

INTERNATIONAL JOURNAL OF MULTIDISCIPLINARY: APPLIED BUSINESS AND EDUCATION RESEARCH

2023, Vol. 4, No. 9, 3446 – 3452

<http://dx.doi.org/10.11594/ijmaber.04.09.28>

Research Article

Project FIERCE: Exploring the Students' Perspective and Behavior Towards Research Subject

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Article history:

Submission September 2023

Revised September 2023

Accepted September 2023

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ABSTRACT

To support and achieve the goals and objectives of the Department of Education, the researcher conducted seminar entitled Project FIERCE. The main purpose of this research was to determine the students' perspective and behavior towards research subject relative to the conduct of Project FIERCE. The study made use of the phenomenological type of qualitative approach, and the findings were drawn from semi-structured interviews. The nine (9) participants are all Senior High School students from New Taugtog National High School who completed and participated in three (3) - day seminar. Participants were asked about in what ways their perception and behavior regarding the research subject changed after participating in Project FIERCE seminar. It was found out that participants of the project FIERCE seminar gained knowledge and experience in research subjects, which resulted in a significant decrease in stress and a marked increase in confidence. This indicates the positive impact of Project FIERCE on research perspective and behavior.

This research further concluded through Project FIERCE seminar, the participants acknowledged that the tasks in research subject can still be difficult, but they felt more capable and ready to take on challenges. With this positive result, it may lead to the success of attaining K-12 goals and objectives.

Thus, it is highly recommended that the Department of Education should continue programs and policies that would support and provide seminars similar to Project FIERCE, which increase the perception and behavior of students towards research subject.

Keywords: Behavior, K-12 curriculum program, Perspective, Project FIERCE, Research subject

How to cite:

Mapanoo, J. E. (2023). Project FIERCE: Exploring the Students' Perspective and Behavior Towards Research Subject. *International Journal of Multidisciplinary: Applied Business and Education Research*. 4(9), 3446 – 3452. doi: 10.11594/ijmaber.04.09.28

Introduction

Senior High School offers a subject that is in accordance with the Department of Education's objectives. The Research Subject is particularly valuable and advantageous for students since it enables them to become analytical thinkers and effective problem solvers by conducting research, gathering data, collecting and interpreting it. According to Modukuri, (2021), students should study research due to these reasons: it is exciting, it gives you valuable skills, and it gives you a community. However, students often have a preconceived notion that research subjects are difficult, leading to stress and hindering the achievement of the Department of Education's goals. According to a recent survey by (Rizwan & Naas) and (Fahmida et al., 2022) there are three factors affecting undergraduates' difficulties in writing thesis, they are psychological, socio-cultural and linguistic factors and it was found out the psychological factor is the self-esteem, motivation, and stress. With that, majority of the students are experiencing stress in their approach to the subject, which has considerable implications on the learning process. As a result, many students view research papers as a requirement rather than an opportunity to learn valuable skills and values. The Senior High School students of New Taugtog National High School struggle with writing their research papers and lack confidence in their ability to produce accurate work, leading to poor performance and grade in this area. It was manifested in the study conducted by students in New Taugtog National that students have difficulty in writing research and that it causes them stress. Teachers are currently

facing the challenge of instructing students who have a negative perception and behaviour towards research.

Methods

The study will utilize phenomenology type of qualitative research. According to Leavy (2015), that phenomenology is particularly useful in education for exploring participants' perceptions and experiences and for gaining insight into how individual make meaning of their educational contexts. This type of study allows the researcher to investigate and collect information about the perception and behavior of Grade 11 students of New Taugtog National High School. The study focuses on the period after the implementation of Project FIERCE.

The draft of the research is subject to editing in both technical and content aspects by research committees and school principal of New Taugtog National High School for suggestions and comments.

After the study has been approved, the researcher will interview the 9 participants who completed the 3-day seminar using the Interview Guide. Each interview will last for 15-20 minutes, and interview process will use audio taped as agreed upon by the interviewee and to be transcribed by the researcher.

Participants will orient about the objectives of the research and will inform that their participation is voluntary. The results of the findings will also be made available for the participant.

The names of the participants will not reveal to maintain privacy and confidentiality of their responses as per ethics in research explained by Fraenkel & Wallen (2003).

Result and Discussion

Table 1

Question	Statement	Theme
1. When you hear the word research, what thoughts or ideas come to your mind?	A When I hear the word research, it does not really mean much to me because one can simply search for it on Google.	Negative perceptions and behavior associated with research, experiencing varying levels of
	B Research is difficult for me because many processes come to mind, and I struggle with how to approach it since I am new to it. It is also "nakakakaba" because it depends on the teacher and group members for the research.	

Question	Statement	Theme
	C Research is difficult for me because I am not familiar with it, and I am encountering it for the first time. I am also worried about the financial aspect, especially if I do not have my equipment, such as a computer.	stress and excitement
	D When I hear the word research, I feel pressured because some people say that it is something to worry about. It seems complicated to me because it is unfamiliar.	
	E I used to think that research was stressful because I thought I would lose time for other subjects. It requires a lot of time because it involves careful study.	
	F I feel nervous because research is difficult.	
	G It is stressful, and I see it as challenging, but at the same time, it is exciting because of the knowledge I can gain from it	
	H I feel pressured and nervous about whether I can handle the research, as I may make mistakes. I also feel stressed because I have a lot to do, and I might fail if I do not understand some parts of it.	
	I This is always what I think about that research is difficult, puts pressure on me, and stresses me out, especially when I see it on social media.	

The table 1 shows that students perceived the research subject as difficult, unfamiliar, nerve-wracking, and stressful, with some feeling pressured and worried about making mistakes or failing, while others see it as an

exciting opportunity to gain knowledge. The data is similar to the study conducted by Sy & Sinaga (2023) that students' difficulties were caused by internal factors, including self-confidence, lack of knowledge and feeling under.

Table 2

Question	Statement	Theme
2. What was your initial reaction upon learning that you have a research subject in senior high school?	A The first thing that comes to my mind when we are assigned a research subject is an added problem. I think it would be difficult because I asked others, and they said the research subject is challenging.	Theme: Feeling of nervousness towards the challenging task of conducting research subject.
	B The research is challenging because I perceive the subject as difficult. It's tough because my groupmates may not be able to help me.	
	C I am nervous about the research because it is challenging, but it is also exciting because I will learn a lot.	
	D My anxiety is pressuring me twice as much because the research subject is approaching. I feel curious yet nervous.	
	E My fear and anxiety about the research have returned, and I'm scared because I thought this is where I would fail.	

Question	Statement	Theme
F	I am excited because I will learn a lot from studying the research and gain experience	
G	I am about to discover something new again, and I am excited but scared about the defense because I think it will be challenging	
H	I am nervous about the teacher, whether we will understand them, and what their attitude is like. It is also enjoyable, but not too much because I know there will be classmates with me	
I	I'm anxious and scared because I am not good at constructing English sentences.	

It can be gleaned from table 2 that students' initial reaction upon learning that they have a research subject in senior high school was a feeling of anxiety or nervousness towards the challenging task of conducting research. How-

ever, students also felt excitement and potential for growth and learning. The data is similar to the study of Rena et al. (2017) that 92.8% of students reported the experience in research was academically challenging.

Table 3

Question	Statement	Theme
3. What knowledge or insights did you gain from participating in Project FIERCE?	A I learned about the two types of research and the difference between qualitative research	Theme:
	B I learned that qualitative research has fewer participants while quantitative research has many respondents. I also remember presenting in front of my group.	Learning about qualitative and quantitative research, their differences, and the importance of diligence in research
	C I still remember qualitative and quantitative research. Qualitative research has a small number of participants, while quantitative research has many respondents	
	D I learned that the purpose of research is to seek, discover, and investigate, and the difference between qualitative and quantitative research is that qualitative is more focused on emotions, while quantitative is more focused on numbers.	
	E Qualitative and quantitative research. In qualitative research, the focus is on phenomenology type. The title should not be too long, and an inverted pyramid should be used. Stress should not be an issue.	
	F Gathering information is important.	
	G I learned about the difference between qualitative and quantitative research, and how to create questions. I gained confidence because I learned what to do	
	H The difference between quantitative and qualitative research and the number of participants in qualitative research.	
	I It's not that difficult to discover a title related to the strand. It takes diligence to finish the research. Even if you're not knowledgeable, you can still finish it.	

The table 3 shows that students acquired knowledge and insights from participating in the Project FIERCE seminar. Participants recalled the topics of qualitative and quantitative research and their differences, as well as the

importance of being diligent in research. Seminar sessions provide an opportunity to develop the skills necessary for research (Morrison et al., 2003).

Table 4.

Question	Statement	Theme
4. Did attending Project FIERCE change your previous perceptions and behaviors towards research?	A After attending Project FIERCE, the phrase "it's nothing" was replaced by anxiety because there are still many things to do. The difficult tasks are still difficult, but they have decreased. The added problems have decreased because I have gained knowledge.	Theme: Shift in perception and attitude towards a challenging task or learning experience, resulting in decreased anxiety and increased confidence and knowledge
	B I used to feel that things were difficult, but now they are becoming easier because they are being taught. My anxiety has decreased because I was able to present in front of many people. It's also challenging because I am the one doing most of the work in the group	
	C My perceptions have changed. Anxiety, difficulty, and excitement are still there, but I am more excited and I realize that I can do it. When it comes to research, I no longer shy away from discussing it. Financially, it's okay because it's not too expensive.	
	D It has changed, instead of being anxious, I now focus on doing the research. I no longer think about how difficult it is because I am focused on handling it and learning from it. Anxiety is still there, but it has decreased.	
	E I no longer get anxious because I can now ask the teachers questions. There are no changes in behavior. It's still somewhat stressful. Doing research can help us and be useful in college.	
	F I am no longer anxious because I know what needs to be done. It's not as difficult anymore because I now have knowledge of the subject. I am no longer as excited, but I know that there is still a lot to learn.	
	G I am now finding it easier and still feel excited, confident, and unafraid because it has become easier.	
	H I still feel pressure, but it's not as much as before because I now have knowledge and teachers to explain things to me, and I have group members who can help.	
	I I am now enjoying learning English. When creating a statement of problem, everything has become more positive because I realize there are benefits that can be applied in everyday life.	

It can be gleaned from the table 4 that the students' perceptions and behavior in the research subject changed from negative to positive. This resulted in a decrease in anxiety,

leading to increased confidence and knowledge. Seminar plays vital role in educational fields to grasp subject inside (Gothane, 2020).

Table 5

Question	Statement	Theme
5. In what ways did Project FIERCE aid you in your study of the research subject?	A The project FIERCE has helped me because I now know how to create a title and I have seen many strategies that I can apply in class. My confidence in class is now the same	Theme: Increase the level of confidence and performance in research subject
	B They make me the leader, so I am still the leader in class. My confidence has increased because I am representing many people.	
	C Our defense changed for me because I participated in the FIERCE project, and my confidence increased because many people attended the project. I gained a lot of information and my confidence increased.	
	D In class, discussions are easier because you have a basis and you know the format.	
	E Doing research is now easier for me and I have more ideas. It is now easier because I know more. I can finish my work earlier	
	F I can now recite in class, and I am more active	
	G I am now helping my groupmates because I know what needs to be done and I can also do what is assigned to me.	
	H Tasks are now being completed, and there is teamwork.	
	I It is now easier to find a topic and get respondents.	

The table 5 shows that through conducting Project FIERCE seminar students has improved academic confidence, leadership skills, and ability to participate in class discussions, conduct research, and collaborate effectively with peers. Conduction of seminar is crucial and essential for the students who find difficult in understanding more or less understanding on subject topics [8].

Conclusion

From the summary of findings, the following conclusions were drawn:

1. Participants expressed difficulty and stress with research, primarily due to lack of familiarity or experience, as well as concerns about financial resources.
2. Participants expressed a mix of nervousness and excitement about the challenges and opportunities towards research subject in Senior High School.
3. Participants in Project FIERCE mainly manifested learning about the distinction be-

tween qualitative and quantitative research, with a focus on the difference in participant numbers.

4. The gain of knowledge and experience in research subject resulted in a significant decrease in anxiety and a marked increase in confidence among the participants, indicating the positive impact of Project FIERCE on research skills and behavior.
5. Participants in Project FIERCE resulted significant improvements in various aspects of their research skills and confidence level.

Acknowledgement

The researcher would like to extend his heartfelt appreciation to the following individuals who have played a significant role in the successful completion of this study:

Blesilda Fontanilla EdD, Public Schools District Supervisor, for her unwavering support and encouragement throughout the research process.

Celso Q. Alcantara Jr. EdD, Research Botolan District Coordinator, for generously sharing his invaluable knowledge and expertise, providing professional guidance, and offering assistance to ensure the study's completion.

Allan E. Carbonell, New Taugtog National High School principal, for his invaluable support and encouragement in conducting the research, improving skills, and cultivating a research-oriented culture.

Josue A. Tolero EdD, for his knowledge and skills that have been instrumental in the successful completion of this research.

Mary Stephanie Ann A. Mapanoo, for her unwavering encouragement and financial support, which have been instrumental in the successful completion of this research.

The **Senior High School Teachers** of New Taugtog National High School, for their unwavering support and encouragement throughout the study.

The **Senior High School Students** of New Taugtog National High School, for their enthusiastic participation in the study and cooperation as participants.

Above all, the researcher would like to express his profound gratitude to the **Almighty God** for answering his prayers and providing wisdom, guidance, good health, and protection for himself, his family, colleagues, friends, and others. To God be the highest glory.

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