

Students' Satisfaction on Research Advising

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Abstract— This study was conducted to assess the students' satisfaction on research advising. The study utilized a quantitative type of research employing a descriptive survey method to describe the satisfaction of student researchers on research advising. The respondents of the study were the 38 Third-Year students of the School of Education, Arts and Sciences (SEAS) of the University of Saint Louis enrolled last Academic Year 2021-2022. Results reveal that students are satisfied on research advising along knowledge of research advisors on student researches, professional characteristics and qualities of research advisors, personality of research advisors, and institutional functions of research advisors. In general, students are satisfied on research advising.

Keywords— Research Advisorship, Student-Researchers, Thesis Writing, Research Methods

I. INTRODUCTION

Research is considered as one of the trifocal functions in higher education and is one of the measures of a quality and competent university. It is then expected that HEIs should be able to embrace its function as researchers in order to generate new information and knowledge critical to the educational field and, at the same time, to address some issues and concerns and formulate new and responsive solutions, especially along instruction and extension (Gaikwad, 2021). Aside from the significant role of research in knowledge and technology development, the conduct of research is a fundamental requirement for program accreditation and leveling of university status. Determinants of research productivity include publications in refereed journals, proceedings, book chapters, literature review, and other forms of writing (Regla & Ballera, 2021). Obtaining research grants, carrying out editorial duties, obtaining patents and licenses, writing monographs, developing experimental designs, producing works of an artistic or creative nature, and engaging in public debates and commentaries are also forms of research productivity (Rogayan & Corpuz, 2022).

In the higher education context, it is important then that students excel in the three functions. Along research, students are all required to take up at least six units of research courses (Research Methods and Thesis Writing) as part of their curriculum. However, it is a fact that research is considered one of the most difficult courses for students (Guido & Orleans, 2020). Hence, mentoring and supervision are needed.

Undergraduate students who participate in research reap various benefits. Undergraduate research experience helps students better understand published works, learn to balance collaborative and individual effort, identify a research field of interest, and get a head start on their careers as researchers. Many students discover their interest in research as undergraduates and go on to graduate school and faculty roles as a result of their exposure to research (Hall et al., 2021; Davis et al., 2020).

With this, research advising should be taken into consideration. Teachers encourage students to study to become scholars in research classes by emphasizing the importance of research in the creation of new information. Teachers maintain a human and intellectual relationship with their students as research mentors in the pursuit of knowledge and understanding. Undergraduate students become collaborators, and those who contribute significantly to their mentor's ongoing research become co-authors of peer-reviewed works. Undergraduate research, according to Wlakington et al. (2020), is a collaboration between students and their mentors in which students apply classroom information to solve new challenges and expand their intellectual capability. With this, research allows young researchers to become members of a learning community where they can practice independent thinking, teamwork, leadership, and communication while working under the supervision of a faculty member. Furthermore, according to Hickey et al. (2019), undergraduate research stimulates students' interest in research, leading to the creation of their own research projects in research-based practice. Student researchers consult experts, apply for grants, present conference papers, write for periodicals, participate in research clubs, and network or collaborate with peer mentors or faculty mentors to achieve the aims of undergraduate research. These research activities necessitate assistance, such as mentoring, orientation, and training, enough infrastructure and resources, and psychological, social, and political components of support for students' research participation.

The research capability of teachers has a significant impact on the quality of student research. Faculty members' advising responsibilities have evolved from the classic advisor-advisee exchange of thesis chapters to modern, technology-driven advising practices propelled by the times' tough demands. The majority of universities and colleges now mandate publications and paper presentations as part of the higher education requirements. And in order to get to these levels, the quality of

the study is the most important factor to consider (Qiang et al., 2020). The University of Saint Louis, aiming to become a research-based institution of higher learning in the Cagayan Valley Region, institutionalized the research advising program in which all research groups will have their research advisors for mentoring and coaching purposes. It is then the reason that the researchers conducted this study in order to evaluate its initial implementation.

II. METHODS

The study utilized a quantitative type of research employing a descriptive survey method to describe the satisfaction of student researchers on research advising. The respondents of the study were the 38 Third-Year students of the School of Education, Arts and Sciences (SEAS) enrolled last Academic Year 2021-2022.

Table 1. Distribution of the Respondents of the Study

| Program | n | % |
|--|----|--------|
| Bachelor in Secondary Education | 19 | 50.00 |
| Bachelor in Elementary Education | 10 | 26.30 |
| Bachelor in Physical Education | 3 | 7.90 |
| Bachelor of Arts in Political Sciences | 3 | 7.90 |
| Bachelor of Science in Psychology | 3 | 7.90 |
| Total | 38 | 100.00 |

This study utilized a questionnaire with two parts. The first part of the questionnaire consisted of items describing the satisfaction of the respondents on research advising, which was originally developed by Janer (2015). The tool was originally composed of 19 items but was modified by the researcher to suit the needs of the current study. The tool that was used consisted of the following parts: Part 1 involved Student's Preferences in Choosing the research advisors (7 items), while Part 2 involved the satisfaction of the respondents on research advising along the following dimensions: knowledge of research advisors on students' researches (4 items), professional characteristics of research advisors (4 items), personality of research advisors (4 items), and institutional functions of research advisors (8 items) and were answered by the respondents using a four-point Likert scale (4-highly satisfied to 1-not satisfied).

An online questionnaire through Google Forms was used to gather the data needed in the study. The researchers requested assistance from the different research instructors of the School of Education, Arts and Sciences (SEAS) for the Second Semester of SY 2020-2021 to assist the researchers in the distribution of the questionnaire. Moreover, it is important to note that ethical considerations were employed by the researchers, such as maintaining the confidentiality and anonymity of the respondents.

Data Analysis

Frequency, percentage, and rank were used to identify the preferences of the respondents in choosing their research advisors. In addition, frequency, percentage, and weighted mean were used to determine the satisfaction of the respondents on research advising with the following range and qualitative descriptions:

| Range | Qualitative Description |
|-------------|-------------------------|
| 3.50 – 4.00 | Highly Satisfied |
| 2.50 – 3.49 | Satisfied |
| 1.50 – 2.49 | Less Satisfied |
| 1.00 – 1.49 | Not Satisfied |

III. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Table 1. Students' Preferences in Choosing their Research Advisors

| Preferences* | Frequency | Percentage | Rank |
|------------------------------------|-----------|------------|------|
| Field of Specialization | 34 | 89.47 | 1 |
| Has interest in the research topic | 25 | 65.78 | 3.5 |
| Coaching and mentoring abilities | 33 | 86.84 | 2 |
| Attitude of the Faculty Member | 18 | 47.37 | 5 |
| Research Reputation | 16 | 42.11 | 6 |
| Compatible personality | 21 | 55.26 | 4 |
| Availability of the Faculty Member | 25 | 65.78 | 3.5 |

*multiple response

The students' preferences in selecting their research advisors are displayed in Table 1. The findings suggest that the main criteria of student-researchers in selecting their research advisor is alignment with their area or topic of concentration. Prioritizing a professor's area of expertise over other factors suggests that the student is more interested in the professor's understanding of the subject at hand. In order to provide advice on the direction the research and fieldwork will go, an advisor must be an authority in the field in which the students intend to write their theses. The faculty members' ability to train and advise the students is another factor that the students take into account. Coaching and mentoring skills refer to the faculty members' capacity to guide students in completing their theses as well as their professional development. This respect for the students indicates that they are not only interested in completing their theses or dissertations but also in receiving training in additional areas of being research enthusiasts, which is crucial to moving forward in one's career. Vandermaas-Peeler et al. (2018) said that students who are identified as stakeholders anticipate career progression opportunities as well as an accessible and high-caliber faculty from their institution. According to this claim, students have high expectations for the university and

its staff in terms of meeting their needs and advancing their careers (Nolan et al., 2020).

Table 2. Satisfaction of Students on Research Advising along Knowledge of Research of Advisors on Students' Research

| Items | Highly Satisfied | Satisfied | Less Satisfied | Not Satisfied | Mean | Qualitative Description |
|---|------------------|-----------|----------------|---------------|------|-------------------------|
| Broad knowledge of the variables in the study and the relationships or connections between them | 20 | 14 | 2 | 2 | 3.37 | Satisfied |
| Clarify confusions pertaining to the methodology of the study | 19 | 14 | 3 | 2 | 3.31 | Satisfied |
| Has the specialization or expertise to provide direction to the framework of analysis to effectively discuss the gaps, rationale, and objectives of the study | 20 | 14 | 2 | 2 | 3.37 | Satisfied |
| Helps identify applications of the research conducted | 18 | 14 | 5 | 1 | 3.33 | Satisfied |
| Category Mean | 19 | 14 | 3 | 2 | 3.35 | Satisfied |

Table 2 presents the satisfaction of students on research advising along knowledge of research advisors on students' research. It can be shown from the results that SEAS student-researchers are satisfied on research advising along knowledge of research of advisors on students' research. Specifically, the two highest items were assessed by the respondents, which are "broad knowledge of the variables in the study and the relationships or connections between them" and "has the specialization or expertise to provide direction to the framework of analysis to effectively discuss the gaps, rationale, and objectives of the study." By using fundamental research concepts, such as the use of theoretical and conceptual frameworks, which served as the foundation in the identification of research variables of the study, research students believe that their research advisors are competent in proving the right direction of the study. The findings also show that faculty members' expertise in thesis advising may be attributed to the fact that they are required to conduct research regularly. Morrison et al. (2019) contend that faculty members should engage in activities beyond merely

instructing and counseling students. These activities should include conducting research, participating in institutional governance, and serving their field and the greater community. Additionally, it demonstrates that the majority of the advisors are knowledgeable in both the research process and the subject under study. The findings also show that the advisor and advisee have similar areas of competence and are conversant with mathematical relationships. Additionally, it demonstrates how the faculty members participated in research projects of varying complexity levels that advanced their education. They improved their research abilities due to these functions

Table 3. Satisfaction of Students on Research Advising along Professional Characteristics of Research Advisors

| Items | Highly Satisfied | Satisfied | Less Satisfied | Not Satisfied | Mean | Qualitative Description |
|---|------------------|-----------|----------------|---------------|------|-------------------------|
| Provides mentoring assistance | 19 | 11 | 2 | 0 | 2.97 | Satisfied |
| Has an extensive research network | 15 | 14 | 7 | 2 | 3.10 | Satisfied |
| Possesses a research reputation befitting to a thesis advisor | 18 | 15 | 3 | 2 | 3.29 | Satisfied |
| Interacts well with the advisees or thesis committee members | 17 | 10 | 9 | 2 | 3.11 | Satisfied |
| Category Mean | 18 | 13 | 5 | 2 | 3.12 | Satisfied |

The satisfaction of students on research advising along personal characteristics of research advisors is shown in Table 3. Students are typically happy with research advising coupled with the professional qualities of the research advisors. This implies that the thesis advisors are well-informed about the research undertaken by the students. They are capable of giving instructions and suggestions on how the study will be carried out because they are aware of every stage of the research procedure. They improved their understanding of their roles in terms of assisting the students with their papers through this research project, which prepared them to handle advising responsibilities in the undergraduate program (Morales et al., 2021).

Table 4. Satisfaction of Students on Research Advising along Personality of Research Advisors

| Items | Highly Satisfied | Satisfied | Less Satisfied | Not Satisfied | Mean | Qualitative Description |
|---|------------------|-----------|----------------|---------------|------|-------------------------|
| Shows interest in the research work by being vocal and enthusiastic during discussion of the paper | 20 | 11 | 5 | 2 | 3.29 | Satisfied |
| Possesses positive attitudes that foster openness, rapport, and harmonious advisor-advisee relationship | 23 | 7 | 6 | 2 | 3.34 | Satisfied |
| Shows concern on the professional development of the advisee | 19 | 15 | 2 | 2 | 3.34 | Satisfied |
| Has a personality compatible to his/her research advisees | 16 | 14 | 6 | 2 | 3.16 | Satisfied |
| Category Mean | 19 | 12 | 5 | 2 | 3.28 | Satisfied |

The satisfaction of students on research advising along personalities of the research counselors is shown in Table 4. The data shows that student researchers were pleased with their research counselors' personalities. This can only mean that the research advisors were very open to their research advisees' inquiries, requests for explanations, and/or recommendations. The results imply a fruitful relationship between faculty and student in the role of advisor and advisee. The reason for this is that creating a thesis results from the dynamic relationship between the advisor and the student, which necessitates dedication and cooperation throughout the research process. Additionally, the findings imply that there are no disputes or personal issues at work. A thesis advisor who possesses these traits may interact and work well with others. He or she may be able to create a cordial relationship with the advisees that is marked by candor, openness, and assurance. When students are exposed to this kind of association, they may form an opinion or experience with research that can support the claim that it is not difficult at all. Students are highly pleased with the academic members' network and status in research. A faculty member's research reputation is operationally based on his/her list of accomplishments, including publications, oral or written presentations, and/or production of works covered by intellectual property laws. According to the data, academics with history of publications, paper presentations, and/or intellectual property development appear to make up the

majority of thesis advisors (Della Corte et al., 2022). On the other hand, research networks refer to connections between academics and different research enthusiasts, as well as the availability of diverse research sources.

Table 5. Satisfaction of Students on Research Advising along Institutional Functions of the Research Advisor

| Items | Highly Satisfied | Satisfied | Less Satisfied | Not Satisfied | Mean | Qualitative Description |
|---|------------------|-----------|----------------|---------------|------|-------------------------|
| Understands the philosophy and mechanics of the research requirement | 20 | 12 | 4 | 2 | 3.32 | Satisfied |
| Develops a plan at the beginning of the research process | 17 | 11 | 8 | 2 | 3.13 | Satisfied |
| Has realistic expectations of the quality and quantity of research that his/her research advisor could do | 17 | 13 | 6 | 2 | 3.18 | Satisfied |
| Helps in narrowing or broadening the scope of the research proposal | 17 | 12 | 7 | 2 | 3.16 | Satisfied |
| Provides educational resources and materials needed to complete the paper | 15 | 12 | 8 | 3 | 3.03 | Satisfied |
| Takes an active interest in student's research progress | 16 | 11 | 8 | 3 | 3.05 | Satisfied |
| Available when needed for consultation | 10 | 15 | 11 | 2 | 2.87 | Satisfied |
| Returns drafts and revisions in a timely manner | 11 | 18 | 6 | 3 | 2.97 | Satisfied |
| Category Mean | 14 | 13 | 9 | 2 | 3.09 | Satisfied |

The satisfaction of students on research advising along institutional duties of the research advisor is shown in Table 5. The findings demonstrate that students are typically happy with the institutional roles of the research advisor and the research advising process. It demonstrates that most students are pleased with their advisors' level of interest in their research projects. The students expressed satisfaction with the advisor and advisee's compatibility. This conclusion implies that the two parties' personalities and conduct are complementary. They get along well with one another as a result, which makes engagement enjoyable and

straightforward. Additionally, Heim and Holt (2019) emphasized that students should choose an advisor with whom they feel at ease working. Relaxed interactions between the advisor and the advisee help in matching thoughts effectively and making the discussions lively and fruitful. The outcome also shows that the thesis advisors expressed interest in the student's ability to use his or her degree as a further foundation and investment in the student's professional growth in addition to their concern for the student's ability to graduate.

Table 6. Summary Table on the Satisfaction of Students on Research Advising

| Dimensions | Highly Satisfied | Satisfied | Less Satisfied | Not Satisfied | Mean | Qualitative Description |
|---|------------------|-----------|----------------|---------------|------|-------------------------|
| Knowledge of Research Advisors on Student Researches | 19 | 14 | 3 | 2 | 3.35 | Satisfied |
| Professional Characteristics and Qualities of Research Advisors | 18 | 13 | 5 | 2 | 3.12 | Satisfied |
| Personality of Research Advisors | 19 | 12 | 5 | 2 | 3.28 | Satisfied |
| Institutional Functions of Research Advisors | 14 | 13 | 9 | 2 | 3.09 | Satisfied |
| Overall Mean | 18 | 13 | 5 | 2 | 3.21 | Satisfied |

Table 6 shows the summary table on the satisfaction of students on research advising. It can be shown from the results that students are satisfied on research advising along knowledge of research advisors on student researches, professional characteristics and qualities of research advisors, personality of research advisors, and institutional functions of research advisors. In general, students are satisfied on research advising.

IV. CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

According to the study's findings, SEAS student researchers are pleased with how the University Research and Development Center (URDC) has implemented its research advising program. The availability, coaching and mentoring skills, and area of expertise of the faculty members are also preferred by the students as criteria for selection.

Therefore, this study suggests that additional training be provided to faculty members in order to improve their skills and methods for thesis advising. As research advisors, the

college might also turn to other prominent academic members. The students may also participate in an orientation activity to help them select the professor with the best research reputation and to inform them of their responsibilities as thesis advisors.

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