

Knowledge in Manuscript Writing and Readiness to Conducting Research Among Selected Accounting Students

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ABSTRACT

This study aims to determine the knowledge of manuscript writing and the readiness among selected accounting students to conduct research from a tertiary institution in Olongapo City, Philippines. The study used a descriptive-correlation research design to 70 purposively chosen students. The data underwent descriptive and inferential measures with the help SPSS 23 software. The study found that students were "knowledgeable" of the different parts of manuscript writing and were "ready" to conduct research. There was also a significant relationship between the knowledge of manuscript writing and the readiness of the students to conduct research. Writing the results and discussion part of the study was a significant predictor to conduct research. Implications for the institution, faculty, and students were suggested.

INTRODUCTION

Writing a manuscript is an excellent challenge for students. Research is a subject already offered even at the senior high school level. In tertiary schools, research writing has been integrated into their courses regardless if it is a board exam or non-board exam course. In higher education, writing research is a must nowadays to the extent of having them published in reputable journals at the local or international level. The community must know the new findings of these researches.

In terms of knowledge in writing a research paper, the IMRaD format is one of the most basic and standard forms. According to Teodosiu (2019), IMRaD requires sound knowledge, especially of its main parts, structuring its sections, using appropriate language and conducting improvements before submitting to a journal. Writing its contents is tricky and sometimes very challenging, depending on the study type one intends to achieve. Shankar and Arun (2022) also shared that many young researchers need help writing research articles since there needs to be specific training for this in their curriculum. Most journals use the IMRaD because it allows ease of editing and allows readers to understand its contents (Bekhti (2022). Therefore, it is an excellent opportunity for students to have this additional knowledge since they will need this skill in the future.

However, writing an academic or scientific article is daunting for students, even at the graduate level. Studies have shown students' different facets and experiences writing research or scientific papers. One problem was competence (Qayoom & Saleem, 2020; Wagbara, 2022; Badenhorst et al., 2015). Writing a manuscript is easy if one possesses specific knowledge and skills. Another idea is the research paper's components, which include the essential parts of the Introduction, Methodology, Results, and Discussion or IMRaD format (Mayyas & Alzoubi, 2022). There is also the language and grammar of the sentences (Qasem & Zayid, 2019; Jeyaraj, 2020; Lin & Morrison, 2021; Shpit & McCarthy, 2022).

All of the mentioned ideas boil down to the possibility of being ready to write a manuscript for students. Logically, the student has enough knowledge of the basic concepts and sections of writing a research paper. In that case, he or she can produce a research paper. This idea can be done individually or by a group.

Based on the reviewed literature, there is a definite need for innovative measures for students to learn the skill of writing an academic or scientific paper. One can learn the knowledge and fundamental parts of a research paper (the IMRaD). However, the actual reality of conducting a research paper still needs to be improved. Local literature also states some discrepancies in the knowledge and readiness of students when it comes to research writing. Therefore, from these premises, the researcher decided to create this basic research to address the gap identified during the review. The study's results will also address some issues and problems of students regarding research writing and the conduct of research.

Lastly, the primary beneficiaries of this paper are the students, wherein a seminar-workshop will be developed by the institution to address the deficiencies and challenges that students deem difficult. Next would be the faculty, wherein the theories, ideas, and concepts will be reinforced and strengthened. Then, the institution enriches the research capability and skills of its students and faculty and cultivates the culture of research writing.

LITERATURE REVIEW

There were also some critical strategies and other relevant prerequisites in writing an academic or scientific paper. For instance, Mutiani et al. (2020) mentioned that writing research papers, students must go through the stages of work, like conceptualization and other pertinent ideas in their thoughts. In the process of conceptualization, students also require enough support in the areas of writing, supervision and use of ICT (Jeyaraj, 2020). They must also be a discourse analyst, authorial voices, and identities (Badenhorst et al., 2015). Other researchers also laid down some strategies (Mahbubah et al., 2021) to aid research writing. At the same time, Mamontova (2022) stated that the combined efforts of teachers and students would contribute to obtaining a real individual authentic research experience. So, it only means that creating a manuscript is the fruit of the labour of two significant individuals working together.

Nevertheless, students still struggle along the way and writing a research manuscript is still a challenge and a burden. One article shared that university students encounter difficulties effectively and efficiently writing their research (Obateru, 2022). Therefore, students must manage academic writing challenges (Lin & Morrison, 2021), like using English in writing (Qasem & Zayid, 2019; Jeyaraj, 2020).

Some related factors affect the students' writing motivation and capabilities. One study stated that confidence and attitudes are associated with the writing behaviour of the students (Mohamad et al., 2022). From the perspective of Mendoza's group (2022), they found a positive relationship between grades, organized thesis writing, self-efficacy at same time interest level and the relevance of writing a thesis. Nevertheless, constraints like lack of effort, strategy for writing, autonomy, and voiceless students (Ravari et al., 2022) were additional factors in the possibility of creating a manuscript.

On the other hand, there were still some studies that showed positive views when it came to research writing. Jeyaraj (2018) states that research in thesis writing is an area that is slowly growing. However, it focuses on public higher education in a Southeast Asian country. Also, the team of Santelmann (2018) revealed that students benefit from writing research. These benefits include metacognitive awareness, social support, peer review opportunities, and other technical aspects of writing research.

In the Philippines, literature also implied the knowledge of manuscript writing and students' readiness in writing research. For example, in the study of Patricio (2022), the author found that students had developed research and writing skills. However, they had high collaborative skills, but their research output quality could have improved. This result is quite evident and

unpleasant, but it is due to different factors. As mentioned in the previous discussion, these factors technically affect students. It is relevant to point out that students' written output reflects different characteristics (Valdez, 2014). They also need help, especially searching for the accurate concepts intended for their study.

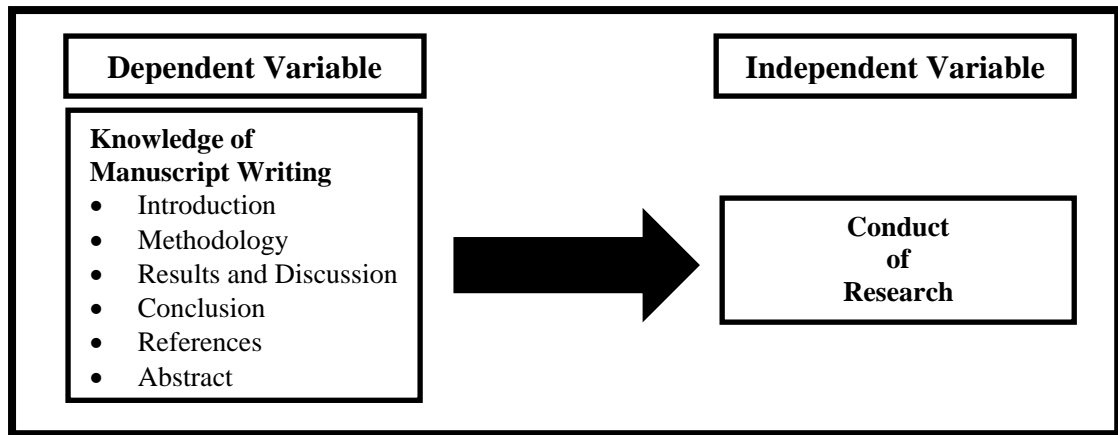


Figure 1. Conceptual Framework of the Study

METHODOLOGY

Design

This study used a descriptive-correlation design with the online survey as the primary data gathering. A correlation study intends to analyze if there is an association between two variables in a particular phenomenon. The study would like to determine if there is a relationship between the knowledge of the research writing process and the respondents' readiness to conduct research. Therefore, the research design fits the need of the current study.

Respondents

The population for this study were selected students from the College of Business and Accountancy from a tertiary institution in Olongapo City, Philippines. With the help of a purposive sampling technique, the researcher availed a total of 70 student respondents from the said college. They voluntarily participated in the said online survey during the 1st Semester of the Academic Year 2022-2023. To be included in the study, the respondent should be a bona fide student of the College of Business and Accountancy. Also, he/ she has already taken up the research subject in their course. He/she is currently enrolled in the said institution. Those respondents who were not college students and had yet to take up research subjects were disqualified.

Instrumentation

The study used an adopted modified instrument from the previous study by Bucar (2022). There were three major parts of the modified instrument. It included the basic information of the respondents, the writing process of a research paper and the respondents' readiness to write a research. The instrument patterned its responses to a 4-point Likert scale (see the range for each table). Since there was a modification in the instrument, the researcher revalidated and subjected the instrument to pilot testing and reliability test. The result of the Cronbach Alpha was .965 which is highly reliable.

Data Analysis

As for the statistical analysis, the study used the mean for the writing processes and the respondents' readiness to conduct research. The study used Pearson-r Moment of Correlation for the relationship between the writing process and the readiness of the respondents and Regression Analysis for the predictor associated with the respondents' readiness in writing research. The Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS) 23 computed the statistics and then interpret the data.

RESEARCH RESULT

The succeeding tables below reveal the results of the study. Based on the study's objective, the researcher found some interesting results that may contribute to the ever-growing literature about research writing.

Table 1. Writing the Introduction of the Study

Statements	Mean	Interpretation
1. Transcribe a clear introduction following the format starting from a global to a local perspective	2.74	Knowledgeable
2. Establish the significance and social worth of the study and its differences from the other earlier studies	2.69	Knowledgeable
3. Prepare or design a comprehensive theoretical or conceptual framework	2.70	Knowledgeable
4. State the explanation or compelling reasons for conducting the research	2.93	Knowledgeable
5. Formulate the statement of the research problem	2.81	Knowledgeable
6. Formulate a hypothesis (for quantitative and mixed-method research)	2.73	Knowledgeable
7. Write a coherent, relevant, and comprehensive literature review of the phenomenon or variable being studied with global, regional,	2.63	Knowledgeable

and local situational analysis of the problem supported by the literature from different continents and regions of the world		
8. Cite sources and other references using standard and acceptable styles (like APA, MLA, or Chicago format) appropriate to one's area of discipline	3.13	Knowledgeable
9. Generate useful information from relevant and recent literature	2.97	Knowledgeable
10. Establish a "research gap" based on the literature reviews that the study anticipates finding	2.67	Knowledgeable
11. Follow ethical standards in writing related literature	3.00	Knowledgeable
Overall Mean	2.82	Knowledgeable

Legend: 1.00-1.74=Not Knowledgeable; 1.75-2.49=Moderately Knowledgeable; 2.50-3.24=Knowledgeable; 3.25-4.00=Very Knowledgeable

Table 1 displays the result of the mean computation for writing the study's introduction. In general, the respondents gave this part a high response rate. In particular, statement 8, "Cite sources and other references using standard and acceptable styles (like APA, MLA, or Chicago format) appropriate to one's area of discipline", generated the highest mean score of 3.13, which corresponds to a Likert interpretation of "knowledgeable." On the other hand, it was statement 7, "Write a coherent, relevant, and comprehensive literature review of the phenomenon or variable being studied with global, regional, and local situational analysis of the problem supported by the literature from different continents and regions of the world" that obtained the lowest mean score which is 2.63 which translates to "knowledgeable" in the descriptive interpretation. All in all, the overall mean for writing the introduction of the study was 2.82 which also corresponds to a descriptive interpretation of "knowledgeable." This result means that most of the student respondents have a good knowledge of writing an introduction to a study.

Table 2. Writing the Methodology of the Study

Statements	Mean	Interpretation
1. Select the most appropriate research design (e.g. quantitative, qualitative, or mixed-method) for the study	2.83	Knowledgeable
2. Describe the population and sampling procedure in the study	2.97	Knowledgeable
3. Plan data collection process and analysis procedures	2.80	Knowledgeable
4. Create an instrument and establish its validity and reliability (e.g. Cronbach Alpha)	2.70	Knowledgeable
5. Select (i.e., adapt or adopt) an appropriate instrument to measure the variables (for quantitative research) being studied	2.74	Knowledgeable
6. Collect data through observation, focus group	2.73	Knowledgeable

discussion (FGD), interviews, etc.		
7. Obtain valid data using a suitable technique instrument	2.76	Knowledgeable
8. Apply data entry (coding and cleaning for qualitative research)	2.71	Knowledgeable
9. Use statistical techniques in analyzing the data (for quantitative or mixed-method research)	2.50	Knowledgeable
10. Analyze qualitative data through thematic analysis (open coding, axial coding, and clustering of themes)	2.33	Moderately Knowledgeable
11. Evaluate the qualitative research report's trustworthiness through member check, triangulation, saturation, peer review, external audit, and other valid means	2.41	Moderately Knowledgeable
12. Articulate and follow the ethical procedures in conducting research (e.g. asking the respondents to sign an informed consent before conducting the study)	2.80	Knowledgeable
Overall Mean	2.69	Knowledgeable

Legend: 1.00-1.74=Not Knowledgeable; 1.75-2.49=Moderately Knowledgeable; 2.50-3.24=Knowledgeable; 3.25-4.00=Very Knowledgeable

Table 2 represents the mean result computation for writing the study's methodology. As seen from the representation, statement 2, "Describe the population and sampling procedure in the study", produced the highest mean score of 2.97. This result corresponds to a descriptive interpretation of "knowledgeable." However, statement 10, "Analyze qualitative data through thematic analysis (open coding, axial coding, and clustering of themes)", garnered the lowest mean with a score of 2.33. This result has the same descriptive interpretation of "moderately knowledgeable." The overall mean for writing the study's methodology was 2.69, corresponding to a descriptive interpretation of "knowledgeable." The result only shows a certain degree of knowledge among the respondents when they write the methodology section of the study.

Table 3. Writing the Results and Discussion of the Study

Statements	Mean	Interpretation
1. Deduce and explain patterns from data	2.66	Knowledgeable
2. Present the results or findings in a clear and explicit manner	2.89	Knowledgeable
3. Relate the results or findings with pertinent and recent literature	2.91	Knowledgeable
4. Confirm the theory from the results or findings of the study	2.77	Knowledgeable
5. Generate a new theory for grounded theory research	2.44	Moderately Knowledgeable
6. Synthesize results of the findings	2.70	Knowledgeable
Overall Mean	2.73	Knowledgeable

Legend: 1.00-1.74=Not Knowledgeable; 1.75-2.49=Moderately Knowledgeable; 2.50-3.24=Knowledgeable; 3.25-4.00=Very Knowledgeable

Table 3 illustrates the mean computation result for writing the study's results and discussion. As observed from the table, most respondents generally responded highly in this study section. Specifically, statement 3, "Relate the results or findings with pertinent and recent literature", got the highest mean with a score of 2.91, which has a corresponding descriptive interpretation of "knowledgeable." Nevertheless, statement 5, "Generate a new theory for grounded theory research", disclosed the lowest mean score of 2.44, which corresponds to "moderately knowledgeable" in the descriptive interpretation. Overall, the study obtained a 2.73 average mean for writing the results and discussion of the study. This result means that some of the respondents still need to work on writing this particular section of the study since this is the part where they present, interpret and analyze their data.

Table 4. Writing the Conclusion and Recommendations of the Study

Statements	Mean	Interpretation
1. Conclude patterns and themes (for qualitative research)	2.76	Knowledgeable
2. Present conclusions that reflect the objectives and results (e.g. validation of theory used for generation of a new one)	2.94	Knowledgeable
3. Formulate recommendations based on the salient findings	2.94	Knowledgeable
Overall Mean	2.88	Knowledgeable

Legend: 1.00-1.74=Not Knowledgeable; 1.75-2.49=Moderately Knowledgeable; 2.50-3.24=Knowledgeable; 3.25-4.00=Very Knowledgeable

Table 4 expresses the result for the mean computation of writing the conclusion and recommendations of the study. As seen from the table, the respondents can write a conclusion and recommendation section of a study. In particular, statements 2, "Present conclusions that reflect the objectives and results (e.g. validation of theory used for generation of a new one)" and 3, "Formulate recommendations based on the salient findings", both generated a mean score of 2.94 which has a corresponding interpretation of "knowledgeable." Statement 1, "Conclude patterns and themes (for qualitative research)," on the other hand, yielded a mean of 2.76, wherein the score also corresponds to an interpretation of "knowledgeable" in the Likert scale. The overall mean for writing the conclusion and recommendations of the study was 2.88, which also falls under "knowledgeable" descriptive interpretation. The result of this table reveals that writing a conclusion and recommendation of a study is possible and attainable by the respondents. Since this section is also the last major section of a study, providing an appropriate conclusion and interesting recommendation is achievable.

Table 5. Writing the References of the Study

Statements	Mean	Interpretation
1. List the cited sources in the reference list with traceable URLs or DOI	3.19	Knowledgeable
2. Select reputable references, which are internationally refereed and indexed	2.96	Knowledgeable
3. Utilize sources which were recently published, preferably at least not older than ten years from their publication year	3.01	Knowledgeable
Overall Mean	3.05	Knowledgeable

Legend: 1.00-1.74=Not Knowledgeable; 1.75-2.49=Moderately Knowledgeable; 2.50-3.24=Knowledgeable; 3.25-4.00=Very Knowledgeable

Table 5 indicates the result of the mean calculation for writing the references of the study. It can be deduced from the table that statement 1, "List the cited sources in the reference list with traceable URL or DOI", got the highest mean with a score of 3.19. Then statement 3, "Utilize sources which were recently published preferably at least not older than ten years from its publication year" came second with a mean score of 3.01. Moreover, finally, statement 2, "Select reputable references, which are internationally refereed and indexed", got the lowest score with a mean of 2.96. Nevertheless, all the mean scores yielded a descriptive interpretation of "knowledgeable" on the Likert scale. As for the overall mean for writing the references of the study, the table generated 3.05 which also corresponds to a descriptive interpretation of "knowledgeable." This result only shows that referencing concept is prevalent and practiced accordingly by the respondents.

Table 6. Writing the Abstract of the Study

Statements	Mean	Interpretation
1. Write a precise synopsis of the research paper	2.61	Knowledgeable
2. State the research focus, objective, aim, or purpose	2.79	Knowledgeable
3. Summarize the research methods used	2.97	Knowledgeable
4. Outline the results and discussions of the study	2.91	Knowledgeable
5. Summarize the conclusion and recommendation of the study	2.87	Knowledgeable
Overall Mean	2.83	Knowledgeable

Legend: 1.00-1.74=Not Knowledgeable; 1.75-2.49=Moderately Knowledgeable; 2.50-3.24=Knowledgeable; 3.25-4.00=Very Knowledgeable

Table 6 shows the result of the mean calculation in writing the study's abstract. One can decipher that, in general, the respondents give this part high remarks. Specifically, statement 3, "Summarize the research methods used", generated the highest mean score of 2.97, corresponding to a descriptive interpretation of "knowledgeable." However, statement 1, "Write a precise synopsis of the research paper", produced the lowest mean with a score of 2.61.

This result also has the same descriptive interpretation of "knowledgeable" in the Likert scale. To sum it all up, the overall mean for writing the abstract of a study was 2.83, which also falls under the similar interpretation of "knowledgeable." The result of this table only means that the respondents are already quite adept in the construction of the abstract of a study.

Table 7. Readiness of the Respondents in Conducting Research

	Mean	Interpretation
1. Writing the significant parts of a research paper	2.66	Ready

Legend: 1.00-1.74= Not Ready; 1.75-2.49= Moderately Ready; 2.50-3.24= Ready; 3.25-4.00=Much Ready

Table 7 reveals the mean computation for the respondents' readiness to conduct research. The table yielded a mean score of 2.66, which translates to a descriptive interpretation of "ready." This result means that the respondents are now capable of writing a research manuscript in the future.

Table 8. Correlation Matrix between the Major Parts of Manuscript Writing and Readiness in Conducting Research

Parts	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Introduction	1						
Methodology	.669*	1					
Results and Discussion	.675*	.640*	1				
Conclusion	.669*	.655*	.808*	1			
Reference	.448*	.617*	.577*	.593*	1		
Abstract	.677*	.598*	.735*	.650*	.575*	1	
Readiness	.595*	.562*	.674*	.516*	.426*	.650*	1

Note: * $p < .05$

To determine if there is any underlying relationship between the respondents' knowledge of manuscript writing and readiness to conduct research, the study performed a Pearson-r Moment of Correlation. As observed in the table, there is a direct moderate association between the two variables. Specifically, the computation generated the following r-values: .595 for writing the introduction, .562 for writing the methodology, .674 for writing the results and discussion, .516 for writing the conclusion, .426 for writing the reference, and .650 for writing an abstract. All of the p-values have a probability value of .000, which is lower than the alpha significance level of .05. It is, therefore, safe to conclude that there is a significant relationship between the respondents' knowledge of manuscript writing and the readiness of the respondents to conduct research.

Table 9. Linear Regression Analysis between the Respondents' Knowledge in Manuscript Writing and Readiness in Conducting Research

Model	Unstandardized		Standardized	t	Sig.
	Coefficients		Coefficients		
	B	Std. Error	Beta		
(Constant)	-.331	.409		-.808	.422
Writing Introduction	.233	.214	.149	1.088	.281
Writing Methodology	.264	.203	.174	1.304	.197
Writing Results and Discussion	.631	.220	.475	2.868*	.006
Writing Conclusion	-.298	.200	-.234	-1.494	.140
Writing Reference	-.043	.130	-.039	-.332	.741
Writing Abstract	.315	.162	.271	1.944	.056

Note: $p < .05$; $F(6, 63) = 12.561$, $p = .000$; $R^2 = .545$

Table 9 presents the linear regression for the respondents' knowledge of manuscript writing and readiness to conduct research. It can be inferred that the result of regression analysis indicated that writing results and discussion explained 54.5% of the variance ($F [6, 63] = 12.561$, $p = .000$). Furthermore, writing results and discussion recorded a B Coefficient of .631 with a probability value of lower than the .05 alpha significance level. This result means that writing results and discussion is a significant predictor of readiness in conducting research among the respondents.

DISCUSSION

The knowledge in writing a manuscript is a skill that one can enrich from time to time. At the same time, conducting research is also in a similar situation. The main objective of the study is to analyze the knowledge of students in terms of manuscript writing as well as the readiness of students to conduct research. The current study found some interesting results that can help future research instructors and students with regard to writing and conducting research.

The preliminary part of the study generated fascinating facts about students' knowledge of manuscript writing. In general, the study found that the students were known to all of the essential parts of a manuscript. A related study by Ramadhani et al. (2021) revealed that students acquire knowledge and experiences from various sources, which helps them write academic papers. Mayyas and Alzoubi (2022) also added that more than 80% of their student respondents know the general manuscript format and structure. This includes the introduction, the methodology, the results and discussion, the conclusion, the references and the abstract. This is a good sign for instructors because all they have to do now is to reinforce these concepts and apply them to actual-world applications. Also, in the sharing of Alfianika et al. (2019), from the learners' perspective, writing scientific papers should be fun, with freedom, motivation, imagination, creativity, logical thinking, direct practice, and guided by a lecturer.

Now in the case of the readiness of student respondents to conduct a research project, it is also interesting to note that a good majority pointed out that they are ready. In relation, a study by Qayoom and Saleem (2020) stated that students have a basic idea of how to find suitable sources for their research topics, review relevant literature and prepare notes and references for the study.

However, there were some obstacles that students always meet along the way. For instance, Real (2022) revealed that students had difficulty in the citation; writing the Statement of the Problem; interpreting data; and formulating research titles. In a foreign article, student perceptions showed that the majority (62%) of students had never written an article and published it (Maknun et al., 2019). On the other hand, another article revealed students' weaknesses in research writing regarding originality, citation, and referencing (Supriyadi et al., 2020). However, there are some tools already available out there that can help students in their research writing struggles. For instance, Milrood and Gunina (2019) tried to evaluate an interactive software tool for academic writing and found out that it is user-friendly and its functionality helps students accomplish their writing goals in research.

For the inferential statistics, the study produced an interesting result as well. There was a moderate association between the knowledge of manuscript writing and the readiness of students to conduct research. Some studies now see another perspective on this context of the current study. For instance, the article by Jevaraj (2020) indicated that students wanted more access to ICT tools to facilitate their writing and language learning in research. ICT nowadays is a great help for beginners, especially the different tools to aid them in research writing. Preparing a manuscript is not a walk in the park. Therefore, one needs to get all the help he/she can get. If one arms itself with the essential tools and basic knowledge of writing a manuscript, one will be confident to conduct research. Moreover, most students have no formal experience writing a research paper (Landicho, 2020), which is why online tools are also essential. With this particular matter, the different challenges and difficulties (Qasem & Zayid, 2019) that students may experience in research writing will be alleviated to some degree.

Finally, the result of this study may lead to the formulation of a research writing workshop for students. The main is for them to benefit from this study and strengthen their resolve and skills in conducting research in the future.

CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

From the results above of the study, the study at this moment concludes that:

- 1) The students were knowledgeable in all aspects of manuscript writing, including the introduction, methodology, results, discussion, conclusion, references, and abstract.
- 2) There was a moderate positive association between the knowledge of writing a manuscript and the readiness of students to conduct research.

- 3) Writing the results and discussion part of the study is a predictor of the readiness of students to conduct research.

Based on the results of the study, this paper provided the following implications:

- 1) In teaching research writing subjects, instructors should qualify themselves with the necessary skills and knowledge to deliver the appropriate learning to students.
- 2) Capacitate research instructors with training and workshops in using ICT, especially software and other tools intended for research.
- 3) Qualification standards for research instructors should also be considered (e.g. minimum with a master's degree in the related field, publications, and training, among others).
- 4) Students should be encouraged to conduct research and assist them by assigning research advisers to guide them along the way.
- 5) Provide student-friendly seminars, training, and workshops related to research. These activities' output can be presented in a conference, forum, or convention in the institution or outside.
- 6) Conduct institutional research capability and capacity building among faculty and students through research forums, colloquiums, or conferences to cultivate the institution's research culture.

Each study has its limitations and this study is not an exemption. One of its limitation is the sample, since this it only one type of sample. Thus, this can be expanded to other courses in the institution and beyond. Second, it did not measure variations in the study, therefore, demographic data collection is applicable and measured using inferential statistics. And third, an experimental research design can also pose a good method for assessing the knowledge and readiness of the students.

FURTHER STUDY

This research still has shortcomings so it still needs to be done further on the topic.

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