072	Accept H <sub>0</sub>	Not Significant
Year Graduated	0.019	0.942	Accept H <sub>0</sub>	Not Significant

**Table 21**

Summary of Computations on Tests of the Relationships Between Respondents' Demographic Profile and Problems Encountered

	<b>Computed Value</b>	<b>p- value</b>	<b>Decision</b>	<b>Conclusion</b>
Gender	-0.217	0.403	Accept H <sub>0</sub>	Not Significant
Age	0.190	0.465	Accept H <sub>0</sub>	Not Significant
Degree Program	-0.405	0.107	Accept H <sub>0</sub>	Not Significant
Specialization	-0.228	0.380	Accept H <sub>0</sub>	Not Significant
Status	-0.379	0.134	Accept H <sub>0</sub>	Not Significant
Year Started	0.422	0.092	Accept H <sub>0</sub>	Not Significant
Year Graduated	-0.303	0.236	Accept H <sub>0</sub>	Not Significant

## Proposed Inputs for Designing and Developing an Academic-Research Writing Manual for Graduate Students

**Table 22**  
**Academic-Research Writing Process Flow**

Process Flow/Stages	Task	Description
<b>Planning</b>	Understanding Research Objective	Define the research topic and objectives clearly. Review any provided guidelines.
	Literature Review	Conduct a thorough review of existing literature to identify gaps and relevant sources.
	Formulation of Research Questions/Hypotheses	Develop clear research questions or hypotheses based on identified gaps and research objectives.
	Description of Methodology	Provide a detailed explanation of research design, data collection, and analysis methods.
	Research Design	Choose an appropriate research design and methodology aligned with research questions and data collection.
	Data Collection	Collect data using selected methods while adhering to ethical guidelines and maintaining data accuracy.
<b>Writing</b>	Creating Outline	Organize findings and plan paper/thesis structure using headings and subheadings.
	Writing Introduction	Craft an introduction that contextualizes the research problem and outlines objectives.
	Integrating Literature	Incorporate relevant literature to support arguments and demonstrate understanding of the field.
	Presenting Results	Display research findings through tables, graphs, or text, depending on data type.
	Data Analysis	Analyze collected data using suitable techniques; interpret results in relation to research questions.
	Discussion and Interpretation of Results	Interpret findings, discuss implications, limitations, and potential future research directions.
	Drawing Conclusion	Summarize main findings, restate objectives, and offer a conclusion to the research.

<b>Evaluating</b>	Proofreading and Editing	Review paper for grammar, spelling, and formatting errors; ensure consistency in style and tone.
	Peer Review	Seek feedback from peers, mentors, or advisors to refine your work.
	Final Revisions	Implement revisions based on feedback received from peers and mentors.
<b>Submission Checklist</b>	Formatting manuscript	Format paper or thesis in accordance with university guidelines or specified style.
	Submission of manuscript	Submit the completed work according to university's submission process and deadlines.
<b>Sources and Cited Works</b>	Listing of References	Create a comprehensive reference list adhering to the required citation style.
<b>Outcomes &amp; Impact</b>	Reflection	Reflect on the research process, lessons learned, and personal growth achieved.