

Precy M. Paurillo, 2019

Volume 4 Issue 3, pp. 1788 - 1800

Date of Publication: 28th February, 2019

DOI-<https://dx.doi.org/10.20319/pijss.2019.43.17881800>

This paper can be cited as: Paurillo, P. M., (2019). Research Writing Ability of Senior High School Students as Perceived by Teachers of Sampled Schools in Quezon City. *PEOPLE: International Journal of Social Sciences*, 4(3), 1788 – 1800.

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RESEARCH WRITING ABILITY OF SENIOR HIGH SCHOOL STUDENTS AS PERCEIVED BY TEACHERS OF SAMPLED SCHOOLS IN QUEZON CITY

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Abstract

Research paper writing continues to be an uninteresting topic for many students. They may not have realized its significance in their relevant discipline and target workplaces especially now that the global context requires a productive research culture that can work along with the newest trends in education. The study shares an objective with The Tarlac State University when it set its goal during the International Research Conference (2017), which is to give avenues for faculty and student researchers to disseminate cutting edge research outputs in a wide range of disciplines while enabling them to build mutually beneficial partnerships with other nations and institutions. This descriptive study was conducted on all the Research teachers of sampled schools in Quezon City. Data were collected by a valid and reliable questionnaire. In total, 93 percent of students reported to be lacking motivation in research writing and the minimum score was found for interest in writing. On the other hand, 100 percent of students noted employing varied motivational activities in research writing as an answer to these challenges. This makes

the role of the teacher in the explicit and motivating discussion of research writing through fun tasks in the classroom becomes crucial.

Keywords

Research Culture, Research Writing Ability, Rudiments of Research, Motivational Activities

1. Introduction

Many students often overlook the importance of writing a research paper. They take it as a burden. They don't realize that it is an opportunity to acquire skills that will be essential to whatever future career plans they may have especially now that the global context requires a productive research culture that can work along with the newest trends in education. They seldom remember that a research paper tests the student's ability to search, collect information, write, compile, analyze and interpret a topic. It is an amalgamation of their total learning. Yet, research as a field is undervalued in the Philippines that is according to Senator Bam Aquino (2016), as the new committee chairman on Science and Technology during the discussion on the proposed Magna Carta for Scientist.

In the K to 12 Curriculum, academic writing is now a vital part of the continuous summative assessments in most academic courses in the Senior High School. Senior High School students are required to present write-ups of scientific inquiry process, draft experiments, business concepts, marketing ideas, essay on current social issues, critique papers, project plans, livelihood projects and other such summative assessments. More so, transparent in the Curriculum Guide for Senior High School is the inclusion of the subjects Practical Research 1 – Qualitative Research, Practical Research 2 – Quantitative Research and *Inquiries, Investigations and Immersion* that require Senior High School students to master research writing and that Senior High School teachers are indebted to discuss it in a more creative and interesting way. But soon after the opening of classes, teachers would often observe that the previously thrill-filled classroom is painted with boredom, passiveness and lack of interest and motivation when they start teaching the rigors of research paper writing. It is also observed that Senior High School students, when given a topic on research writing, are not confident and are unsettled to further the writing activity itself. Sometimes, it is the reason of not being able to advance in terms of subject accomplishments that may lead to getting a failing grade in a specific subject.

To give more emphasis, specified in the DepEd Memo No.39, s.2016, The Department of Education adopts the enclosed Basic Education Research Agenda which provides guidance to DepEd and its stakeholders in the conduct of education research and in the utilization of research results for planning, policy and program development.

In relation to that, (Cruz, 2013), supposed that starting 2018, no student will be admitted to college without having satisfied the College Readiness Standards (CRS). The CRS specifies, for example, that incoming freshmen should already be able to “write a research paper in English of at least 1,000 words, with proper documentation of all sources showing critical thinking about a contemporary issue. These two requirements clearly raise the bar for senior high school graduates. They should be ready to handle college-level courses without having to worry about their ability.

(Dalisay, 2011), further inferred that it must be a good idea, to begin with what is inescapable. That is the Philippine education, there is no escaping class, not for any writer, not for any kind of writing and in that sense, it could be a trope, that the one thing that one cannot ignore is the task of research writing, especially in English.

It is conclusive to say that the government is in its abounding intention to promote research and deemed its full implementation in the context of the educational system as disclosed by the programs and mandates of the Department of Education intensified in the school’s division.

As a matter of fact, (Ganobscik & Williams, 2009), on their recent studies, highlighted that academic writing plays a major role in higher education both in students’ understanding of the course content and the consequent assessment of students’ knowledge. The academic staff was aware of the importance of writing, with one survey highlighting that almost 90% of staff felt that it was necessary to teach writing skills to students and maintaining standards of Academic Writing has significant implications for both those teaching and learning in the higher education.

(Lee & Boud, 2010), stressed that there is an important need for the development of staff in the research role in the light of growth of higher education and changes to the organization of the sector in many countries. Their article examines one strategy for research development: the use of writing groups. It argues that writing is best seen as a starting point, rather than an endpoint, of the research process and hence that fostering academic writing is a useful place to

do research development work. Though it is a fact that the writing requirements and problems of Senior High School students have not been targeted in writing survey research, in spite of the importance of writing in the lives of these students.

(Gallagher, 2016), put emphasis on acknowledging the importance of writing. Trends have adopted new standards to advance students' writing skills; however, most students are not experiencing instruction that aligns with those standards. Because the new standards require a new way of teaching, identifying supports to help teachers make substantial shifts in writing instruction is imperative.

In the Philippines alone, a great deal of research has spurred the interest of many to conduct investigations. Findings of this studies have shown that Filipino students employ rhetorical conventions despite the influence of foreign language. One may, therefore, argue that Filipino writers do not completely adhere to the traditional models of writing. These peculiarities of writing are said to be shaped by exposure to language according to (Magistro, 2007).

It is indeed an intricate task to write for form and meaning to be able to say that is a scholarly output or an intellectual crop which is a main requirement in research writing.

Another important aspect in making research paper writing appealing to learners is the use of games. (Takeuchi & Vaala, 2014), stressed that the market for games in a school setting is rapidly increasing, with over 74 per cent of teachers reporting that they now use games in the classroom. Learning needs games that are designed in conjunction with educators that will meet the growing demand for deeper learning experiences and it can be true to learning research paper writing.

(Bernardo, 2010), conducted a study titled "Creative Ways in Teaching Research" and he said that research writing is one macro skill that is complicated to learn and to cultivate. Many students may regard it as painstaking and dull. However, teachers have the power to create an enjoyable writing environment where students will learn how to value the art of composition and enjoy the learning of the fine points of the writing process at the same time. It is always true, then, that a difficult and mind-numbing course may not be taught the difficult and boring way.

As identified by (Pravikoff, Tanner & Pierce, 2005), with innovative, interactive strategies to align with requirements for the 21st century, educators need to generate a perception that research is useful, rewarding, fun, and worthwhile. This, then, confirms that research is a

skill that requires a foundation of knowledge and its applicability to practice or 'real life' be it to the students or to humanity.

The National Council of Teachers of English (2017), believes that there is a strong connection between teaching and research as the latter may influence teaching itself but it may be true that it is literally taken for granted.

To cite, the teacher and the way he teaches are matters that affect the academic writing itself, that methodologies and strategies are vital aspects of teaching and learning research paper writing.

(Russel, 2008), then, argues that fun writing tasks can help learners experiment with language in a “safe” way that is not subject to grading or evaluation. This implies that cultivating students’ interest and enhancing their ability in writing research can be dependable on how teachers create a classroom atmosphere.

(Uberman, 2008), also suggests that materials developers and language practitioners agree that games are not simply time-filling activities but tasks that have immense educational value. This, then, is the keynote that propels teachers to become more creative and more effective.

There is no better purpose for research than to elevate the eminence of humanity. Furthermore, it sheds light to what students can do to cope with the advancement of trends in education as a tool for individual and national development as a fundamental way in trailblazing education.

2. Conceptual Framework

The researcher adopts related concepts that influenced her study. One of which is the statement from the National Council of Teachers of English (2017), that emphasizes about the use of “research-based strategies” and yet such strategies may be presented to them stripped of the very sensitivity to context, analytical rigor, and thoughtful skepticism that are hallmarks of quality research.

(Pravikoff et al., 2014), identified that with innovative, interactive strategies to align with requirements for the 21st century, educators need to generate a perception that research is useful, rewarding, fun, and worthwhile. Educators of research need to extend beyond academic learning and continue to develop and implement innovative strategies.

In the conceptual framework, the students' interest and ability to produce a scholarly research output is highly affected by the teacher's background in teaching research. That when teachers are prepared with the skills in basic research, have a remarkable research culture and are familiar with more strategies in teaching research, students will likely become more interested and motivated in writing their academic papers and be able to produce a more scholarly output. The framework elaborated that these factors are closely related with each other. When teachers utilize more strategies to foster interest and confidence among the students, as an immediate conclusion, they are prepared with the rudiments of basic research and that they have a notable research culture.

In the conduct of the study, the researcher is guided by the conceptual paradigm in Figure 1 presented as follows:

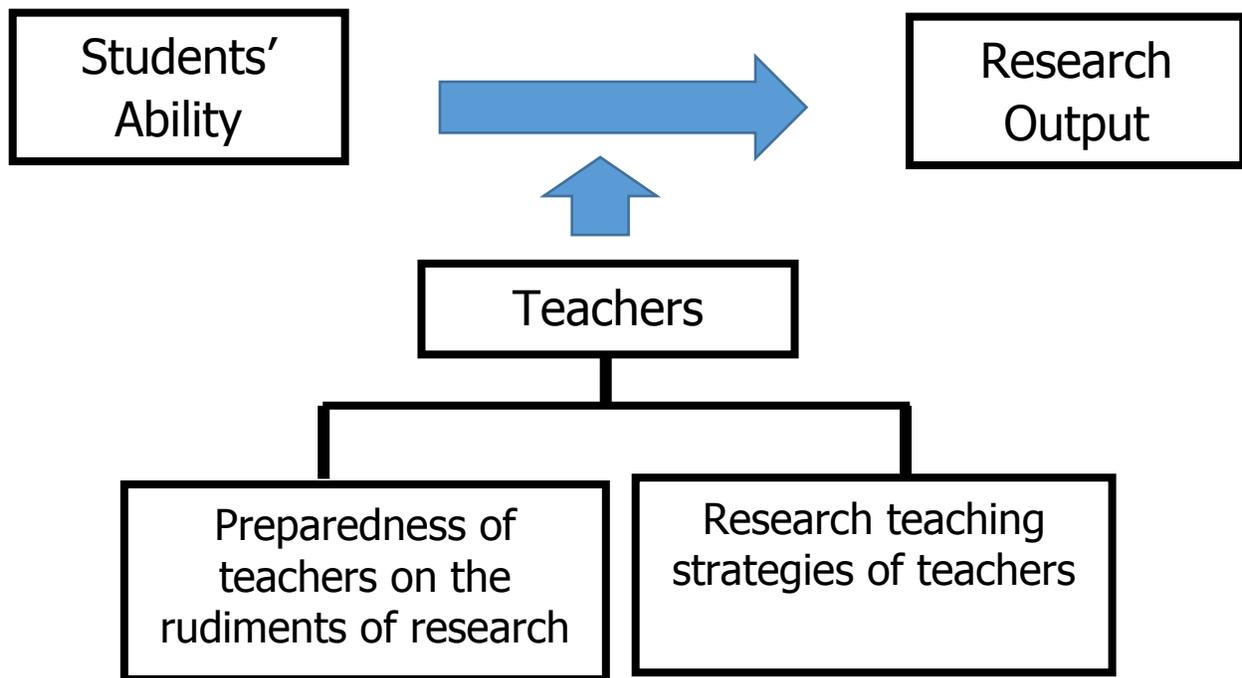


Figure 1: *Conceptual Paradigm*

3. Research Questions

This study analyzed and determined the research writing ability of Grade 12 Senior High School students as Perceived by Teachers of sampled schools in Quezon City during the Academic Year 2017-2018.

Specifically, this study sought answers to the following questions:

3.1 How may the respondents be described in terms of the following:

3.1.1 Preparedness on the rudiments of basic research,

3.1.2 Research culture of respondents, and

3.1.3 Research teaching strategies?

3.2 How may the teacher respondents describe the Grade 12 students' ability to write research paper in terms of:

3.2.1 Punctuation,

3.2.2 Grammar,

3.2.3 Word choice,

3.2.4 Spelling,

3.2.5 Syntax,

3.2.6 Citation,

3.2.7 Paraphrasing, and

3.2.8 Organization?

3.3 What challenges are encountered by the respondents in teaching research and how are these addressed?

4. Methodology

4.1 Research Design

The researcher utilized the Descriptive Method of research in the collection of data to make an accurate presentation of a group due to the trait they possess.

Descriptive Method, according to **Boholano** (2016), determines and reports the way things are. The principal aims in employing this method are to describe the nature of a situation as it exists at the time of the study, to explore the causes of a particular phenomenon and to classify features, count them, and construct statistical models in an attempt to explain what is observed.

4.2 Respondents

The respondents of this study are thirty (30) Senior High School teachers who are teaching research in sampled schools in Quezon City during the first semester of the Academic Year 2017-2018.

4.3 Sampling Techniques

The researcher utilized the Purposive Sampling technique to determine the respondents of the study. **Calmorin & Calmorin (2007)**, stated that the purposive sampling is based on the selection made by the researcher because of the good qualities that they possess which represent the group they belong to.

4.4 Instruments Used

The researcher used a questionnaire as the main instrument to gather data needed to fulfill the aims of the study.

4.5 Questionnaire

It contains statements designed to elicit answers to the questions in the Statement of the Problem. The questionnaire consists of three parts:

Part I consists of questions that inquire about the descriptions of teachers' preparedness on the rudiments of basic research, research culture and the strategies used in teaching research writing.

Part II consists of questions that inquire about the descriptions of Grade 12 students' ability to write a research paper as perceived by the teacher-respondents.

Part III consists of questions that inquire about the challenges met by the students regarding the aforementioned and how are these addressed.

5. Summary of Findings

Based on the gathered data, the researcher came up with the following findings:

5.1 Description of the Respondents

5.1.1 On Teachers' Preparedness on the Rudiments of Basic Research

The first three in rank are:

1. "I had research subjects in college" with a frequency of 28 or 93 percent
2. "I am enrolled in the Graduate Studies" with a frequency of 26 or 87 percent
3. "I have attended training courses on research" with a frequency of 24 or 80 percent

5.1.2 On Teachers' Research Culture

The first three in rank are:

1. "The teaching staff is encouraged to conduct research" with a frequency of 28 or 93 percent

2. “Teaching staff is provided with seminars and research method sessions” with 24 or 80 percent
3. “The teachers develop students to become research-oriented leaders” with 22 or 73 percent

5.1.3 On Teachers’ Strategies in Teaching Research

The first three in rank are:

1. “Teacher assigns a research topic for students to construct/discover” with a Weighted Mean of 4.97 percent or Very High Extent
2. “Teacher utilizes group dynamics, eg. dyads, small group, and the entire class” with a Weighted Mean of 4.70 percent or Very Satisfactory
3. “Teacher allows students to make use of their own experiences in writing compositions” with a Weighted Mean of 4.50 percent or Very Satisfactory.

5.2 The Teachers’ descriptions of Students’ Ability in Writing a Research Paper in terms of:

5.2.1 On Students’ Ability in Punctuation

The first three in rank are:

1. “The use of full stop (.) at the end of a statement” with a Weighted Mean of 3.8 or Very Satisfactory
2. “The use of quotation marks (‘ ’) when writing the title of a book/film or to show the exact words someone said” with a Weighted Mean of 3.73 or Very Satisfactory
3. “The use of capitalization in the first word of every sentence, on the days of the week and the months of the year and proper nouns” with a Weighted Mean of 3.66 or Very Satisfactory

5.2.2 On Students’ Ability in Grammar

The first three in rank are:

1. “The alternative ways of grouping and ordering written information to highlight the flow of your argument” with a Weighted Mean of 3.16 or Satisfactory
2. “The use of modal verbs to express degrees of certainty and commitment” with a Weighted Mean of 2.86 or Satisfactory
3. “The identification of the basic distinctions of meaning in the verb tense system” with a Weighted Mean of 2.03 or Poor

5.2.3 On Students' Ability in Word Choice

The first three in rank are:

1. "Identifying misused words" with a Weighted Mean of 3.86 percent or Very Satisfactory
2. "Avoiding repetition and redundancy" with a Weighted Mean of 3.53 percent or Very Satisfactory
3. "Identifying Jargons or technical terms" with a Weighted Mean of 3.26 percent or Satisfactory

5.2.4 On Students' Ability in Spelling

The first three in rank are:

1. "Spelling derived words" with a Weighted Mean of 3.8 or Very Satisfactory
2. "Spelling unstressed syllables" with a Weighted Mean of 3.73 Very Satisfactory
3. "Spelling double consonants" with a Weighted Mean of 3.67 Very Satisfactory

5.2.5 On students' Ability in Syntax

The first three in rank are:

1. "The sentence does not contain repetition" with a Weighted Mean of 3.53 percent or Very Satisfactory
2. "The sentence has less prepositional phrases" with a Weighted Mean of 3.46 percent or Satisfactory
3. "The sentence is preferably in active voice" with a Weighted Mean of 3.33 percent or Satisfactory

5.2.6 On Students' Ability in Citation

The first three in rank are:

1. "Citing the journal as a whole" with a Weighted Mean of 3.53 percent or Very Satisfactory
2. "Citing a featured article" is rank no. 2 with a Weighted Mean of 3.26 percent or Satisfactory
3. "Citing a specific column" with a Weighted Mean of 3.2 percent or Satisfactory

5.2.7 On Students' Ability in Paraphrasing

The first three in rank are:

1. "Looking for meaning to unfamiliar words or phrases" with a Weighted Mean of 3.66 Very Satisfactory

2. “Reading and rewriting the original text” with a Weighted Mean of 3.26 or Satisfactory
3. “Using quotation marks to identify the unique term or phraseology borrowed exactly from the original text” with a Weighted Mean of 3.13 or Satisfactory

5.2.8 On Students’ Ability in Organization

The first two in rank are:

1. “Using cohesive elements or transition words” with a Weighted Mean of 3.46 percent or Satisfactory
2. “Using appropriate text structure that includes a beginning, a middle and an ending” with a Weighted Mean of 3.2 percent or Satisfactory.

5.3 Challenges Met by the Respondents in Teaching Research and Solutions Offered in Addressing these Challenges

5.3.1 On Challenges Met by the Respondents in Teaching Research

The first three in rank are:

1. “Lack of motivation in research writing” with 28 or 93.33 percent
2. “Inability to restate text or passage” with 27 or 90 percent
3. “Lack of interest in writing” with 26 or 86.66 percent

5.3.2 On Solutions Offered in Addressing these Challenges

The first three in rank are:

1. “Employing varied motivational activities in research writing” with 30 or 100 percent
2. “Providing various strategies in restating text and passages in writing research” with 28 or 93.33 percent
3. “Providing various strategies in teaching research” with 26 or 86.66 percent.

6. Conclusion

In light of the findings, the following conclusions were drawn:

6.1 Research Teachers are generally prepared on the Rudiments of Basic Research. Their readiness to teach the subject is based on their educational background which is manifested by their experience in their undergraduate supplemented by units earned and diploma in a master’s degree and their units and a diploma in a Doctorate program. More so, they have been constantly updating their qualifications by attending pieces of training related to research writing and they are encouraged to conduct research.

6.2 Students are normally familiar and knowledgeable in most of the essentials of research writing such as punctuation, grammar, word choice, spelling, syntax, citation, paraphrasing, and organization.

6.3 Challenges met by the teachers in teaching research vary from the rudiments of writing which include syntax, citation, and paraphrasing among many others to the insufficient teaching strategies in research. This clearly emphasized that teachers need to extensively employ varied strategies, task-based motivational activities, and fun-tasks as noted by (Takeuchi & Vaala, 2014).

7. Recommendation

In light of the findings and the conclusions derived from this study, the researcher recommends the following:

7.1 To the teachers in the Senior High School:

7.1.1 They must continue to enhance their skills by attending pieces of training and seminars that showcase the newest trends in academic writing and by finishing a Master's and a Doctorate degree.

7.1.2 They need to be trendier and more experimental in the presentation of the lessons in Research Writing.

7.1.3 They have to assure the transfer of learning through the use of more engaging techniques and strategies.

7.2 To the School Administrators:

7.2.1 They must consider the teaching loads vis-à-vis teaching hours of teachers handling Research subjects to give way to a more in-depth treatment of the lesson and ample time to check the outputs.

7.3 To the Curriculum Planners:

7.3.1 They must confirm the inclusion of research subjects in the Junior High School starting from Grade 7 with the consideration of the degree of difficulty; Grade 7 – Focus: Chapter 1, Grade 8 – Focus: Chapter 2, Chapter 9-Focus: Chapter 3, and Grade 10 – Focus: Chapter 4. This is to prepare the students in the complex world of research writing as they reach Senior High School.

7.4 To Future Researchers:

7.4.1 They can make most of the findings of this study and conduct similar research with students as respondents. This will enable the future researchers to analyze and recommend a new perspective on the bases of the students' response and performance since the respondents of this study are the teachers.

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