

DOCTORAL STUDENTS' SELF-ASSESSED ABILITIES TO WRITE PUBLISHABLE PAPERS IN ENGLISH

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In many international PhD programs, publications are a requirement for doctoral students to graduate (Solli & Nygaard, 2022; Xu, 2022). The ultimate goal of PhD education is to turn doctoral students into responsible scholars and the publication requirement helps the student to meet this aim. In addition, the ability to write a publishable paper is an essential skill for establishing an academic career. A survey was conducted in Hungary in the fall of 2022 and all the doctoral students who came to study here from non-English speaking backgrounds were invited to participate. The current study is part of a larger project. In this study, we investigated how students self-assessed their ability to write a publishable paper on an empirical study they designed and implemented. We also examined the role of gender in the students' self-perceived abilities and the difference among the self-assessed scores of 1st, 2nd, 3rd and 4th year PhD students. A total of 255 (125 females; 127 males; 3 not stated) doctoral students studying at 14 different universities in Hungary participated in our study and a large number of the participants provided us with their email addresses for follow-up interviews. The participants represented 49 countries and they were studying in 68 PhD programs (1st year = 36.5%; 2nd year = 27%; 3rd year = 18%; 4th year = 16.9%; not mentioned = 1.6%). A six point Likert scale item was used. It was found that students agreed with the given, 'I can write a publishable paper in English on an empirical study I designed and implemented' to a large extent ($M = 4.65$, $SD = 1.00$). Therefore, we can infer that students were confident with their English academic writing ability. An independent samples t-test was run to compare the self-assessed scores of female and male students. There was a significant difference in the scores for females ($M = 4.43$, $SD = 1.09$) and males ($M = 4.88$, $SD = 0.86$; $t_{(250)} = -3.630$, $p < .001$), indicating that male students were more confident with their writing abilities than their female peers. The self-assessed scores of 1st year PhD students were found to be the lowest among four different groups: 1st year ($M = 4.46$, $SD = .50$), 2nd year ($M = 4.62$, $SD = 1.00$), 3rd year ($M = 4.89$, $SD = .87$), and 4th year PhD students ($M = 4.88$, $SD = 1.19$). Therefore, we conducted a One-way ANOVA to examine if the differences were significant. The result revealed that the differences were not statistically significant among the self-assessed scores of the 1st, 2nd, 3rd and 4th year PhD students at the $p < .05$ level for the four conditions ($F_{(5,249)} = 1.836$, $p = .106$). We concluded that the doctoral students in this study were confident in their English academic writing abilities and that male students were more confident than their female peers. We assumed that the differences among four different groups were not statistically significant due to our study sample size.