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Research Article

From Readiness to Research: Exploring Business Students' Research Writing Competence

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ABSTRACT

This study assessed the research writing readiness of third-year business students at Tangub City Global College during Academic Year 2025–2026. It examined readiness in terms of technical aspects of research writing, the ability to write the major parts of a research paper, and students' sentiments toward research writing. Anchored on Self-Regulated Learning Theory, the study employed a convergent mixed methods design. Quantitative data were obtained from 232 respondents selected through stratified random sampling from a population of 580 third-year business students, while qualitative data were gathered from 25 purposively selected participants through semi-structured interviews. Frequency count, percentage, and weighted mean were used for the quantitative data, while thematic analysis was applied to the qualitative responses. The quantitative findings showed a high level of perceived readiness across all assessed components, with a grand mean of 3.11 interpreted as "Agree." Results and Discussion obtained the highest mean of 3.15, whereas Technical Aspects in Research Writing obtained the lowest mean of 3.01. Qualitative findings showed that students experienced research writing as challenging yet rewarding, difficult and stressful, and motivating and confidence-building. Common difficulties included finding reliable sources, organizing ideas, managing time, coping with academic pressure, and collaborating with group members. The findings indicate that students possess foundational perceived readiness but require continued support in technical writing, literature synthesis, critical analysis, source evaluation, and evidence-based academic communication. A proposed enhancement program emphasizes faculty-led writing laboratories, source-evaluation and citation workshops, literature-matrix templates, guided methodology and discussion clinics, and performance-based draft feedback to help translate perceived readiness into stronger observable writing performance.

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Introduction

Research writing is not simply a requirement attached to a research subject. For business students, it is a practical academic task that asks them to identify a problem, examine evidence, organize information, explain decisions, and communicate conclusions in a form that others can evaluate. These demands become especially visible when students move from classroom discussion to the production of an actual research paper. A student may know the parts of a manuscript yet still struggle to connect those parts into a clear and defensible argument.

Research-writing readiness, therefore, includes both knowledge of research procedures and the ability to apply academic conventions while working through a demanding writing process. Students need to synthesize literature instead of merely listing sources, explain why a research problem matters, describe methodological choices clearly, interpret evidence carefully, and document sources consistently. Hardianti and Sabata (2025) emphasized the value of academic writing instruction in developing writing techniques, while Jimenez et al. (2024) reported that college students encounter difficulties in organizing and expressing ideas. Shrestha et al. (2021) likewise described research writing as a coordinated process in which the sections of a paper must work together to communicate a coherent study.

At Tangu City Global College (TCGC), these demands are encountered by students in the BSBA-Human Resource Management, BSBA-Marketing Management, and BS Office Administration programs. Research activities require students to move between course concepts and the practical work of searching for literature, narrowing a topic, preparing a methodology, handling data, and writing the manuscript. The researchers' observations and the students' accounts in this study point to recurring concerns: organizing ideas, locating appropriate and credible sources, applying citation practices, and managing the pressure of completing research requirements. These local

experiences provide a useful context for examining readiness rather than treating research writing as a purely technical classroom skill.

The present study assessed the research-writing readiness of third-year business students at TCGC during Academic Year 2025–2026. It examined technical aspects of research writing and five major manuscript components: introduction, methodology, results and discussion, conclusion and recommendations, and references. It also explored students' sentiments toward research writing, the difficulties they encountered, and the perceived effects of the process on confidence and motivation. The findings were used not only to describe students' perceived readiness but also to identify where TCGC can provide more deliberate and sustained support for research writing.

Literature Review

Research writing draws on several competencies at the same time. Technical competence includes clarity, organization, grammatical accuracy, academic language, paraphrasing, citation, and adherence to prescribed research formats. Hardianti and Sabata (2025) found that academic writing instruction can strengthen students' writing techniques, while Patricio (2022) connected research and collaborative writing skills with the quality of research outputs. Jimenez et al. (2024) similarly documented difficulties in academic writing, particularly in organizing and expressing ideas. These findings make technical writing practice a relevant concern for students who are expected to produce research manuscripts.

The major sections of a research paper create different writing demands. Shrestha et al. (2021) explained that each section has a particular purpose and must contribute to the coherence of the whole study. Hashmi (2022) reported challenges in thesis writing, while Tagudin and Rivera (2026) highlighted gaps in research-writing knowledge and difficulties in developing research outputs. For business students, the task is not merely to know what belongs in an introduction, methodology, results

and discussion, conclusion, or reference list. They must also make the sections connect logically and use evidence appropriately.

The affective side of research writing is equally important. Amarga and Quirap (2024) examined challenges and attitudes in academic writing, while Puspita (2023) discussed students' anxiety related to writing. Shengyao et al. (2024) associated academic resilience, self-efficacy, and motivation with persistence in demanding academic tasks, and Daguplo and Paglinawan (2025) examined the relationship between students' interest and research-writing performance. These studies help explain why two students with similar technical knowledge may experience the same research task differently: confidence, motivation, pressure, and persistence can influence how they approach and complete the work.

Self-Regulated Learning Theory provides a useful lens for the present study because research writing requires students to manage their own work over an extended period. Zimmerman (2020) described self-regulated learning in terms of learners' active management of their learning processes. Chan et al. (2024) emphasized goal setting, strategy selection, and self-monitoring, while Abate (2025) and Wang et al. (2025) linked self-regulated writing strategies with academic writing performance. In the TCGC context, this perspective is relevant to students' need to plan tasks, monitor progress, manage deadlines, revise drafts, seek feedback, and persist when the research process becomes difficult.

Taken together, the literature supports viewing research-writing readiness as multidimensional. It includes technical knowledge, the ability to construct the major parts of a research paper, and the personal resources needed to persist through demanding academic work. The present study adds a localized account from third-year business students at TCGC, combining quantitative evidence of perceived readiness with qualitative accounts of what students actually experience while completing research requirements.

Materials and Methods

Research Design

A convergent mixed methods research design was employed. Quantitative and

qualitative data were gathered during the study, analyzed separately, and integrated to provide a broader understanding of students' research-writing readiness. The quantitative component described students' perceived readiness in technical aspects and major research-paper components, while the qualitative component explored sentiments, challenges, confidence, motivation, and experiences related to research writing.

Participants and Sampling

The study involved third-year business students at TCGC during Academic Year 2025–2026. The population consisted of 580 students: 219 from BSBA–Human Resource Management, 241 from BSBA–Marketing Management, and 120 from BS Office Administration. For the quantitative component, 232 respondents were selected through stratified random sampling, proportionately representing the three programs. For the qualitative component, 25 participants were purposively selected from the same population to provide detailed accounts of their research-writing experiences.

Research Instruments

The quantitative instrument was an adapted and modified questionnaire based on Yodico (2025), "Students' Readiness in Conducting Research: Basis for an Intervention Plan." It contained 42 items distributed across six domains: technical aspects of research writing, introduction, methodology, results and discussion, conclusion and recommendations, and references. Items were rated using a four-point Likert scale from 1 (Strongly Disagree) to 4 (Strongly Agree). The questionnaire underwent expert validation and pilot testing with 30 students from a comparable program; the reported Cronbach's alpha was 0.820. A researcher-developed semi-structured interview guide was used for the qualitative component and was likewise subjected to expert review.

Data Analysis

Quantitative responses were summarized using frequency count, percentage distribution, and weighted mean. The study interpreted 3.26–4.00 as Strongly Agree/Very High, 2.51–3.25 as Agree/High, 1.76–2.50 as Disagree/Low, and 1.00–1.75 as Strongly

Disagree/Very Low. Qualitative interviews were transcribed, reviewed, coded, and organized into recurring themes. The two strands were then integrated to explain and enrich the quantitative findings.

Ethical Considerations

Participation was treated as voluntary, and the researchers stated that respondents'

identities and information would remain confidential. Informed consent was obtained, and the information gathered was intended solely for academic purposes. The study was delimited to third-year business students of TCGC and relied on self-reported readiness; it did not assess the actual quality of students' completed research manuscripts or establish causal relationships.

Table 1. Summary of Students' Perceived Research-Writing Readiness

Research Writing Component	Mean	Remarks
Technical Aspects in Research Writing	3.01	Agree/High
Introduction	3.07	Agree/High
Methodology	3.09	Agree/High
Results and Discussion	3.15	Agree/High
Conclusion and Recommendations	3.13	Agree/High
References	3.13	Agree/High
Grand Mean	3.11	Agree/High

Results and Discussion

Overall Research Writing Readiness

The respondents reported a high level of perceived research-writing readiness across the six assessed areas. The grand mean of 3.11 fell within the "Agree/High" range. Results and Discussion had the highest mean at 3.15, followed by Conclusion and Recommendations and References at 3.13, Methodology at 3.09, Introduction at 3.07, and Technical Aspects in Research Writing at 3.01. The pattern is important for TCGC because the students did not identify one area as generally "low"; instead, the results point to a narrower weakness in the technical application of research-writing conventions.

The 3.01 mean for Technical Aspects in Research Writing deserves particular attention. The domain covers formatting, academic style and grammar, paragraph organization, citation, paraphrasing, and communication during data gathering. Students' qualitative responses reinforce this result: they described difficulty in finding reliable sources and arranging ideas into a coherent paper. In practice, this means that familiarity with research concepts does not necessarily remove the need for close guidance on how those concepts are expressed in writing. Guided drafting, targeted feedback, and repeated practice may therefore be more

useful than relying on a single orientation or lecture about research formats.

Writing the Introduction

The Introduction obtained a mean of 3.07. Students generally perceived themselves as able to explain the relevance of a study, formulate research problems, develop frameworks, and justify the need for research. Yet the study also identified literature synthesis and research-gap identification as continuing difficulties. These tasks require students to move beyond describing what previous authors said and instead build a reasoned case for the present study. The finding is consistent with the concerns about organizing ideas and using scholarly sources effectively reported by Hashmi (2022) and Tagudin and Rivera (2026).

Writing the Methodology

Methodology received a mean of 3.09. Students generally reported readiness in selecting research designs, describing sampling procedures, planning data collection and analysis, developing or adapting instruments, and observing ethical standards. However, the source study noted difficulty in clearly explaining sampling procedures and methodological processes. A methodology section asks students to translate abstract research concepts into the

specific procedures they actually followed. This is an area where faculty-led examples, annotated methodology sections, and draft consultations can make the connection more concrete.

Writing Results and Discussion

Results and Discussion received the highest mean at 3.15. Students perceived themselves as ready to present findings, interpret patterns, relate results to literature, discuss implications, and synthesize evidence. At the same time, the study identified difficulty in deeper analysis, particularly comparing findings with previous studies and integrating theoretical perspectives. The high score should therefore be read as perceived readiness, not as direct evidence of consistently advanced written performance. The distinction matters because the study measured students' perceptions and did not score their completed manuscripts.

Writing Conclusion and Recommendations and References

Conclusion and Recommendations and References both obtained a mean of 3.13. Students generally felt able to summarize findings, align conclusions with objectives, formulate recommendations, and suggest future research. They nevertheless reported difficulty connecting conclusions to broader practice or policy implications. In the References domain, students were generally comfortable listing sources and applying citation conventions, but recent and credible sources and consistent formatting were more challenging; two indicators had means of 3.05. This points to a practical need for source-evaluation and reference-management activities rather than citation instruction alone.

Table 2. Themes on Students' Sentiments Toward Research Writing

Theme	Participants Mentioning Theme
Research Writing as Challenging but Rewarding	5
Research Writing as Difficult and Stressful	5
Research Writing as Motivating and Confidence-Building	7

Students' Sentiments Toward Research Writing

The qualitative findings add detail to these numerical results. Students described research writing as challenging but rewarding, difficult and stressful, and motivating and confidence-building. Their accounts show that the same research task can produce both pressure and a sense of accomplishment. When students saw

progress in their work, research writing could strengthen confidence and motivation; when sources were difficult to evaluate, ideas were difficult to organize, or deadlines became tight, confidence could temporarily decline. The findings are consistent with the role of self-regulation, resilience, motivation, and feedback discussed by Abate (2025), Shengyao et al. (2024), and Wang et al. (2025).

Table 3. Themes on Challenges Experienced in Research Writing

Theme	Participants Mentioning Theme
Difficulty in Finding Reliable Sources and Organizing Ideas	5
Time Management, Pressure, and Collaboration Challenges	5

Note. Participant counts in Tables 2–4 are the counts reported in the original thesis analysis for each theme. Because thematic responses may overlap, the counts are not intended to sum to 25.

Challenges Experienced in Research Writing

Two recurring challenges were difficulty in finding reliable sources and organizing ideas, and time-management, pressure, and collaboration challenges. These concerns are especially relevant in a group-research setting be-

cause students must coordinate schedules, divide tasks, communicate decisions, and still produce a single coherent manuscript. The findings suggest that research support at TCGC should address the workflow of writing as well as the content of research methodology.

Table 4. Themes on the Effects of Research Writing on Confidence and Motivation

Theme	Participants Mentioning Theme
Research Writing Builds Confidence, Motivation, and Learning Growth	6
Research Writing Lowers Confidence but Encourages Perseverance	5

Policy and Program Implications

The quantitative and qualitative strands converge on a central institutional concern: students perceive themselves as ready, but they still need structured opportunities to demonstrate and strengthen that readiness in actual writing tasks. The present study did not directly assess the quality of completed research manuscripts, so it cannot establish a measured gap between perceived readiness and actual written performance. The policy implication is instead a need for TCGC to create mechanisms that can test, reinforce, and document the transfer of perceived readiness into observable writing performance.

For TCGC, the findings support an enhancement program built around several connected interventions. Faculty-led research-writing laboratories can provide guided practice in technical conventions, paragraph organization, citation, paraphrasing, and academic style. Focused source-evaluation and citation workshops can train students to distinguish credible and recent literature from less suitable sources and to document them consistently. Structured literature-matrix templates can help students

record authors, purposes, methods, findings, and research gaps before attempting to synthesize literature. Methodology and results-and-discussion clinics can use annotated examples and faculty feedback to strengthen explanations of procedures, comparison of findings, and theoretical integration. Scheduled writing consultations and rubric-based draft checks can give students evidence of what they can already do and what still needs improvement.

These interventions can also address the affective concerns reported by participants. Breaking a large research project into scheduled milestones can reduce last-minute pressure, while regular feedback can make progress visible and encourage persistence. A simple baseline-and-follow-up writing sample, assessed with a common rubric, would allow the institution to determine whether students' perceived readiness is reflected in actual writing improvement. In this way, the proposed program would not assume that a high self-rating automatically means high performance; it would use the students' self-reports as a starting point for guided practice and observable development.

Table 5. Proposed Research-Writing Enhancement Program

Proposed Intervention	Targeted Need	Suggested Institutional Action
Faculty-led research-writing laboratories	Technical writing, paragraph organization, citation, paraphrasing	Schedule guided writing sessions within or alongside research courses.
Source-evaluation and citation workshops	Credible/recent sources and consistent documentation	Conduct hands-on sessions using scholarly sources and reference-management exercises.
Structured literature-matrix templates	Literature synthesis, idea organization, research-gap identification	Provide a common matrix for author, purpose, method, findings, and gap before drafting.
Methodology and Results-and-Discussion clinics	Method explanation, comparison of findings, theoretical integration	Use annotated examples, guided exercises, and faculty feedback on draft sections.
Writing consultations and rubric-based draft checks	Transfer of perceived readiness into observable performance	Use scheduled consultations and baseline/follow-up writing samples assessed with a common rubric.

Proposed Intervention	Targeted Need	Suggested Institutional Action
Research workflow and collaboration support	Time pressure, deadlines, group coordination, persistence	Set milestones, peer-review checkpoints, and clear group-writing responsibilities.

Conclusion

Third-year business students at Tangub City Global College reported a high level of perceived research-writing readiness, with a grand mean of 3.11 interpreted as "Agree/High." Results and Discussion obtained the highest mean of 3.15, while Technical Aspects in Research Writing had the lowest at 3.01. The results suggest that students have a foundation for preparing the major sections of a research paper, but technical conventions, literature synthesis, source evaluation, methodological explanation, and deeper interpretation still require continued practice.

The qualitative findings show that readiness is closely connected with students' experiences while doing research. Students described research writing as challenging and stressful, but also rewarding, motivating, and confidence-building. They identified reliable-source searching, organization of ideas, time management, academic pressure, and collaboration as recurring challenges. Progress in completing research tasks could strengthen confidence, while uncertainty and pressure could temporarily weaken it. These experiences fit the study's Self-Regulated Learning Theory framework, particularly the processes of planning, monitoring, persistence, and reflection.

The study supports a shift from one-time research orientation toward sustained, practice-based support. The proposed enhancement program should include faculty-led writing laboratories; source-evaluation and citation workshops; structured literature-matrix templates; methodology and results-and-discussion clinics; scheduled faculty consultations; and rubric-based draft reviews. These activities can be embedded in research courses or coordinated across the business programs so that students encounter the same expectations and support at successive stages of the research process.

Because the present study measured perceived readiness rather than the quality of completed manuscripts, TCGC should also include performance-based checks in the

enhancement program. A baseline research-writing sample and a later revised sample can be evaluated using a common rubric covering technical accuracy, organization, source use, methodological explanation, analysis, and citation. Such a process would allow the institution to determine whether improvements in students' perceived readiness are accompanied by observable improvements in written work. Future research may likewise compare self-reported readiness with assessed manuscript performance and examine the effectiveness of the proposed enhancement activities.

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