

THE PERCEIVED QUALITY OF RESEARCH SCHOLAR AND RESEARCH GUIDE AMONG THE POST GRADUATES STUDENTS AND RESEARCH GUIDES.

Sasikala D., Reader, Apollo College of Nursing, Chennai,
Latha V., Principal, Apollo College of Nursing, Chennai.



Abstract

A research guide is the key person in post graduate degree program. An ideal research student and guide relationship ensures quality research. A descriptive study was conducted to assess the perceived quality of research scholar and research guide among the post graduates students and research guides at selected nursing college in Chennai. Thirty post graduate students and 30 research guides were selected using purposive sampling technique. Data was collected using background characteristics proforma of research scholars and guides and structured rating scale to assess the perceived quality of research guide and research scholar through self administration method. The collected data were analysed using descriptive statistics such as frequency and percentage distribution. The study results revealed that most of the research guides had high acceptable level of knowledge and intellect (70%), personal effectiveness (67%), research governance (77%), ability of engagement and influencing (70%) and less than half of the research scholars had overall highly acceptable level of essential qualities (47%).

Key words: Quality of research guide, quality of research scholar, post graduate students.

Introduction

“True guidance is like a small torch in a dark forest. It doesn't show everything once. But gives enough light for the next step to be safe.”

-Swami Vivekananda

The research student and guide relationship significantly influences the quality and completion of the research work. This relationship plays a key role in

kindling the research interest in the student. The research guide is the key person who play the principal and a vital role in helping the students to achieve their scholastic potential, provide, reasonable, commitment, accessibility, professionalism, stimulation, guidance, respect and consistent encouragement to the student. A graduate supervision as a process involving complex academic and interpersonal skills. These skills include guiding graduate students towards sound proposal preparation and defence, methodological choices, documenting and publishing their research, maintaining both supportive and professional relationships, as well as reflecting on the research process. A research guide should be available to help their graduate students at every stage, from formulation of their research projects through establishing methodologies and discussing results, to presentation and possible publication of dissertations. They must also ensure that their students' work meets the standards of the University and the academic discipline. Graduate research is a form of apprenticeship taken under the supervision of only senior faculty members. The faculty member involved in the supervision of graduate and post graduate research must have the right expertise to play the role of promoter/supervisor. Without these skills, supervision may suffer many challenges with undue delay in completion.

Statement of the problem

A descriptive study to assess the Perceived Quality of Research Scholar and Research Guide among the Post Graduates students and Research guides at selected Nursing College in Chennai.

Objectives

- To assess the perceived quality of research guide among the post graduates students.
- To assess the perceived quality of research scholar among the research guides.

Methodology

A descriptive design was adopted for conducting this study. This study was conducted at selected college in Chennai. The samples included 30 post graduate students and 30 research guides, who were selected using purposive sampling technique. Data were collected using background characteristics proforma and structured rating to assess the perceived qualities of research guide and research scholars through self-administration method. The five point rating scale to assess perceived quality of research guides consisted of 25 items related to knowledge and intellect, personal effectiveness, research governance, engagement and influencing with the scores ranging from 0 to 4 for each item based on the responses. The five point rating scale to assess the perceived quality of research scholar consist of 20 items related to knowledge, attitude, comprehension, analysis and syntheses abilities of the research scholar with the score ranging from 1 – 5 for each item. Thus, the total obtainable score was 0-100 and

was interpreted as highly acceptable (76 – 100), acceptable (51 – 75), unacceptable (26 – 50) and highly un acceptable (0 – 25). The study was conducted after obtaining permission from concerned authorities of Apollo College of nursing, Chennai. After initial introduction, the researcher obtained written informed consent from the research participants in the study. An assurance was given regarding confidentiality before the data collection procedure. The data were collected through self-administration method by using the predetermined, structured and pretested tools such as background characteristics proforma and structured rating scale. The collected data was entered and analyzed in SPSS-16, using appropriate descriptive statistics based on the objectives of the study.

Results and Discussion

The background characteristics of the research scholars revealed that most of them belonged to the age group of 30–40 yrs (72%), all of them were female (100%), and more than half of them had > 5 yrs of experience after their baccalaureate programme (53.4%). With respect to research guide more than half of them belonged to the age group of 40-50 yrs (54%) with 5 – 10 yrs of experience in guiding research for PG students and 36% of them were pursuing Ph.D.

Fig 1. Percentage Distribution of Perceived Qualities of Research Guide by the Research students. (N=30)

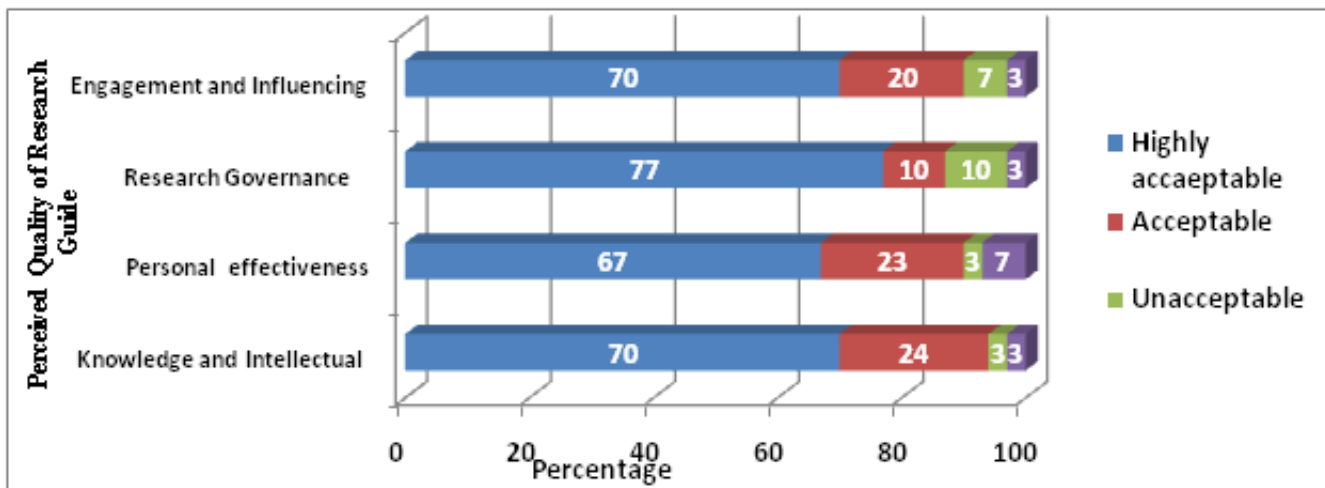
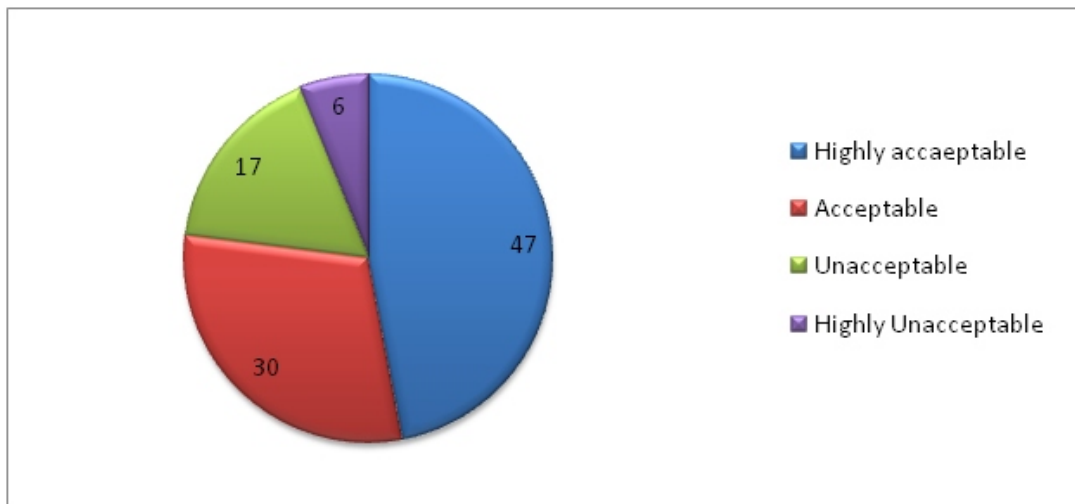


Fig 2. Percentage Distribution of Perceived Qualities of Research Students by the Research Guide. (N=30)



Discussion

The background characteristics of the research scholars revealed that most of them belonged to the age group of 30–40 yrs (72%), all of them were female (100%), and more than half of them had > 5 yrs of experience after their baccalaureate programme (53.4%). The findings revealed that most of them were having more than five years of experience and having a long gap after their academics which could attribute to their difficulty in coping with academic activities due to reduced writing speed and memory capacity.

With respect to research guide more than half of them belonged to the age group of 40-50 yrs (54%) with 5 – 10 yrs of experience in guiding research for PG students and 36% of them were pursuing Ph.D. The findings revealed that more than half of the research guides were having 5-10 yrs of experience in guiding the research students. This projects their expertise in their research area, knowledgability and resource fullness.

The first objective of the study was to assess the perceived quality of research guide among the post graduates students. The results revealed that most of the research guides had high acceptable level of knowledge and intellect (70%), personal effectiveness (67%), research governance (77%), ability of engagement and influencing (70%) and less than half of the research scholars had overall highly

acceptable level of essential qualities (47%). The first three most important attributes of their supervisors were being knowledgeable and resourceful, encourages to plan and work independently, and experts in their topics. They expect the research guides to be friendly, open and flexible. The above results were also consistent with the reports of Cullen et al and Abiddin and West that good supervisors are friendly, approachable and supportive. Majority of the students indicated that their supervisors were friendly, approachable, and paying much attention to details with their work. Majority of the students were of the view that their supervisors were experts in their chosen topics (research area), interested and supportive to them. However, the quality of research supervision is also compromised by the busy schedules of research guides, who are also responsible for teaching, setting and marking course work / assignments and examinations and other activities like research, scholarly publications, administrative work and university services which impose time constraints on the research guides.

The second objective of the study was to assess the perceived quality of research scholar among the research guides. The findings indicated that less than half of the research scholars had overall highly acceptable level of essential qualities (47%). The results purported that studying a research degree requires diligence and hard work. Strong work

ethics, discipline, focus, efficiency and professionalism are all necessary for successful study and research. They should also possess capacity to develop necessary research skills including the ability to analyze, synthesize, conceptualize, develop an argument and think critically. They should be highly motivated to learn new knowledge and should have deep interest in the research topic. Intellectual curiosity is an essential component for research student and it is the key tool for acquiring new knowledge.

Conclusion

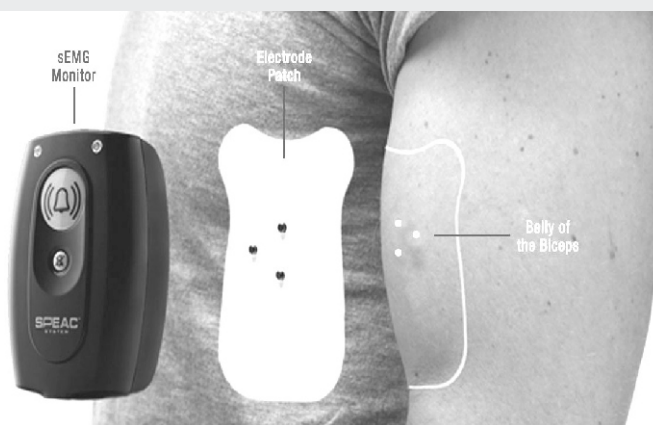
Master's degree is not only a pathway to a PhD, but also a terminal degree that greatly contributes to the development of professional practice as observed by Drennan and they need very experienced supervisor to guide them well. Research guides should be friendly, approachable and flexible as well knowledgeable and resourceful. They should also be stimulating and convey enthusiasm for the research to improve students' performance and facilitate early completion of graduate programmes. The research students should also be involved in the departmental researches and should be encouraged to publish collaborative research works. Similarly, the research students should be more committed and accept the constructive criticism and consider it as a gateway or stepping stone for quality research outcome.

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