

Research Article

A Qualitative Study of Research Works Done by Postgraduate Students of Departments of Pharmacology

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ABSTRACT

Introduction: Post graduate students are required to do more research projects nowadays. They need guidance for producing useful research work. To know whether their current research works are useful, this study was undertaken.

Methodology: Post graduate dissertations were analyzed using a checklist to assess their standards and usefulness. These dissertations were randomly chosen. They belonged to different universities. **Results:** 44% of the dissertations were innovative. 38% had good review literature with sufficient critical analysis of other studies. Methodology section, presentation of data, conclusion section were good in most of the dissertations. **Conclusion:** Post graduate students have to take more innovative and useful topics in future. While writing the dissertation, they have to include more critical analysis of similar studies, recommendations for future studies and limitations of the current study.

Key words: Dissertation, Research Methodology, Pharmacology Research.

INTRODUCTION

Research work is undertaken by a postgraduate student in pharmacology with a view to get exposure in research methodology. It is also mandatory as per the syllabus of the postgraduate course. Nowadays, apart from a dissertation, a postgraduate student also does research works for presenting in a conference and also for publishing in the e-journal of the university. Hence, he does three research projects during his postgraduate course. This is three times when compared to previous years. Due to this, many postgraduate students do more research works and publish dissertations besides conference presentations and e-journal publications. As the work is increasing day by day, these research works have to be guided carefully so that more fruitful findings emerge out instead of just publishing some papers. To know whether postgraduate research works are useful and to see the extent of the same, this study was undertaken.

METHODOLOGY

Dissertations submitted by the postgraduate students during the past 2 years were taken for analysis. A check list was prepared to assess the dissertations. The check list was prepared to

bring out the standard and utility value of the research works. About sixteen dissertations submitted to various universities were randomly selected and analyzed. Merits and demerits of these research works are presented in this article.

RESULTS

All the research works were analyzed using the checklist. Analysis was done by two teaching faculty members. The outcome of the analysis is presented in table 1.

Table 1: Parameters of evaluation and corresponding percentage of dissertations

Innovative dissertations	44%
Clear aim specified in introduction section	82%
Good review literature with sufficient critical analysis of other studies	38%
Good presentation of data	75%
Usefulness of the topics	69%
Adequate description of methodology	87%
Making good recommendations for future studies	50%
Writing the limitations of the study	44%
Good narrative conclusion	87%
Topic based on good scientific justification	81%

DISCUSSION

On detailed analysis using a specially developed checklist, it is found that most of the research works submitted by the postgraduate students are of good standard. More innovative topics can be taken up in future as only 44% of the topics analyzed in this study are of innovative in nature.

Most of the dissertations reviewed mentioned "aim" in introduction section. It is better that introduction section should lead to and end in aim of the research work. In this context, it is better to remember "to narrate the state of knowledge before the work, define the gaps which the work will fill and then, state what the research worker plans to do"¹. Review of literature can be written with more emphasis on analyzing other related research articles instead of repeating known facts from textbooks.

Recording the information in chronological order will help in writing the review of literature in a better way.¹ More recommendations for further studies and more mentioning of limitations of the studies can be emphasized for postgraduate students in future.

Most of the studies had good statistics, correct sample size and proper interpretation. This shows that postgraduate students are consulting statisticians at the early stage of the project. Emphasis on the importance of statistics is given in many studies².

Lengths of the dissertations were conforming to the standards set by the Universities. This is mainly important when preparing a paper for publication, where lengths of abstracts and word counts of the paper are very important. In another study, lengths of the dissertations were not satisfactory³.

Good quality of the research works may be due to the increased availability of research methodology workshops. Many institutions have made it mandatory to attend such workshops before a student embarks on his first research work. It is time now for organizing programs for those who supervise research works. This has been spelt out in an earlier published Article.⁴

It is also right time now to have centralized facilities to identify and direct research projects considering the priorities of our population. Such a message has been clearly given in an earlier published Article⁵.

Only sixteen research works have been taken for this study. In future studies, more research

works can be taken up for analysis. Expert groups can be formed at the national level and state level to identify areas of research keeping in mind the various priorities of our population. This will help research workers take up useful and innovative works during their postgraduate courses.

CONCLUSION

About 16 research works done by postgraduate students were taken up for this study. Postgraduate students have to take up more innovative and useful topics in future. Most of these works have adequate scientific justification. While writing the dissertation, they have to include more critical analysis of similar studies instead of reproducing known facts from textbooks. They are all good in presentation of data and analysis of the same. They have to increase their recommendations for future studies. They have to mention the limitations of the studies in detail. Apart from these observations, most of the research works submitted were satisfactory and were of good standard.

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