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**TO PUBLISH OR NOT: PHILIPPINE GRADUATE STUDENTS' MOTIVATION,
EXPERIENCES, AND NEEDS IN RESEARCH PUBLICATION**

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ABSTRACT

Engaging with research publications is crucial for graduate students in their academic pursuits. It allows them to not only reflect on their knowledge and practice, which in turn leads to the development of a research topic for their theses, but also to contribute to the advancement of knowledge within their field of study. This study delves into the motivations, experiences and needs of graduate students who have engaged in research and publication in the Philippines context. A phenomenological approach was applied, involving selected graduate students who have published at least one research in internationally refereed journals and experienced the processes of journal publication. The data were gathered from FGD and analyzed iteratively. The findings revealed that their motivations are professors' encouragement, course requirements, new learning experience, collaboration, and promotion. In describing their experiences, they found it enriching, collaborative, fulfilling, and challenging. Their needs are mentoring, research capability building, having a research community, financial support and incentives, and providing relevant information. From the findings, it can be concluded that graduate students will be able to do research with the right motivation and support from the faculty. Research and publication are fulfilling and enriching but challenging. The experiences and needs of the selected graduate students can be used as inputs in the development of a research and publication program for graduate students. in general and comparing between autonomous versus controlled motivation.

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1. INTRODUCTION

Engaging with research publication has been indispensable in graduate students' academic realms since they do not only reflect on their knowledge and practice that leads to the development of a research topic for their theses but also are expected to contribute to knowledge development within their field of study (Alvarez et al., 2014; Lathif et al., 2021). However, doing research and publication in international journals may be challenging for them since it entails more time, effort, and advanced academic writing skills (Azizah & Budiman, 2017; Click, 2018; Lathif et al., 2021). For instance, they might still feel unsure of how to publish their papers or where to begin the publication process (Alvarez et al., 2014). Academic institutions in this case oftentimes provide resources to graduate students to develop their capacity and confidence (Arsenault et al., 2021). Faculty should always strive to foster supportive and positive mentoring relationships with their graduate students, and institutions must support them in doing so. Institutions and graduate advisors alike should support and encourage students to take healthy breaks when students are feeling stuck, burnt out, or overwhelmed and should explicitly highlight options and examples for taking such breaks (Burton & Cao, 2022).

Over time, graduate programs and policies change to respond to global and economic needs including the research agenda of a university. This includes strengthening the research program of educational institutions. In the Philippines context, one of the program outcomes in graduate schools is for making the students become future-ready research scholars. In one of the teacher education universities in the Philippines, research publication as a requirement before earning a graduate degree is already implemented for students who entered the last term of school year 2021-2022. However, there are graduate students who are not covered by the new policy but have been engaged in research including publications.

Indeed, writing and conducting research can be very demanding to graduate student who will need guidance and assistance. Even graduate school professors continue to relearn and discover new things about research. As the requirements and standards become higher, the more challenging it becomes for graduate students and professors who are required not only to do research but also publish them. The Commission on Higher Education (CHED) issued CMO No. 15 s. 2019 "Policies, Standards, and Guidelines for Graduate Programs" which is in alignment with the Philippine Qualifications Framework (PQF). In this memorandum, one of the required final outputs for graduate students is a publication of a research work in an internationally or nationally refereed and indexed journal or have a juried creative work outlet.

Therefore, students' capabilities in conducting cutting-edge research and impactful publication are crucial to be examined. Looking at the research capabilities of graduate students particularly at the master's level, a study revealed that the graduate students perceived their capability in writing research proposal as "moderately capable". In terms of writing a publishable research paper, they said that they are "moderately capable" in writing a publishable research paper. On the availability of facilities, time, training, funding, other resources and support from agency in doing research, they perceived them as "moderately available" (Agatep & Villalobos, 2022).

In a study on research activities from the lens of graduate students, revealed that research activities are strong which are integrated into all courses offered in the graduate school, and the presentation of output is one of the culminating requirements (Bueno, 2019). Their professors are considered key components in the implementation of a research-enriched activities in the graduate school so that they can have adequate skills, experiences, and preparation for developing their competencies. An effective supervisor should satisfy such criteria. The supervisor must be competent in the general area of the student's research even if not expert in the detailed area of the thesis topic (Bueno, 2019). This perspective strongly supports CHED Memorandum Order No. 15 s. 2019 where faculty in the graduate school should have publications in internationally or nationally refereed journals. In other words, graduate students who are required to have a publication as one of the required outputs should be guided by faculty who are actively engaged in research and have research publications.

However, there is a lack of research regarding mentorship, especially when it involves common obstacles that a student may experience such as academic rejection, the pressure to publish scholarly work, and career conversations post-graduate school. Academic rejection refers to the act of receiving a rejection for a scholarly task such as a rejection notice for a manuscript, award, grant, or even employment (Hoover & Lucas, 2023). Hence, this study sought to understand the experiences of selected graduate students and identify their needs and challenges in journal publication. From their inputs, these may be used as bases in developing a research capability program or mentoring program on journal publication for graduate students. The following are the research questions that the study sought to answer.

1. What are the reasons of selected graduate students to engage in research journal publication?
2. How do the selected graduate students describe their experiences in research publication?
3. Based on the experiences of selected graduate students, what assistance should be provided to graduate students for journal publication?

2. METHOD

The present study is motivated by many graduate students who have no research publication experience and there is no formal research publication mentoring program for them. In consideration of the new policy in the Philippines, it strongly suggests that graduate students must be prepared for research publication by equipping them with at least the basic knowledge and skills. Since there are graduate students who have already taken the initiative to write and publish research, they can share their insights based on their experiences and provide inputs on how the

graduate school can mentor graduate students in research publications. Indeed, mentoring will not only guide the students but also inspire them to do research.

The method used in this study is phenomenology. According to Creswell in his book entitled *A concise introduction to mixed methods research* in 2014, phenomenology is an approach to qualitative research that focuses on the commonality of a lived experience within a particular group. The fundamental goal of the approach is to arrive at a description of the nature of the particular phenomenon.

The participants were graduate students in a teacher education university who have at least one research publication and are not covered by the new policy on research publication for graduate students. They were selected based on the data of current graduate students who have research publications and were recommended by graduate school professors who served as research mentors. It means that research publication is not a requirement for the completion of their degree.

For the data gathering, the researcher held a focus group discussion (FGD) which was participated by two master's and ten doctoral graduate students. Three graduate students who were not able to join the FGD were interviewed separately using the same questions. Interview questions were developed by the researchers and validated by experts in educational research with a strong presence in Google Scholar, particularly citations. The interview questions were free from any biases. The FGD lasted for almost two hours and the interview for at least 30 minutes.

Coding was used to analyze the data. In coding, the researcher organizes data collected into segments and assigns a word or phrase to them as labels (Creswell, 2014). Before conducting the interviews and focus group discussion, the researchers sought the consent of the participants. The participation of the selected graduate students was voluntary, and their responses will not affect their status as students in the university. No names were mentioned in this study.

3. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

What are the motivations of selected graduate students to engage in research and journal publication?

Graduate students are introduced to research by their professors in the early stages of their coursework in preparation for their thesis or dissertation writing. Though research publication is not a requirement for graduation, there are graduate students who have completed and published their research. They are motivated because it is a course requirement, a new learning experience, professor's encouragement, collaboration and promotion. It can be gleaned in Table 1 the reasons or motivations in doing research for publication.

Table 1.
Motivations for Research Publication

Themes	Motivations
Course Requirement	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Required in courses • One of the course requirements • A concept paper is required.
New Learning Experience	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A personal choice to learn • Validating my ontological beliefs • Challenge myself on how much I learn about research and how I can apply the learning in actual research writing • Interesting to do research presentations and I need to do research projects to have something to present • Felt the need to finish the research that I started. • Learning new ideas
Professors' Encouragement	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Motivated by professors to publish • Encouraged to continue the concept papers and complete the research for publication • Inspired by professors to do research
Collaboration	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Motivated by critical friends to publish • Invited by classmates to collaborate on a research work • Felt confident because it is a team research.
Promotion	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Part of the requirements for promotion as a teacher. • Publication achievement is helpful for promotion at work and other opportunities.

The following are the findings and discussion of every motivation based on the data gathered:

Course Requirement

Most professors in graduate school ask their students to do research-related requirements which are either an annotated bibliography, research proposal or complete research. Seeing the potential of the requirement that they submitted, the graduate students decided to complete their research requirement and submit it for publication. Graduate Student 1 shared that :

"Initially, I considered it as a requirement. However, I realized that my work should not be put to waste and must be continued to become a complete research. Upon the advise of my professor, I decided to send it to a journal for publication."

Graduate Student 3 has a similar experience. He/She said that :

"In one of the core courses that I took, the professor required us to conduct a complete research by group in just three months. Despite the limited time, we were able to do the research and presented it in our class. After our presentation, the professor encouraged us to revise our paper and submit it for publication."

The selected graduate students agreed that it all started as a requirement. However they were motivated by their initial research output and decided to take it to the next level by continuing and completing their research. Some have already done a complete research and polished it for possible publication in an international journal. These graduate students have self-efficacy. Self-efficacy has been identified by researchers in other disciplines as a helpful concept for understanding why and how graduate students initiate, continue, and complete their degrees (Munoz, 2021).

New Learning Experience

Graduate students will agree that it is not easy to do research. More so, making it more scientifically sound that will qualify for publication in an internationally peer-reviewed journal. It does not only require knowledge and skills but also experience from writing to publication. However, the selected graduate students considered it as a new learning experience that would enhance their research knowledge and skills. While other graduate students consider not pursuing their initial research output, the selected graduate students saw this as an opportunity to grow. Graduate Student 3 shared that :

"I decided to challenge myself on how much I have learned about research by applying what I have learned by continuing my research paper that led to its publication. In that process, I have to admit that the entire process was an a-ha moment."

Some said that it was a personal choice. They were invited by their classmates and professors to do research but it was really their decision to do it. Graduate Student 7 said that :

"I knew that it will be a long and tedious process. It will be difficult but I saw the chance to learn more about research. It was my choice to do research. Having seen my research published, I told myself that I made the right choice."

A graduate student viewed it as an avenue to validate his/her personal beliefs on observations and experiences in teaching and learning. Graduate Student 4 said that :

"Having a lot of ideas in mind, I considered research as a chance to validate my ontological beliefs in education. I was able to discover new ideas and proved some of my observations as a teacher. As I was writing my research, I felt a great deal of relief having been able to write about something that I found interesting."

The challenge of doing research for publication is already a strong motivation for the selected graduate students to engage in research. They saw it as a new learning experience that would enhance their research knowledge and skills and prepare them for thesis/dissertation writing. To make this happen, graduate programs should invest more time in developing faculty-graduate student mentorship programs to support more publishing opportunities that focus on developing a research plan, writing strategies, selection of a peer-review journal to submit a manuscript, and the process of submitting a manuscript for review (Floyd et al., 2019).

Professors' Encouragement

Graduate students may have an idea about research publication but they are more focused on the course work and their thesis or dissertation. However, in their course work, some professors require them to do either research proposal or complete research. The selected graduate students claimed that they were inspired by their professors' encouragement to continue and publish the research that they have started. Graduate Student 11 gladly shared that :

"In one of our courses, I presented my research proposal which I thought was already done. The following term, I was under again the same professor in a research course. He/She said to continue the research because it is potential for publication. Because of that, I worked on my research which was eventually published."

Another graduate student had a similar experience because his/her professor was always sharing about research publication. He/She was inspired to do research because of the encouraging words of the professor. Graduate Student 9 said :

“When my professor kept on telling us that we can publish as long as you have a good topic and the determination to do it. From then on, I started reading published researches and decided to start my own research. If not for that professor, I would not have published my research articles. Those encouraging words were very powerful.”

Believing that research should only be done towards the end of the graduate program, Graduate Student 1 said that his/her professor changed his mindset. The professor said that research publication will not only prepare you for thesis or dissertation writing but will help you become a better educator. The graduate student shared that

“A professor can make or break you. I felt the passion of my professor in research that it made me reflect on my thoughts on research. He/She was very inspiring because of his selfless attitude to make graduate students not only better researchers but also better educators. That changed my attitude not only towards research but also on my graduate studies.”

The role of the faculty is important in engaging graduate students in research. The professors' caring emphasize the role faculty play in student success. The professors' pedagogical caring subscale assessed the extent to which students felt valued by their professors. In other words, professors play a strong part in the academic success of the students (Buskirk-Cohen & Plants, 2019). The selected graduate students attribute their motivation to publish research articles to their professors.

Collaboration

Arguably, the most difficult part of graduate studies is thesis or dissertation writing. It is an individual requirement for every graduate student but with the assistance of an adviser. As an individual work, research is difficult but can be less harder if it is a collaborative work. Graduate students who are in their course work consider doing research as long as it is a group engagement. The selected graduate students honestly said that they got into research publication because of their professors and fellow graduate students. They were invited to join and contribute in a research project that will be submitted for publication in the future. Graduate Student 10 shared that :

“I could not believe that I was invited by my professor to join in their research project. It was an opportunity to learn more about research from them by becoming more involved in the work. I felt the courage to do research because it is a collaborative work with more experienced writers who are willing to share their knowledge with me.”

Being a collaborative work, research becomes easier and interesting because everyone takes part in the work. All researchers learn from one another. Graduate Student 5 said that :

“My classmate invited me to join them in their research project. I was skeptical about it because I did not know how I will be able to contribute. After our discussion, I found out that there will be three of us who will be working. Both of them have already an experience in research publication. With their insistence, I decided to join them.”

The selected graduate students found strength in collaboration that enabled them to do research and have their work published. All of them learned from the process. They felt confident to do it because it was a team effort. As a group, they were in constant communication and mindful of their research task. Collaboration encourages the establishment of effective communication and partnerships and also offers equal opportunities among the team members. It honors and respects each member's individual and organizational style. Collaboration also increases the ethical conduct maintaining honesty, integrity, justice, transparency, and confidentiality (Medhi et al., 2019).

Promotion

In the reclassification of faculty members in private and public schools (basic education and higher education), research is one of the areas assigned with a higher percentage. Many points can be earned by a faculty member who have research publications. If reclassified, it is expected that the faculty will receive higher salary. In fact, Graduate Student 4 shared that: “I have to admit that promotion is one of my motivations for doing research. While I learn more in doing research, I can also use it for promotion.”

Another graduate student said that it is part of the promotion system in tertiary education for faculty. Graduate Student 10 said that: “Research publication is an important part in one's career growth in teaching. I decided to engage in research work because it will provide more opportunities particularly promotion in faculty rank and possible leadership positions.”

No faculty member wants to stay in his current rank or position throughout his/her stay in the teaching profession. He/She will aim for career growth leading to promotion in rank or position. Obviously, salary increase is part of promotion but research is an opportunity for them to grow in the profession. In a study on teachers as researchers, it found out that teachers have positive perceptions towards doing research and its benefits to their teaching practice and to their students' learning process. Another important finding is teachers reported that they were motivated to do research because they wanted to be promoted. It must be noted that, some of the teacher-participants only did research as part of the requirements for their graduate degrees. They did not do research other than their master's research. Thus, job promotion is their only motivating factor why they took their master's

degree and did research. (Ulla, et. al, 2017). Though the selected graduated students said that they have other motivations to do research, they are honest to say that research publication entails promotion.

How do the selected graduate students describe their experiences in research publication?

The selected graduate students went through a similar process of writing, conducting, and publishing researches. However, each of them has a story to tell about their experiences in research publication. They said that their experiences in research publication are enriching, challenging, collaborative and fulfilling. It can be gleaned in Table 2 how they described their experience.

Table 2.
Experiences in Research Publication

Themes	Description of Research Publication Experience
Enriching	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Rekindled the drive to write and do research. • Felt the need to learn more particularly when submitting it to high indexed journals.
Challenging	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • I learned a lot from experts who reviewed my research. • Finding the appropriate journal is challenging. • Doing revisions is very challenging. • Multiple revisions can be very frustrating. • Doubted oneself when revising. • There are too many revisions to do. • Out of my comfort zone – not easy. • Rejection is part of the process, a learning experience.
Collaborative	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Very supportive professors. • Professors inviting graduate students to do research. • Collaboration among students to do research. • Possible to do because of collaboration. • Enjoyed collaborative work with other authors.
Fulfilling	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Felt accomplished after seeing the research published. • A big accomplishment when your research is published. • Fulfilling when it was accepted and published. • Fulfilling because I was able to share to the world. • Very happy that my paper was accepted. • Felt proud of what I have accomplished.

The following are the description including the findings and discussion of their experiences on research publication :

Enriching

Research publication is a tedious process that requires patience and grit from researchers. Looking at their experience, the selected graduate students found it enriching for they were able to hone their research knowledge and skills. Graduate Student 2 shared that "Going through the research publication process was an enriching one despite the seemingly endless revisions. Along the way, I was able to enhance my research skills and learn new things about research."

The research publication process was full unexpected discoveries particularly when submitting to highly-indexed journals like Scopus or ASEAN Citation Index. Graduate Student 3 said that :

"Before submitting a research to a Scopus-indexed journal, I already had an experience in research publication but of a lesser indexed journal. However, it was different in highly-indexed journal. There are journals which only has 5% acceptance rate. We learn a lot from the publication process including the countless revisions."

Another graduate student recalled how research got his/her interest to write including research. Graduate Student 12 remembered that :

"Personally, I did not like to write. I'd rather speak. However, after being encouraged to do research, I was able to try writing particularly research. From that time on, I started writing collaboratively with other researchers which led me in enriching myself not only on research but also on other things. It taught me to be patient, persevering, determined."

The entire process of research publication may be difficult but the selected graduate students found a silver lining. They were able to learn more about research particularly enhancing their skills in writing. They were also able to instill values that made them stronger as graduate students.

Challenging

Engaging in research publication will always be considered a challenging task. Based on the experiences of the selected graduate students, research publication is like a road less traveled and unexpected events may happen. From writing the research to the decision on submission, one has to be prepared for a lot of surprises. Graduate Student 7 said that:

“Our group was able to finish a research and decided to submit it for publication. We encountered two major challenges. One is finding the appropriate journal for our research study. There may be a lot of journals but we did not know which were predatory. But with the advise of a professor, we were able to find one with no publication fee. The second challenge was revision. We were happy that our paper was accepted but doing the revisions was certainly challenging. But with our grit, we were able to meet the requirements of the journal.”

Another graduate student pointed out the lack of knowledge on publication. Graduate Student 8 said that :

“I was so interested to have my research published but I did not know how to do it. A classmate gave me a list of journals with no publication fee. Eventually, I checked the google scholar profile of my professors and visited the journals where they published their researches. It was definitely challenging at the beginning including the numerous revisions of my first published article.”

Research publication is challenging at the beginning most especially if one has no experience in writing research for publication. Graduate Student 5 shared that :

“Before I entered my current university, the only research that I did was my thesis which was not published. I was not confident to do research because I felt inadequate. However, a professor changed my mindset because he/she believed that I can do research. I did what was required in journal publication and my hard work was rewarded.”

Graduate students encounter a lot of challenges in research. It is important that they are mentored in order to face these challenges more positively. In a study conducted on challenges of post-graduate students on research, it found out that they need to seek for research experts before conducting the research. They should consult research supervisors or their seniors for obtaining research procedures, research methods and research strategies for success in their researches (Kadoke & Otieno, 2022). The selected graduate students agreed that the assistance provided by their professors helped them significantly in overcoming the challenges in research publication.

Collaborative

When researchers come together for collaborative research, it becomes more interesting and exciting. Collaboration encourages the establishment of effective communication and partnerships and also offers equal opportunities among the team members. It honors and respects each member's individual and organizational style. Collaboration also increases the ethical conduct maintaining honesty, integrity, justice, transparency, and confidentiality (Medhi et al., 2019). Selected graduate students claimed that their first research publication was a collaborative work either with their professors or classmates. It was their introduction to research that they considered as “breaking the ice” in publication. Graduate Student 12 happily recalled that

“I admire my professor who took us under his/her wing as research assistants and co-authors. We were not the most intelligent in class but he/she saw our patience and determination. We took part in researches including those that are funded. Honestly, we learned a lot and we were able to do our own researches after that.”

The selected graduate students agreed that their research publication is mostly collaborative in nature. Being a collaborative work, research became more attractive and doable. Graduate Student 6 said that :

“I like and enjoy studying and writing research because it became personal to me. I have to admit that all my published researches are collaborative. My contributions in those researches are in the areas that I am good at. If not for collaboration and persistence of my co-authors, I would have not done it.”

They also attribute their research publications to the initiative of their professors for collaborative research. They were able to accomplish something that is initially unimaginable. Graduate Student 4 pointed out that

“I was invited by a classmate who has an experience in research publication. Later, I found out that it was also collaborative work with a professor. I felt the support of our professor and the determination of our group to finish and publish our research. I enjoyed doing that collaborative research. After that, I continued joining my classmates in research.”

The selected graduate students appreciate the value of collaboration in research with their professors and classmates. It was an enriching and fulfilling experience considering what they have accomplished. Aside from

their professors, it is also evident that peer-mentoring was helpful in research publication. Peer mentorship positively affects developmental outcomes across four domains of graduate learning: academic, social, psychological, and career (Lorenzetti et al., 2019).

Fulfilling

There will always be a light at the end of the tunnel. Research publication is challenging but fulfilling in the end. The selected graduate students unanimously agreed that their hard work paid off after their research was published. Graduate Student 5 shared that:

“I remember one of my first publications which that I repeatedly revised before it was finally accepted and published. I was very happy and fulfilled as I look back. Actually, it inspired me to do another research for publication.”

Another graduate student said that it is not impossible to have a research work published despite the comments from the reviewers. Graduate Student 9 recalled that:

“When I first saw the required revisions for my paper, I almost cried and did not know where to start. Nonetheless, I addressed all the comments and jumped for joy when I saw it published. It was very fulfilling considering what I went through.”

Seeing a research work published makes one feel very happy and accomplished. Graduate Student 11 said that:

“If you work hard on something, you will get rewarded. I felt so accomplished when my research was published. I was so happy and proud of what I have done. In fact, I shared it in facebook not to brag about it but to express our happiness.”

In the end, research publication can be fulfilling and inspiring for graduate students who are determined to produce quality researches. They find happiness and fulfillment for their hard work. Research writing has its ups and downs. There are moments of joy and sadness. Researchers tried discontinuing their researches but decided to finish them. The experiences of the selected graduate students can be described as enriching, challenging, collaborative and fulfilling. Most of them did their publication during the COVID-19 pandemic. A study revealed that graduate students find completing a graduate degree exciting and a challenging time for them. Many students realized their inner strength by persevering when life got very hard. They were slightly more positive (i.e. support from others; developing coping strategies; improved graduate experience) than negative (i.e. loneliness; emotional; being sick). (Chonody, 2021).

Based on the experiences of selected graduate students, what assistance can be provided to graduate students for journal publication?

Research publication is a challenging process requiring patience, determination and grit. The selected graduate students have different motivations in engaging in research publication such as compliance in course requirements, professional growth, a new learning experience, collaboration, and promotion. In describing their experiences, they said that it was enriching, challenging, collaborative, and fulfilling. Looking back on their experiences, they identified their needs that can be used as inputs in developing a mentoring program for research and publication for graduate students who will be required to publish at least one research before receiving the degree.

Based on the experiences of the selected graduate students, they said that the assistance that can be provided to the graduate students on research publication are mentoring, research capability building, research community, financial support and incentives, and relevant information. These can also serve as inputs for a mentoring program that will enhance their knowledge, skills and competence in research publication. Table 3 shows that the kind of assistance to be provided to the graduate students are based on their needs.

Table 3.
Needs of Graduate Students in Research Publication

Themes	Needs
Mentoring	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Support from faculty. • Collaboration with faculty.
Research Capability Building	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Faculty guiding graduate students in publication. • Faculty providing training. • Revive online training • Conferences for paper presentation. • Revive research laboratory. • Exposure of graduate students in conferences.
Research Community	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Pocket sessions for graduate students. • Interaction among graduate students on their research experiences. • Support system to keep the graduate students mentally and emotionally strong in doing research.

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|----------------------------------|---|
| Financial Support and Incentives | <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Providing support for publication and presentation.• Incentives for students who published in reputable journals.• Recognition of students who were able to publish their research. |
| Relevant Information | <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Updates on seminars and conferences.• List of reputable journals for publication.• Facebook pages with updated information. |
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The following are discussion on the needs and assistance that can be provided to the graduate students in research publication :

Mentoring

As they recalled their experiences, the selected graduate students emphasized the importance of mentoring. They recalled how their professors encouraged and collaborated with them in their first research publication. Not only did their professor initiate a research collaboration with them but also guided them in the research publication process. Graduate Student 1 vividly remembered the entire journey and pointed out that :

“During our classes, this professor was always talking about research and publication which I never heard before. At that time, the only research that I did was my thesis and was never published. One day, I received an invitation from this professor to collaborate with him. I really felt how he/she guided me throughout the process. After two collaborations, he/she encouraged me to do individual research for publication. I consider him/her as my inspiration in research.”

Another graduate student said how important the support of the faculty is in research publication. Graduate Student 5 said that:

“I was invited by a faculty to join as a research assistant in funded research. At that time, I didn't have any idea about research most especially publication. In that research, I did not only assist them but also learned from them. They were very supportive and showed me the way in research publication. If not for them, I would not have engaged in research publication.”

A professor who is virtually present and responsive can encourage graduate students to engage in research and publication. Graduate Student 10 remembered that:

“In one of our classes, this professor shared his/her experiences in publication. I got interested and started sending him/her messages inquiring about publication. To my surprise, he/she was very responsive and even gave pointers on how to do research publication. I even received a list of journals where I can publish my research. Eventually, I got to collaborate with him/her in one of my researches which got published.”

The value of mentoring is strongly appreciated by the selected graduate students. In fact, students who are mentored by faculty gain expertise in their field as they learn current research and study the theories that inform their practice. Students who work as research assistants and teaching associates at the university level learn from their mentors as they observe their mentors' work and pattern their practice after their mentors. As such, the role of the faculty mentor is critical when working with graduate students because they are shaping the future of the profession (Laverick, 2016).

Research Capability Building

Graduate students consider research as an important but challenging component in their academic life. In their graduate course work, their knowledge and skills are enhanced that will prepare them for thesis or dissertation writing. The selected graduate students have published researches and suggested to provide trainings and workshops for graduate students particularly in the next academic year for research publication will be a requirement. Graduate Student 4 remembered attending a seminar on research provided by the graduate research laboratory before the pandemic. He/She suggested that :

“Before and during the pandemic, various trainings were conducted by graduate faculty members on research writing. Those were very helpful in enhancing the research skills of the students. I hope that this will be revived either online or onsite.”

Attendance and participation in research conferences are very helpful to graduate students because it provides exposure and opportunities for them to present their researches. Graduate Student 7 recalled an experience in presenting in a research conference. He/She said that :

“I was able to attend and present my research paper in an international conference organized by the university. Though it was only online, I learned a lot from the plenary speakers and presenters in the parallel session. Likewise, I was able to experience presenting my paper which gave me confidence to do more researches in the future.”

To further enhance the research knowledge and skills of graduate students, it is also important to provide them research-related training and opportunities. These graduate students are also teachers who will also be doing researches that will contribute to their respective schools. A study found out that there is a need for intensive seminar/ training write-shop for technical writing of completed research. Teachers needs to be highly capable in writing completed research that can be presented and published, and the researchers also recommended the action plan for the seminar/training write-shop activities, timeframe, expected output, material requirements, and the responsible entity/person (Tamban & Maningas, 2020).

Research Community

While the selected graduate students appreciate the support of their professors who continue to mentor them, they also find the importance of their fellow graduate students in mentoring each other. The initiative and encouragement of their fellow graduate students in research publication led them to have their research outputs published. Hence, there is a need to establish a research community among graduate students that will support and inspire each other in their research activities. Graduate Student 6 mentioned the importance of holding pocket sessions regularly. He/She said that:

“There should be group sharing activities that will guide and motivate graduate students in research. Many are discouraged from continuing their graduate studies and research due to lack of support. The session will be a venue for graduate students to ask and share their concerns including their joys in research.”

Because research is challenging, graduate students must interact and discuss among themselves their struggles and triumphs in research and publication. Graduate Student 8 pointed out that there are times when he felt alone in his/her thesis work. He/She shared that:

“For graduate students to be mentally and emotionally strong, they need a support group from fellow graduate students. By having a regular interaction, it will help them cope with the challenges and anxieties associated with research writing. It is hard to be alone and I don't know who and where to reach out.”

Building a research community among graduate students is also establishing a support system. With an online platform that can bring together graduate students together, this can be an opportunity for them to interact and share their experiences in research and publication. There is also the need to focus on enhancing factors that strengthen student resiliency and that create a healthier environment. Providing students with resources that allow them to feel optimistic about their future careers and feel supported by their peers are aspirational goals for all universities (Charles et al., 2021).

Financial Support and Incentive

The research publication is a challenging learning experience but very fulfilling. The selected graduate students had similar experiences in terms of the final publication of their research papers which is publication fee. Though they were able to have their researches published for free, the publication fees for reputable refereed journals indexed in Web of Science/ Clarivate Analytics, Scopus, and ASEAN Citation Indexing (ACI) are expensive. This prevents them from publishing in these types of journals. Graduate Student 9 said that:

“I am dreaming to have my research published in high indexed journals. However, after all the revisions that I did, I was informed that I have to pay a publication fee worth \$ 400.00. I backed out because I did not have enough money for it. Though we could have divided the fee with my co-authors, we decided not to pursue it. I hope that the university will help us financially.”

Providing incentives after the publication of research in reputable journals can be very helpful to students. Graduate Student 11 shared that:

“If there are incentives for graduate students in publication, maybe many graduate students will be interested in publication. It is also important that they are supported and their hard work is rewarded.”

Recognizing graduate students who have published in reputable journals will be motivational. Adding incentives will certainly boost their desire to publish. It will also help them financially. Many graduate students are in a state of financial fragility, as they may have stopped their careers to pursue additional education or have entered graduate school directly after their undergraduate programs. Financial circumstances and graduate student quality of life are closely intertwined. Financial circumstances and considerations for graduate students are a by-product of financial knowledge, financial stress, and financial well-being (Schuman et al., 2023).

Relevant Information

With the internet and social media as modern-day platforms for communication, anyone can easily access information. Hence, it is important that the university's website and official social media accounts should be updated. The graduate school social media accounts should continue to provide updated information related to trainings, seminars, conferences, and research. Graduate Student 4 says he/she relies on the updates on the social media accounts of the graduate school. He/She shared that:

"Information dissemination will help graduate students find opportunities for seminars and conferences. The social media accounts of the university must always be updated. I am always checking those accounts for information."

Another graduate student said that updates on research-related information should also be posted. Graduate Student 9 suggested that:

"The list of journals can also be shared so that graduate students will know where to publish. Also, I appreciate that some graduate student organizations were promoting research in their social media accounts, showing who among the students and faculty are publishing their researches."

Technology has changed the way people live today including communication. Everyone can receive information anytime and anywhere as long as there is an internet. Likewise, everyone can interact through the internet. Hence, graduate students need to know relevant information on graduate studies particularly research-related matters. A study revealed that openness to using social media in education, uncovers interactive and information motives for its use, and offers theoretical and pedagogical implications (Neier & Zayer, 2015). The virtual learning environments provided by social media facilitate the development of students' enthusiasm and interaction with peers assertively, thus increasing the students' participation. Because of emerging technologies, social media platforms surge and plummet quickly. Therefore, it is important for institutions to either develop their platform or subscribe to existing ones for effective knowledge sharing at an institutional level with clear ethical rules (Kara et al., 2020).

4. CONCLUSION

The present study has delineated the reasons of graduate students in the Philippines for engaging with research journal publication, their experiences in research publication, and assistance that should be provided to graduate students for journal publication. The graduate students find research and publication not only challenging but also enriching, fulfilling and an opportunity for collaboration. Research publication can be an inspiring engagement for graduate students because they find fulfillment in this academic task. Despite the challenges and anxieties that can be encountered in research and publication, graduate students can find different motivations to engage themselves in research. From their experiences, they identify mentoring, research capability building, research community, financial support and incentive, and information dissemination as the needs of graduate students in research. Getting the support of their professors and fellow graduate students also enables them to pursue research work. Moreover, the guidance of their professors proved to be a key factor in the publication of their researches. They considered their collaboration with their professors and fellow graduate students as opportunities to learn and grow as researchers. Hence, graduate students should be supported and mentored by faculty on research and publication so that they will flourish as graduate students. Likewise, a support system from among graduate students is needed to keep them mentally and emotionally strong. This study recommends to institutionalize a mentoring program for graduate students on research and publication. Future research is strongly recommended to continue the discussion by exploring tensions and burnouts encountered by graduate students in the process of publishing their papers and how mentorship lessens such challenges using more rigorous methods.

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