Current Trends in Writing Thesis at Master's Level in English of Humanities and Social Sciences

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ABSTRACT

This research paper explores the current trends in writing a thesis at the Master's level in English of Humanities and Social Sciences. Both the supervisors and master's level students encounter several problems during the thesis writing process. Most students do not update the MLA and APA formats and other components of the thesis. Then some students purchase the readymade thesis from the market or hire ghostwriters. So, this study analyzes the problems the thesis supervisors and students face. Thesis writing has been challenging for students because of various contexts and issues. It intends to generate concrete suggestions to settle the thesis writing by investigating and identifying the genuine problems. The study seeks to examine the issues faced by the students and probable solutions. The current trend of thesis writing is not satisfactory. This paper aims to create a friendly environment between the supervisors and thesis writing students to simplify the process. It adopts the qualitative survey methods and document analysis to discuss the issues raised. This project focuses on why thesis writing has become the most challenging task. Who is responsible, the supervisors or the students? What are the ways of making thesis supervising and writing friendlier? This study aims to address these questions, bridge the gap between supervisors and students, and open the avenue for further research to bring out a result-oriented and less problematic thesis.

Keywords: APA and MLA format, Challenges, Current trends in thesis writing, Supervising

Introduction

The thesis writing process creates a dichotomy between thesis writing students and supervisors.

Most students consider that supervisors should act more roles to make their thesis writing more accessible. The students expect more from the supervisor in modulating the thesis writing. They contemplate that they need more support from the supervisor. They even drop the thesis writing process because of the context of the supervisor and their incapability. They demonstrate their anger to the supervisor and the research process. Some students work hard, and others give up their writing process by blaming their supervisor and the university.

The Master's level students, who are enthusiastic about pursuing their careers, intend to continue thesis writing by incorporating the ideas of their supervisors. They engage in research with the support of the supervisor. However, the students and supervisor face apprehensions in the thesis writing process. They cannot accomplish thesis writing without stress. Both of them have to work hard, like two blades of scissors. The supervisor and the student engage in the blame game. The student cannot satisfy the supervisor quickly. The supervisor returns the thesis to the students for revision about four or five times. The student develops negativity about the supervisor. The negativity leads to the wrong direction. It even demoralizes the thesis writing students.

Taking the above contexts, this paper examines the current trends of the thesis writing process at the master's level on university campuses. Misunderstanding between the supervisors and students surfaces in the process of thesis writing. The supervisors claim that students do not endeavor or have no idea of writing. On the other hand, the students blame the supervisors as if their supervisor bothers them knowledgeably. This sea-saw game of claim and blame goes on. Most of these get accomplished with a round of claim and responsibility. Some students discontinue their theses, or they do not earn the degree. Sandra Acker et al. (1994) state that a supervisor would be like a manager or director, keeping the student motivated and on track, providing timetables and guidelines. The student is a passive participant (p. 484). The supervisor should act in the role of manager or director in the process of thesis writing. The students, who are passive initially, must actively participate in writing the thesis.

Further, Acker et al. explain that the supervisory style is considered a coherent and consistent set of practices in much of the literature. The supervisory practices consist of different techniques of supervision of the thesis. Mostly, the technical rational model and negotiated order model take center stage in the care of the idea. To some extent, the technical rationality model is expected in the sciences, while negotiation is more characteristic of the social sciences and the arts. This research also attempts to find the clues to the weaknesses of the thesis writing process and accommodate them so that both the supervisor and the researcher complete thesis writing without fail. The clue is the supervisor and thesis students' positive thoughts and continuous effort with mutual understanding. The continuity from both sides plays a significant role in thesis accomplishment. This study aims to make the thesis writing students genuine researchers. Lipson claims, "Good thesis writing is clear, convincing, and courteous to readers" (Lipson, 2005, p. 145). He argues that the thesis should be flawless and

well-organized. However, most master's theses do not incorporate the qualities that Lipson suggests.

Thesis writing could be pleasant if the students and supervisor act seriously. Firstly, the students should have a zeal for thesis writing. They should take it as a matter of passion and determination. Secondly, the supervisor should have good command over the subject matter's format, language, and contents. They need to know the methodology and tools for thesis writing.

In contrast, the students spend limited time studying the subject matter and the thesis format. They do not take thesis writing as a matter of great concern or want to accomplish it without hard work. They just read a specific text and apply a particular theory to analyze it. Both teachers and students take this thesis writing as a part-time job. Here lies the problem. All the supervisors need to give time for supervision without fail. But the remuneration of the supervisor is nominal. The administration does not count thesis supervising under the workload; many students are under a supervisor. One supervisor must give at least three months to one student if the student vigorously works. In an informal talk, Prof. Dr. Rudra Paudel admits, "One supervisor can guide three students in five months." The more workloads of the supervisors deteriorate the quality of the thesis. It hampers the thesis writing process.

Similarly, the students need to demonstrate enthusiasm for their thesis work. They even employ a ghostwriter or buy a ready-made thesis from the market. The students claim that they are busy with their jobs. The students desire to do the partial fulfillment of a master's degree haphazardly. Bridging the supervisors' and students' roles and activities is another challenging job. So, this paper attempts to bridge the gap between the supervisors' and students' activities and roles by unfolding the following research questions.

Research Questions

This paper scrutinizes the existing inclinations of thesis writing in the colleges and university campuses where master's degree classes of English subjects are running. The study examines the necessary steps from proposal development to thesis writing. This research bases on the natural ground of the supervisors and students. This suggests the essential tips using which the students get facilitated in thesis writing. The research focuses on these research questions. Why do most thesis writing students feel uneasy and difficult while preparing a thesis? What are the ways to make thesis writing friendlier and simpler? What are the parameters to be a thesis supervisor and writer?

Research Objectives

The main objectives of the study are as follows:

To generate a thesis writing-friendly environment between the supervisors and students by enhancing writing skills

To provide the necessary suggestions to make the thesis writing friendlier

and simpler

To recommend some parameters to be a thesis supervisor and writer

Materials and Methods

The study employs document analysis and qualitative survey methods to explore the in-depth analysis and interpretation of the available documents (cited in Neupane, 2020) about thesis supervising and writing by different scholars and experts. It also consults the supervisors and the ongoing thesis writing students of master level and incorporates their views. The study is carried out with qualitative analysis. The researchers informally talk to the supervisors and the master's level students from different departments of English who have real ground experiences of writing and supervising the thesis writing process. Then the researchers use the libraries both offline and online. The researchers studied the available books, journal articles, magazines, and research articles published online and in print related to the topics of this research paper using critical words like thesis writing, thesis students, supervisors, and so on.

Discussion and Results

The thesis writing necessitates specific trends and skills. Several scholars have worked on how to promote the thesis writing skills of master's level students as well as teaching faculties. Still, there is a gap between the supervisors and students. There is no provision for regular classes for this course except the research methodology course (Sharma, 2017, p. 223) on university campuses. As a result, the students seem to have been bothered by the supervisors. The university campuses have to manage the provision of regular classes for thesis writing. Writing a thesis means analyzing a specific text with the help of theoretical tools. Writing is hard, and there is nothing wrong with you if you find writing a challenge. Even the best writers say it's hard (Roth, 2019, p. 151). Writing is the most challenging job, even for a professional writer. It is like driving or cooking where proper care is essential. The knowledge of one area does not fit another area of study. Writing must incorporate something new to make it rational and appropriate according to context. The research writer requires to understand the parameters of the writing.

In most cases, students and supervisors misunderstand the thesis writing process. Both of them exhibit different directions to proceed thesis writing process. The reason for misunderstanding (problem) between supervisor and student is that the students contemplate that what they are doing is different from their task. It is a supervisor who makes the write-up easier for the students. The supervisor can guide you, but the thesis is the student's responsibility—the supervisor is not an author and must arrange an examination and so on (Evans et al., 2014, p. 55). The supervisors always suggest that the thesis writing students work more but cannot give time for study. So, they ruminate that the supervisors should make them more accessible. Hari Prasad Tiwari (2017) proposes the following steps for thesis writing:
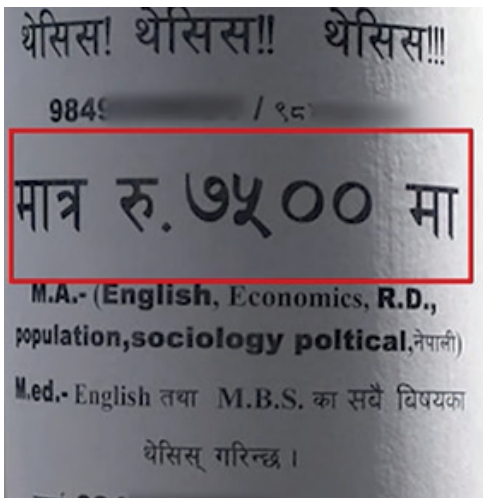
It consists of specific activities for three successive phases of research. In

the first phase, the students begin with background reading, formulating a research problem, and developing a proposal. In the second phase, the students conduct research; in the third phase, they produce the thesis. Writing a thesis is less overwhelming than some may initially think. However, students need help with writing or preparing for a thesis. Their difficulties range from identifying and thinking of the investigation area to analyzing the collected data and reporting the findings. They seek special help from the side of the supervisors to accomplish their theses. (p. 45)

There are specific steps or phases the students have to follow without fail. Writing a thesis means problematizing the existing text. While problematizing, they must begin with the background of formulating a research problem and developing a proposal. Then they have to carry out research and produce the thesis. When the students cannot do what their supervisors suggest, they pretend to have a genuine problem. Some students, like lady students, come to the supervisors with their newly born baby with them so that their workload may decrease. Some students use the power of the government's high-ranking people and call the department head to consider the thesis. The students prefer to avoid facing challenges. They find this work tedious and seek special help from the supervisors to accomplish their ideas. Gurung (2023) states that the students are irregular in the class (86).

The students take a master's thesis as the most challenging job because most are job holders. A master's thesis is not necessarily original research. It might be a replication study that repeats and confirms research previously conducted by others (Eco, 2019, p. 121). The students have to study a particular text they like. Some author/s already write this text. They apply the theoretical tools propounded by other scholars to analyze the text. Still, the students ponder thesis writing is like eating a whale with one bite. Eco (2015) claims that many students are forced to write a thesis to obtain career advancement quickly (p. 4). This may instigate them to have their thesis written by a second party by investing a reasonable amount of money, or they copy someone else's prior thesis already submitted to another institution, although there is a plagiarism system.

The thesis writing encounters myriad challenges because of thesis business. Some so-called scholars have been doing thesis business. These scholars are doing unethical business in thesis writing. They sell their readymade theses to students pursuing their thesis writing. There are several posters pasted on the walls of universities and campuses. The university is also providing the degree to such students. There needs to be a robust monitoring mechanism by which checks and balances can be performed. The university stands helpless to curb the thesis writing business up to now. It faces challenges to minimize this alarming trend. The following is the proof of thesis business.

थेसिस! थेसिस!! थेसिस!!!
9849   / ९८
मात्र रु. ७५ ०० मा
M.A.- (English, Economics, R.D.,
population, sociology poltical, नेपाली)
M.ed.- English तथा M.B.S. का सबै विषयका
थेसिस् गरिन्छ ।

What an open business of thesis in the market! Minimizing this alarming tendency is the main objective of this study. The university seems to ignore such activities knowingly. Why?

Writing a thesis means learning how to plan, draft, write, develop, revise, and rethink an idea, and finishing it on time and to the standard required, is too important (Dunleavy, 2003, p. xi). Most thesis students linger because of their own and supervisors' wild schedules. The thesis students must follow the steps of planning, drafting, writing, developing, revising, and rethinking a thesis. In terms of volume, at the master's level, there are 100 marks in the annual system and 50 marks in the semester system. For 100 marks, the required volume is 50 plus pages; for 50 marks, 30 plus pages; and so (source: Thesis committee R. R. Campus, T. U.). This study focuses on master's level students. This research aims to enhance both the students and supervisors to make thesis writing work friendly. The supervisor's positive behavior drives the production of a good thesis. The constructive or mutual relationship between the supervisor and the students brings out the expected output of the idea. Recently, University has issued a notice for the anti-plagiarism process. Implementing anti-plagiarism encourages students and supervisors to be serious in thesis writing.

Conclusion

This research concentrates on enhancing the skills of the thesis supervisors and thesis writing students at the master's level. It develops supportive ideas to reduce misunderstandings between the supervisor and students. Most college and university teachers, as well as master's level students, will consider this research paper worth having for them while supervising and writing theses. Thesis writing has been challenging due to the supervisors' and students' lack of proper guidance and carelessness. And those students who are writing ideas will be benefitted from this document. Not only the students and supervisors but also the university campuses and colleges get

benefitted from this report. The educational institutes might rethink the remuneration they pay to the supervisors. The syllabus designers can allocate extra time for supervision. This project is a good guideline for those supervising the master's level student's theses. This project proposes to select a supervisor who really can supervise. There is a difference between a teacher and a supervisor, but the present scenario is different. Classroom teaching and supervising cannot be similar. There are other things to be realized by the authority; thesis supervising has to be made practical and interactive.

This study has suggested that the students and supervisors be up-to-date regarding writing devices. Once both the students and supervisors vigorously work together, the thesis writing goes ahead smoothly. It argues that thesis writing and supervising inculcate a new horizon of knowledge. It recommends some ideas to develop a concrete proposal that guides to bring out the expected thesis. It contributes to the pictures to make thesis writing and supervising less stressful. It provides some techniques and ideas to enhance the quality thesis. It contributes to concrete writing design and plans to develop the proposal and thesis better.

Further, it instills some methods of supervising the thesis and benefits the thesis supervisors. This study interposes a research map for academia and policymakers. By reading this research, policymakers will rethink it and generate some incentives for publishing the students' theses. More than 35,000 theses of master's degrees are waiting for further procedure. The central library is not correctly utilizing those theses. This study proposes the thesis publishing system. This will inspire the students to make their thesis less errors. Once they submit their thesis, their department awards them a degree, and their theses remain idle. This study illuminates the authority to make all the theses accessible to those students who want to read online. For this, they have to digitalize the submitted theses.

This project proposes the authority to revise the supervisors' remuneration and make it reasonable so that future works of thesis supervision will be genuine. Many good teachers avoid supervising the thesis as they do other good, income-oriented jobs instead. And they are bound to do so. The present remuneration is nominal, which does not enhance the quality thesis. Supervisors and the students must develop mutual understanding without compromising the quality of the thesis writing.

This study facilitates the teachers and students to conduct training and workshops. It develops a roadmap for research-oriented works. It adds more eagerness and vision to the thesis supervisors. It encourages the thesis writing students to produce the research work ethically. Further, it reassures the thesis supervisors and researchers for the publication of the journals and articles. This study helps the thesis students and supervisors prepare an outline of thesis work. If the thesis writing students study this research paper, they easily carry out their thesis as there are easy steps to write it. Mainly, the study prepares a thesis package idea like scheduling day-to-day activity as required. The study can be the best guideline for thesis writing students. This study inspires the students to work rigorously. According to the level, time consumption

differs.

The student researcher has to work for their thesis accomplishment meticulously. They have to visit their supervisor for several times and take the feedback. They must follow up regularly with their supervisor to acquire proper cooperation. The students have to carry out the processes of thesis writing sincerely. While supervisors provide feedback through the research and thesis writing process, the final assessment takes the form of an oral examination, known as the 'viva,' 'viva voce,' or 'oral defense' (Murray, 2006, P. 53). By the time the student comes to this stage, he has learned a lot more to produce a good thesis.

Acknowledgments

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