

Difficulty in Conducting Research and Learning Ability in English among College of Teacher Education Students

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Abstract Conducting research is an integral part of being a scholar-practitioner with the skills and credibility to effect social change. This research is aimed to assess the difficulty in conducting research and learning ability in English among CTE students. Employing an adopted questionnaire in a descriptive type of research, the respondents' difficulty in conducting research and learning ability in English were determined and evaluated. Results showed that difficulty in conducting research of BSED students is moderate extent while the BEED students are in high extent. Furthermore, the BSED's difficulty in conducting research when they are grouped by learning ability is in moderately extent while the BEED students are in high extent. However, the learning abilities of BEED and BSED respondents do not affect the difficulty in conducting research.

Keywords: CTE students, difficulty in conducting research, learning ability in English

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1. Introduction

The modern world is transformed through research. Economics of nations today depends on their commitment to knowledge generation and utilization through research [1]. Research is one of the activities of a scientific mind and it is a way of life. In the educational system, it is required in all levels that makes research to be at the top priority. Research is important in universities, to facilitate good quality undergraduate and graduate training programs [2]. Thus, research help universities to motivate and empower its researchers and promote the training of future researchers.

Writing remains significantly under-theorized within research, however, the application of generic structural rules on guidelines for writing research is inadequate to account. Hence, conducting research is an integral part of being a scholar-practitioner with the skills and credibility to effect social change.

In the context of classroom efficacy, the value of research practice is shown by the increased gains in pupils attainment, behaviour and attitudes [3]. The sources for introducing students on researches of their few experiences come from parallel work in school [4]. What the work in school shows is that student researchers bring their particular viewpoint to the research and are able to make valuable contributions to research, to learning and teaching in schools, as well as learning a range of important processes. Moreover, it seeks to bring action

and reflection that may affect theory and practice, in participation with others, in the pursuit of practical solutions to issues of pressing concerns of peoples and more generally the flourishing of individuals and their communities [5,6,7,8]. Furthermore, by researching peers experiences, individuals may come to see the value of research, the value of collaboration and listening to the voices of other people involved. Thus, It attempts to move research from something that is known about to something lived, experienced and in a way, to see growth and change [8].

Research competence is very important in designing and innovating ways to create new knowledge [5]. It is argued that one way to address this problem is for teachers to become creators of knowledge through research. Thus, research is a major function of higher educational institution, that is faculty members should not only be aware of it but must be actively involved in the generation of knowledge.

In recent times, it has been identified that undergraduates' interest towards research is declining. Thus, it requires a lot of self-independence and ability to bear responsibility [6,7,8]. However, students were losing their interest in doing research because of a lack of engagement with research [9]. Research activity is not attractive for students due to big time expenditures, efforts, stress, delay in feedback, and lack of academic support [10]. Likewise, undergraduate students usually tend to view research course negatively. The negative attitudes of undergraduate towards research includes difficulty in identifying a sound problem, formulating research

objectives, determining valid literature, designing and conducting research, treating and processing the gathered data, explaining the results, among others [11,12]. Hence, the study emphasized four influencing factors in conducting research namely: beliefs, attitudes, accessibility and self-efficacy and motivates social factors.

2. Methodology

This Descriptive Research design was used in this study. This research design fits best in studies which aim is to describe the nature of situations while the study has been done and afforded by the respondents.

This research was conducted at the College of Teacher Education of Quirino State University, Diffun Campus, School Year 2015-2016. A total of 80 respondents were determined using the software G-Power. The respondents were the Bachelor of Elementary Education (BEED) students and Bachelor of Secondary Education (BSED).

There are two parts of the research instrument of the study: Part 1 deals with the socio- demographic profile of the student respondents. Part 2 of the questionnaire focused on the learning ability in English and extent of difficulty between BEED and BSED students in conducting research. The gathered data were treated with mean, t-test, F-test, and Pearson-r correlation: all were employed in SPSS.

3. Results and Discussion

Results in the foregoing table shows that the BEED students find more difficulty (*high extent*) than their BSED counterparts (*moderately extent*). This could be attributed to the fact that the BSED students are more exposed in research writing as most of their courses in the program are research-based. Moreover, the BSED students are working for three major theses: one educational research which is an output for their Methods of Research, one subject-specific thesis relative to their major field of specialization, and an Action Research during their Student Teaching.

Corollary to the foregoing results is the notion that most students have in research writing: undergraduate students usually tend to view research course negatively [11]. Hence, teachers may design a thesis writing program that is more responsive based on the current trend of Thesis Writing in the country. In doing so, students may come across learning to do better in writing their thesis.

Aptly, prospective teachers may find the value of research practice in education. It is claimed that research impinges efficacy of classroom teaching and learning, as well as learner’s behavior, and attitude [3]. The value of participatory work in research centers on the idea that students learn to become researchers, develops their creativity and critical thinking, as well as developing collaboration and communication [6,7,8].

Table 1. Difficulty in Conducting Research of the Students

Extent of Difficulty	M	D	M	D
	BEED		BSED	
1. I find difficulty in formulating a title.	3.06	HE	2.60	HE
2. I exerted more effort in writing introduction or rationale.	3.04	HE	3.03	HE
3. I experienced anxiety on how to state the problem clearly.	2.97	HE	2.66	HE
4. I feel confused on how to formulate objectives of the study.	2.89	HE	2.57	HE
5. I discovered it is not easy to state the hypothesis.	2.80	HE	2.54	HE
6. I feel disorganized on the scope and limitation of the study.	2.42	ME	2.15	ME
7. I experienced worry on the importance of the study.	2.87	HE	2.15	ME
8. I find struggled to identify theoretical or conceptual framework	2.82	HE	2.63	HE
9. I am anxious in surfing related literature and related studies.	2.72	HE	2.54	HE
10. I am worried on the appropriate use of methodology.	2.74	HE	2.51	HE
11. I find troubled on how to interpret the results of the study.	3.27	VHE	2.69	HE
12. I am upset on how to discuss the results correctly.	2.93	HE	2.42	ME
13. I am bothered on how to make summary.	2.89	HE	2.06	ME
14. I feel confused in making conclusion from the findings.	3.06	HE	2.03	ME
15. I find struggled in giving recommendations.	2.95	HE	2.06	ME
Mean	2.89	HE	2.44	ME

Legend: HE – High Extent, ME- Moderate Extent.

Table 2. Difficulty in Conducting Research when they are grouped by Learning Ability in English

Learning Ability	BSED		BEED	
	Difficulty	Description	Difficulty	Description
Below Ability	2.54	High Extent	3.00	High Extent
Average Ability	2.47	Moderately Extent	2.94	High Extent
High Ability	1.90	Moderately Extent	2.66	High Extent
Total	2.45	Moderately Extent	2.90	High Extent

The foregoing table shows the difficulty of the respondents in conducting research when they are grouped by their learning abilities. It confirms the results in Table 1 that BEED students are more into experiencing difficulties in conducting research than their BSED counterparts as they experience it in high extent across all learning abilities. On the other hand, only the low ability group from the BSED respondents experience it in high extent: the rest of the groups experience it in moderate extent. The foregoing results may be construed by the fact that most of the BSED respondents are language majors (English and Filipino. Filipino is the official language of the Philippines). On the other hand, the BEED respondents are in to General Education that requires them lesser number of English courses. It is claimed that learners of the second language find difficulty in expanding their English lexicon because of less engagement in application-oriented experiences in the school [13].

On the other hand, low proficiency in English language has been considered a barrier to learning and academic success at the post-secondary level and this is because English learners often lack the language proficiency necessary to understand academic works and requirements [4]. Furthermore, it was claimed that competency in English significantly determines performances in Research or Thesis Writing [5]. Moreover, there is a close relationship between communication skills and personal, professional, and intellectual growth [16].

On the other hand, writing is uniquely challenging for it requires mastery and concurrent use of a complex array of language skills – from vocabulary and spelling to the ability to organize and convey ideas [17]. Furthermore, writing is considered a complex process. It allows writers to explore thoughts and ideas and make them visible and complete. It encourages thinking and learning for it motivates communication and make thoughts available for reflection. When thought is written down, ideas can be examined, reconsidered, added to rearrange and change [17,18,19].

Table 3. Significant Relationship between Difficulty in Conducting Research and Learning Ability

Course	Pearson- R Correlation	p-value	Result	Decision
BEED	-.222	.134	Not Significant	Accept Ho
BSED	-.208	.245	Not Significant	Accept Ho

Results in the foregoing table show that there is no significant relationship between the respondents' difficulty in conducting research and their learning ability in English. Albeit insignificant, it can be noted that there is an emerging negative correlation which suggests that when they exude better abilities in English, the lesser will be the seen difficulty in conducting research. This suggests that the university system may reinforce the English program so that possible potential problems in Thesis Writing may be addressed [20,21].

4. Conclusion

Based on the results of the study, the following are drawn:

1. The BEED students are in for a high extent of difficulty in conducting research while the BSED students are in for a moderate extent;
2. All learning abilities in English among BEED students experience high extent of difficulty in conducting research;
3. Only the low ability group of the BSED students experience high extent of difficulty in conducting research; and
4. The learning abilities of the BEED and BSED respondents in English is not significantly related to their perceived degree of difficulty in conducting research.

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