Hospitality Program Postgraduate Theses: What Hinders Their Accomplishment?

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Abstract—Postgraduate education is generally aimed at providing in-depth knowledge and understanding that include general philosophy in the world sciences, management, technologies, applications and other elements closely related to specific areas. In most universities, besides core and non-core subjects, a thesis is one of the requirements for the postgraduate student to accomplish before graduating. This paper reports on the empirical investigation into attributes that are associated with the obstacles to thesis accomplishment among postgraduate students. Using the quantitative approach the experiences of postgraduate students were tapped. Findings clearly revealed that information seeking, writing skills and other factors which refer to supervisor and time management, in particular, are recognized as contributory factors which positively or negatively influence postgraduates' thesis accomplishment. Among these, writing skills dimensions were found to be the most difficult process in thesis accomplishment compared to information seeking and other factors. This pessimistic indication has provided some implications not only for the students but supervisors and institutions as a whole.

Keywords—Hospitality, Program, Postgraduate, thesis.

I. INTRODUCTION

POSTGRADUATE education is generally aimed at providing in-depth knowledge and understanding that include general philosophy of the world sciences, management, technologies, applications and other elements closely related to specific areas. It is used by the university to describe a process of learning higher than that achieved at undergraduate level.

Postgraduate studies are a growth process by which students need to develop scholarly thinking with institutional support and guidance through and beyond the classroom environment as they become mature individuals [16]. The key consequence of a postgraduate education is the capability to recognize patterns, techniques and routines for thought and action that one has learned and that are applicable to a given situation. The postgraduate education in fact is one of the modes to provide students with knowledge and experiences that will allow them to think critically and analytically in the future. In short, besides extending a qualification and being a stimulus for intellectual challenge, this higher level education is meant to produce an individual who not only can perform managerial functions, but meet organizational needs as well as industrial and academic challenges [9].

In almost all universities, a postgraduate thesis is one of the core requirements for postgraduate students to accomplish before graduating besides other core and non-core management subjects. A thesis is a substantial piece of work, written with a view to proving or disproving something with the purpose of adding to, or creating new knowledge. A thesis requires students to demonstrate a mastery of the subject area being researched as well as a comprehensive understanding of the research methodology being used [6]. It encompasses both intellectual and skills development [4] and for the vast majority of postgraduate students, the thesis is by far the most challenging piece of academic work. Carrying out a Master's thesis project can become equivalent to a full-time job, with no obvious immediate benefits and can take several years to complete.

A thesis project should involve more consideration and attention than an exam or assignment and putting postgraduate research on the back burner can hinder individual advancement in the field [6]. Maintaining steady progress will help students to avoid the unfortunate circumstance of having an incomplete thesis project after they have finished their coursework. A thesis on the other hand, is a kind of academic project that marks the transition from student to researcher or intellectual [10]. Therefore, there is unrelenting pressure on the universities to provide adequate research training in the field of expertise through which postgraduate students will demonstrate a significant and original contribution to knowledge [6].

Owing to the complexities, academic scholars extensively regard the thesis as the last safeguard for postgraduate students in accomplishing their studies [1], [15]. Many postgraduate students are reported to be failing to submit their thesis work on time. In Canada, for instance, the completion rates vary from 40% in arts to 60% in humanities and life sciences [7] whereas in the UK the completion rates are between 51% and 64% in humanities and sciences [21]. In fact, accomplishing a thesis or research project is one of the most daunting challenges faced by postgraduate students in many universities.

The attrition and low completion rates among postgraduate students are also a major problem faced by the Faculty of Hotel and Tourism Management, University Technology

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MARA, Shah Alam, Malaysia. A report from the Faculty revealed that those low graduation rates are due to the failure of students to complete their final thesis or research project although passing all other coursework. Out of 70 students enrolled in the program only approximately 30- 40 percent graduated on time. This phenomenon raises significant questions as to the underlying reasons or causes of this. According to [10], even with all the resources support, many postgraduate students are still struggling with writing skills, understanding and using the information, integrating and applying the literature and theory, and other factors. With this notion, some empirical evidence on this issue needs to be obtained and the present study aims to reveal the answer by hypothesizing that;

H1. There is a relationship between students' information seeking and thesis project accomplishment.

H2. There is a relationship between postgraduate students' writing skills and thesis project completion.

H3. There is relationship between other factors and postgraduate students' thesis completion.

II. Literature Review

Generally, a thesis refers to a study on an exacting topic in which innovative research has been done and presented by the student, or a proposition stated for consideration, particularly one to be discussed and proved or maintained against opposing views [6]. A thesis or research project conducted is actually a mission for knowledge and understanding through experimentation, investigation and an attentive search with the aim of finding and interpreting, or an analysis of new knowledge aimed at resolving debatable existing knowledge [10]. Scholar [6] further argues that a thesis is a piece of academic work using systematic procedures which demand a substantial amount of work to complete and is normally associated with a higher-level degree of education involving postgraduate, master or doctoral students.

Scholars [3], [2] and [19], on the other hand, deduced that whatever the research project conducted, it requires specific components or structures which impart a logical continuity to the thesis in way that links in a chain confer on it integrity and strength. The most common and acceptable components of the thesis consist of the background of the study or introduction, a review of the literature, methodology, analysis, findings and conclusion [14], [19], [2]. Besides those components, a good or poor progression of a thesis project very much depends on the research processes or attributes [14]. In other words, a research project will not be accomplished without supporting attributes such as information, writing skills and other factors and lack of these attributes could become obstacles for students in completing their research work [13].

A. Information Seeking / Gathering

In any research project, information seeking is a process that involves individual actions such as searching, selecting, evaluating and gathering the information needed [20]. This encompasses activities that students engage in searching, identifying, transferring and using the information. As suggested there are six stages in the information seeking processes which include the information seekers' cognitive and affective processes, confidence and anxiety [11]. The stages range from initiation, selection and exploration to formulation, collection and presentation. In the later stages of the processes or after formulation, the information seeker is able to understand whether information needs have been met or otherwise.

According to [12], despite a variety of sources of information available, libraries are still vital and relevant in meeting the information needs of the individual. Scholar [13] noted that academicians and postgraduate students in different disciplines vary in their information seeking. Through a survey of 167 faculty members and 140 postgraduate students it was revealed that faculty members were more inclined towards books and fewer journal compared to post graduate students who were inclined toward both resources. On the other hand, [18] an examination of the information-seeking behavior of 256 social science faculty members revealed that journals, books, government documents and reference sources were more preferred in meeting academic information needs compared to indexing, abstracting sources, book reviews, conference proceedings, dissertations and theses, newspaper clippings and other non-book sources.

B. Writing Skills and Reading Comprehension

For the thesis, writing skills and reading comprehension seem to be one of the many attributes that need to be taken into consideration by most of the postgraduate students. Researcher [9] states that the ability to speak and write well in English is crucial for the postgraduate student to complete their thesis especially when English is a second language in the country's educational system. A number of studies reported that there are high proportions of postgraduate students who struggle to complete their studies within the specific time given [22]. Many factors contribute to the pressures of undertaking and coping with the requirements of a postgraduate thesis such as lack of writing skills, using the appropriate vocabularies and reading and comprehending academic texts in a critical manner. Lack of knowledge in research skills including linkages in sentence formation or redundancy factors in writing construction may also affect postgraduate thesis achievement [5].

C. Other Attributes

Besides giving attention to such attributes as information seeking, writing skills and reading comprehension, other factors are seen as additional contributors to the positive or negative impacts on the postgraduate thesis progression. As emphasized by [8], part-time students are different from those full time students and they are constricted in coping with their concurrent academic and professional workloads. Part time students are experiencing a lack of support and understanding from many areas such as their family, inflexible program organization and structures, and a feeling of isolation [13]. Internal conflicts like changes in thoughts and feelings and external conflicts such as personal relationships, time and

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resource constraints negatively influence the process. Research has showed that several factors hinder the thesis completion, such as student employment, difficulty in balancing personal and academic life, and insufficient training for thesis research [17]. In addition, problems like lack of prompt feedback, conflicting and inconsistent feedback, and unhelpful advice also jeopardize thesis completion [17].

III. METHODOLOGY

As the aim of this study is to investigate the attributes that are associated with the obstacles or difficulties encountered by postgraduate students during the process of embarking on the postgraduate thesis, a quantitative study through a cross-sectional approach using an individual unit of analysis was applied. The information required was obtained through self-reported and self-administered questionnaires and the samples came from graduated postgraduate students from the Faculty of Hotel and Tourism Management, University Technology MARA, Malaysia. As the intention was also to tap the experiences, final year students who were in the process, or on the verge of submitting their thesis, were also included.

Closed-ended questions using a summated rating scale or interval scale were opted for in soliciting post-graduates' feelings and opinions. The instrument consisted of five sections with Section A looking at the respondents' socio-demographical profile. Section B dealt with the information seeking obstacles facing by students during post graduate thesis embarkation while Section C assessed the obstacles related to writing skills. Other factors that may hinder post graduate students' thesis momentum were measured in Section D while Section E investigated the research or thesis project completion. Questions in each section were mostly adopted from previous similar studies with a slight modification made to suit the objectives.

Prior to the actual survey cellular telephone numbers and electronic mailing addresses of the graduates were obtained from the Faculty of Hotel and Tourism Management office. Sixty (60) of the graduated students were then contacted to obtain their willingness to participate in the study. They were also notified of the objectives and the significance of the survey as well as the date that the questionnaire was to be e-mailed to them and the date it should be returned. One week was given to them to respond. As some of the graduates were among the researcher's friends, there was quite an overwhelming response with fifty completed questionnaires received.

For final year post graduate students, the data collection process was undertaken over around two (2) weeks. Data gathering was personally administered by the researcher. The students were given information through the information sheet attached to the questionnaire itself. This information sheet provided details about the researcher, the aims of the study and purpose of the survey to be conducted. In light of the positive feedback and the absence of any obvious problems with either the instrument or the process, good responses with a total of fifty one (51) completed questionnaires were collected. A total of 101 responses were successfully obtained.

The reliability test was undertaken for Sections B, C, D and E. Items used in the stipulated dimensions were reliable with a coefficient alpha value of 0.82 for Section B, 0.91 for Section C, 0.83 for Section D and 0.69 for Section E. Cronbach Alpha Coefficient values of above 0.60 over all sections indicated that the data received were suited for further analyses.

IV. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

A. Respondent Profile

The majority of the respondents were part time students with 59.4 percent (n= 60) compared to 40.6 percent (n=41) of full time students. This was anticipated as the majority of students who enroll in post graduate study in many universities are among the working individuals as opposed to full time students. There was an almost equal proportion of female students with 50.5 percent (n =51) compared to 49.5 percent (n=50) of male students. Among those respondents, 87.1 percent (n = 88) were in the range of 20-30 years of age, while the remaining 12.9 percent (n =13) were in the range of 31-35 years of age.

B. Descriptive Analysis

Descriptive statistics were undertaken looking at the mean scores rated by respondents based on each dimension of the variables.

C. Information Seeking

On the information seeking or information gathering most of the respondents had the same feelings toward all items in this dimension. The magnitude of the mean from 2.0 to below 3.5 indicates students were having slight difficulty in information seeking. As such, assessing the overall information needed was slightly difficult (M=2.88, B1) as given by most of the respondents. Slightly difficult feelings were expressed in evaluating suitable information and resources (M=3.19, B2), recognizing related journals, books and other materials for the study (M=3.27, B3) and incorporating selected information (M=3.32, B4).

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TABLE I
REPORTED MEAN SCORES FOR INFORMATION SEEKING DIMENSION

Variables	Items	(M)	(SD)
Information Seeking			
To access the overall information needed for my study	B1	2.88	.852
To evaluate suitable information and resources for my study	B2	3.19	.743
To recognize suitable /related journals/ books for my study	B3	3.27	.753
To incorporate selected information into my study	B4	3.32	.719
To access the most recent studies/ literature that are relevant to my topic	B5	3.36	.743
To use information effectively in accomplishing a specific purpose	B6	2.89	.662
To access and use the information ethically and legally	B7	2.24	.674
To retrieve the needed information	B8	3.36	.642
To use Web-based search engines	B9	3.39	.610
To get online papers, journals or articles for my study	B10	3.17	.675
To gather online information pertaining to area of my study	B11	3.19	.717
Information seeking at the university library	B12	3.34	.575
Accessing information outside the university setting	B13	2.83	.634
Allocating time for information seeking in the university library	B14	2.96	.488

(Scale: 1=Most Difficult, 2=Difficult, 3= Slightly Difficult, 4=Easy,5=Easiest)Note: (n=101)

Slight difficulties were also experienced in assessing the most recent studies / literatures relevant to the topic (M=3.36, B5), using information effectively to accomplish a specific purpose (M=2.89, B6), accessing and using the information ethically and legally (M=2.24, B7), retrieving the needed information (M=3.36, B8) and using web-based search engines (M=3.39, B9).

It is interesting to note slight difficulties were reported by the respondents in getting online papers, journals or articles for their study (M=3.17, B10), gathering online information pertaining to area of their study (M=3.19, B11), information seeking at the university library (M=3.34, B12), accessing information outside the university setting (M=2.83, B13) and allocating time for information seeking in the university library (M=2.96, B14). The highest report on these items might come from part time students compared to full time students as they were only at the university during their weekend classes.

D. Reading Comprehension and Writing Skills

Unlike the preceding section, the range of mean scores from 1.0 to below 2.4 for all items in this section analysis posited that students were having more difficulties in writing skills compared to information seeking. There were difficulties in expressing and in developing adequate writing skills (M=2.26, C1), tracing an understanding of particular concepts or text materials (M=2.38, C2) and connecting components of a larger strategic reading process (M=2.39, C3). Similar difficulties were experienced in recognizing the suitable phases from text material to be used (M=2.40, C4), developing narrative summaries from text material (M=2.37, C5), and understanding academic or research language was strongly difficult (M=1.82, C6).

TABLE II
REPORTED MEAN SCORES FOR READING COMPREHENSION AND WRITING SKILLS DIMENSION

Variables	Items	(M)	(SD)
Reading Comprehension and Writing Skills			
Developing adequate reading and comprehension skills	C1	2.26	.607
Understanding particular concepts or text materials	C2	2.38	.570
Connecting components of a larger strategic reading process	C3	2.39	.496
Recognizing the suitable phases from text material to be used	C4	2.40	.609
Developing narrative summaries from text materials	C5	2.37	.683
Understanding academic / research language	C6	1.82	.805
Determining the appropriate writing styles	C7	1.30	.609
Coming up with and formalizing the ideas in writing	C8	1.16	.745
Connecting between statements and paragraph	C9	1.01	.742
Arguing findings in an analytical manner that generates new knowledge and insight	C10	1.01	.794
Grammatical accuracy and appropriateness	C11	1.00	.800
Using proper and appropriate vocabularies	C12	1.32	.761
Constructing the references with the right format	C13	1.31	.761
Using suitable verbs and nouns	C14	1.36	.639
Expressing thoughts clearly in English	C15	1.39	.799
Considering a possible writing structure for the thesis	C16	1.41	.763
Writing an interpretation of the results derived from analysis	C17	1.28	.631
Formulating and justifying empirical research questions for the study	C18	1.18	.774
The overall writing phase/process of a thesis	C19	1.17	.744

(Scale: 1=Most Difficult, 2=Difficult, 3= Slightly Difficult, 4=Easy, 5=Easiest) Note: (n=101)

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Compared to reading comprehension, writing elements are the most difficult part experienced by students in accomplishing their thesis work. The most difficulties were experiencing in determining the appropriate writing styles (M=1.30, C7), coming up with and formalizing the ideas in writing (M=1.16, C8), connecting between statements and paragraph (M=1.01, C9), arguing findings in an analytical manner that generates new knowledge and insight (M=1.01, C10), grammatical accuracy and appropriateness (M=1.00, C11), using proper and appropriate vocabularies (M=1.32, C12), constructing the references with the right format (M=1.31, C13) and using suitable verbs and nouns (M=1.36, C14).

Most difficulties were also reported in expressing thoughts clearly in English (M=1.39, C15), considering a possible writing structure for their thesis (M=1.41, C16), writing an interpretation of the results derived from analysis (M=1.28, C17), formulating and justifying empirical research questions for their study (M=1.18, C18) and the overall writing phase/process of a thesis (M=1.17, C19). In sum, although reading comprehension seems to be hard for the students, writing elements are even harder and this could be the main drawback for the students in accomplishing their thesis project on time. In other words, lack of ability in English academic writing caused the deferment of thesis completion.

E. Other Factors/Attributes

On other attributes, two (2) patterns of feelings were expressed by students. One related to supervisory and another was concerned with the time management factor. For supervisory, the majority of students expressed slight difficulty in maintaining contact with some of the supervisors (M=3.71, D1), keeping the communication lines open (M=3.59, D2), maintaining a good academic relationship (M=4.09, D3), getting research knowledge, support and assistance (M=3.86, D4), receiving constructive feedback within an agreeable period of time (M=3.90, D5) and coming up with a realistic daily schedule (M=3.51, D6).

TABLE III
REPORTED MEAN SCORES FOR OTHER FACTORS/ATTRIBUTES

Variables	Items	(M)	(SD)
Other Factors/Attributes			
Maintaining contact through regular personal supervision	D1	3.71	.455
Keeping the communication lines open	D2	3.59	.533
Maintaining a good academic relationship with the supervisor	D3	4.09	.694
Getting research knowledge support and assistance from the supervisor	D4	3.86	.530
Receiving constructive feedback within an agreeable period of time	D5	3.90	.412
Coming up with a realistic daily schedule	D6	3.51	.802
Maintaining a positive attitude and staying motivated	D7	3.39	.702
Maintaining daily contact with the thesis	D8	3.38	.661
Balancing personal matters and academic life	D9	3.43	.726
Distance travelled to meet the supervisor	D10	2.91	1.001
Scheduling and using time efficiently	D11	3.14	.633
Cost of travelling to see the supervisor	D12	3.35	.962

(Scale: 1=Most Difficult, 2=Difficult, 3= Slightly Difficult, 4=Easy, 5=Easiest) Note: (n=101)

On time management, most students admitted slight difficulty with maintaining a positive attitude and staying motivated (M=3.39, D7), maintaining daily contact with the thesis (M=3.38, D8), balancing personal and academic matters (M=3.43, D9), distance travelled to meet the supervisor (M=2.91, D10), scheduling and using time efficiently (M=3.14, D11), and the cost of travelling to see the supervisor (M=3.35, D12). What could be said from this section analysis is that beside information seeking, writing skills, supervisory and time management significantly contribute to postgraduate students' thesis accomplishment.

F. Overall Experience on Thesis

The last descriptive analysis looked at the overall experience of postgraduate students in accomplishing their thesis project. Mean scores ranging between 3.59 and 4.52, indicate that the majority of students agreed and strongly agreed with the statements probed. They agreed that lack of resources affects their thesis accomplishment (M=3.59, E1) and agreed that proper thesis guidelines helped them to accomplish their thesis project (M=3.84, E2). They realized that working on a thesis is a very tough process (M=3.93, E3) and therefore agreed that the supervisor plays an important role in their thesis accomplishment (M=3.74, E4)

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TABLE IV
REPORTED MEAN SCORES FOR OVERALL EXPERIENCE ON THESIS

Variables	Items	(M)	(SD)
Overall Experience on Thesis			
Lack of resources affected my thesis accomplishment	E1	3.59	.569
Proper thesis guidelines helped me to accomplish my thesis project	E2	3.84	.543
I realized that working on a thesis is a very tough process	E3	3.93	.604
My supervisor played an important role in my thesis accomplishment	E4	3.74	.658
Completing a thesis was the most daunting challenge in my academic pursuit	E5	4.52	.502
Maintaining steady progress helped me to avoid unfortunate circumstances	E6	4.54	.573
Lack of writing skills delayed my thesis accomplishment	E7	4.52	.667

(Scale: 1=Strongly Disagree, 2=Disagree, 3=Neutral, 4=Agree, 5=Strongly Agree) Note: (n=101)

Realizing those matters, most of the post graduate students involved in this study strongly agreed that maintaining steady progress helped them to avoid unfortunate circumstances (M=4.54, E6) as completing a thesis was the most daunting challenge in their academic pursuit (M=4.52, E5) and lack of writing skills might have delayed their thesis accomplishment (M=4.52, E7). The overall respondents' experiences on thesis completion are summarized in Table IV.

This section analysis clearly revealed that accomplishing thesis work not only involved commitment of the students in terms of time management, resources, good writing skills but also commitment and proper guidance from respective supervisors.

G. Hypotheses Testing

In response to the three (3) hypotheses of the study, standard multiple regressions were used. This analysis is appropriate to confirm the earlier sections related to information seeking, writing skills, other factors and thesis completion and, in other words, to explore the relationship between a numbers of independent variables (predictors) and dependent variables (criterion). With that, various aspects of distribution scores (normality, linearity, homoscedasticity, independence of residuals, multi-colinearity and Tolerance and Variance inflation factor (VIF)) were checked through the scatter plots as part of the multiple regression procedure.

H1: There is a relationship between students' information seeking and thesis project accomplishment.

For the first hypothesis, results (Table V) show that the information seeking attributes were able to explain 30 percent ($R^2 = .30$, F-change $= 8.609$, $p<.004**$) of the variance in the thesis project completion. The outcomes demonstrated that the information seeking in thesis completion attributes significantly contributed to the prediction of the thesis project completion. It evidently shows that information seeking ($\beta = .28$, $p < .004**$) was found to significantly and positively affect the thesis project completion, so it can be said that hypothesis 1 (H1) is supported.

TABLE V
RESULTS OF MULTIPLE REGRESSIONS OF THE INFORMATION SEEKING ATTRIBUTES ON THE THESIS PROJECT COMPLETION

Predictors	Model 1 Std. β
Step 1: Model Variables	
Information Seeking	.28**
R^2	.30
Adj. R^2	.071
R^2 Change	.30
F-Change	8.609

Note: *p < 0.05, **p < 0.01, ***p <0.001

H2: There is a relationship between postgraduate students' writing skills and thesis project completion.

The second hypothesis evaluates the relationship between the predictors comprising writing skills and the criterion which represents the thesis completion. In particular, this is to see how strong writing skills affected post graduate students' thesis completion. Again, a single-step multiple regression was conducted and the result is tabulated in Table VI.

TABLE VI
RESULTS OF MULTIPLE REGRESSIONS OF WRITING SKILLS ATTRIBUTES ON THE THESIS PROJECT COMPLETION

Predictors	Model 1 Std. β
Step 1: Model Variables	
Writing Skills	.67***
R^2	.51
Adj. R^2	.40
R^2 Change	.51
F-Change	12.494

Note: *p < 0.05, **p < 0.01, ***p <0.001

Results show that writing skills was able to explain 67 percent ($R^2 = .51$, F-change $= 12.494$, $p<.001**$) of the variance in the thesis completion. This shows that reading comprehension and writing skills independently significantly contributed to the prediction of the thesis completion. The value of $\beta = .67$, $p < .001**$ indicates writing skills significantly and positively affect the thesis project completion, therefore the hypothesis 2 (H2) is vigorously supported.

H3: There is relationship between other factors and postgraduate students' thesis completion.

For the third hypothesis, the predictor variable comprising other factors is evaluated against the criterion variable which is the completion experiences. Results of the analysis using

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single step multiple regressions are exhibited in Table VII. Other factor attributes were able to explain 20 percent ($R^2 = .38$, F-change = 2.183, p<.05*) of the variance on the thesis completion. The value of $\beta = .18$, $p < .05*$ indicates other factor slightly significantly and positively affect the thesis project completion, therefore hypothesis 3 (H3) is supported.

TABLE VII
RESULTS OF MULTIPLE REGRESSIONS OF THE OTHER FACTOR ATTRIBUTES ON THE THESIS PROJECT COMPLETION

Predictors	Model 1 Std. β
Step 1: Model Variables	
Other Factors	.18*
R^2	.20
Adj. R^2	.38
R^2 Change	.20
F-Change	2.183

Note: *p < 0.05, **p < 0.01, ***p <0.001

In sum, out of the three (3) factors, writing skills had the most significant impact on the thesis accomplishment process, information seeking and other factors. This result indicates that writing skills is the most challenging and the hardest process during thesis embarkation faced by most postgraduate students

V. IMPLICATIONS, RECOMMENDATIONS AND CONCLUSION

No doubt a thesis is one of the most important components of postgraduate studies and in fact acts as the last safeguard for students accomplishing their studies. It is by far the most challenging piece of academic work as it involves many contributory factors which determine the rate of completion or graduation. With this challenge, maintaining steady progress in all factors or aspects therefore, will help the individual student to accomplish their mission and will avoid any unfortunate circumstances, while neglecting one of those contributory factors might lead to the deferment of thesis completion and extending the graduation date.

From this study, information seeking, writing skills and other factors which refer to supervisor and time management in particular are recognized as the main contributory factors which positively or negatively influence postgraduate thesis accomplishment. Study findings clearly revealed that a large proportion of postgraduate students are still not well versed in information seeking or in getting the right information for their study. In addition, they are also inefficient in managing time and maintaining contact with supervisors in regard to their thesis work. Besides these, a very clear picture, and in fact a most remarkable finding, emerging in this study is that it is necessary to deal with postgraduate students' difficulties in developing adequate and acceptable academic writing skills. This depressing indication has provided some implications not only for the students, but also for supervisors and the faculty as a whole.

For the students, they should not think that postgraduate studies are similar to undergraduate studies which do not really require substantial amounts of effort in many aspects. Their undergraduate mentality in all facets should be transformed or in other words they should shift their line of thinking and become more competent, critical and analytical. The ability to anticipate, decide and solve matters should also be practiced. Similarly to information seeking, at the post graduate studies level, students' ability to evaluate suitable information, resources and incorporating selected information should not be an issue. Students must use their own initiative to understand in-depth the various information seeking techniques available.

As suggested by many scholars, managing time and maintaining contact with supervisors are also crucial in post graduate studies, particularly during embarking on the thesis project. Postgraduate students in this study who are students of the Faculty of Hotel and Tourism Management therefore must avoid any elements of procrastination, but provide milestones or schedules and targeted dates and seriously follow the schedule. The same applies to the supervisor. Mutual understanding between student and supervisor should be developed. Regular meetings with the supervisor plus presenting a good piece of work should always be practiced by the individual student. In other words, presenting bits and pieces of their work to the supervisor is more meaningful than showing the bulk of it at the end of the period. For the supervisor, their roles of supporting, encouraging, monitoring and commenting on their students' work should frequently be carried out.

As previously mentioned, lack of proper academic writing is the most critical issue apparent from this study. On this note, postgraduate students must show be seriously concerned with improving their writing skills, especially during post graduate studies. Studies have proved that practicing is the most effective way of acquiring and polishing writing skills. The individual student without any other options should keep themselves writing if they want to improve their English writing skills. Students' ability in this matter cannot be achieved without proper writing guidance from the program lecturers through class assignments, essay tests and examinations.

As a conclusion, the above highlighted issues could be resolved without the direct involvement of the faculty as a whole. Having a clear insight into this issue, the faculty therefore should take a proactive role by providing the necessary support to the students. An information seeking program should be organized at the beginning of each semester especially for a new student. A supervising program particularly for a new supervisor, needs to be continually carried out and, most importantly, a colloquium in every stage of a student's thesis should be organized by the postgraduate department.

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