



The role of Research Guides for better visibility of work: Avoiding the wrong way while preparing to undertake Research

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Introduction:

One of the fascinating word that has caught the present generation in education field is the term called as "Research". The term has different meaning for different sections of

students. For some, it means that, you need to dig already available material/ stuff, and then re-look at it, in the present contact or in the contact which your research works is addressing. For some, it is collection of required data, and presents it in the needed format. For some, it is to look at an entire different framework and format, and try discovery some new facts and issues, per se. In all this case, everyone is right, but what matter is, why research still not a breakthrough is thought among the researchers. In contact of Management Research world, apart from the know big Business school research outcome, why is that, other business schools which runs in numbers, are not heard about their research work or their findings of work. Where is the issue lying, and what can be done.

This paper is based on my personal observation, with more than a decade experience in management research, while working to guide several students for doctoral degree work and as scholar during my work towards management doctoral degree. The issue of - Where PhD Scholars go Wrong in undertaking Research, has to be seen at multiple stages. There seems to be lack of clarity and deep understanding about the issues before one decides to do research work. Some of those are discussed here, with the view to understand the solutions for these issues.

1. The Prepared Mind:

Research requires a different type of aptitude. Being a good teacher will not grantee one to be a good researcher. You should be prepared to be a researcher, because it requires a different set of skills and competency to prove to be a good researcher. Most feel that, if I am a good teacher, I will be a good researcher. I am sure, this is surely not the true proposition.

Further, you need to prepare to be a researcher, and see things from researcher's lens. A well preparation before formally you enroll for the Doctorate degree is must. When we say, a well prepared mind, necessary it means that, any area or subject that we wish to discover further, enough time has to be spent, know the ground reality of the subject that e wish to take it further, and a self-directed question- Is this issue a researchable topic / area, that has the potential to be researched.

2. Wide Reading:

A work requires a grip on the subject and the area. A well-read work or the subject that one wishes to undertake the research work will lead to better and appropriate conclusions. Most of the time, the scholar loses the direction in between and try to regain the line at the later stage. Through reading initially, will not only help the scholar to look at the feasibility of the work to be undertaken, but gives a direction and a purpose. A set a well-defined objective for the study, a well-read work is must. Further, a wide reading which encompasses different subject or interlinked domain will help understand the scope of the study. Initial reading about various subjects, methods of research will focus the work in the right direction.

Through visits to various libraries and try find out the journals which focus in the area of subject one wish to research, will be of great help. Library, inspire having online and search engine, will help us understand from varied point of views and subjects. My personal view and interaction with most scholars is, most scholars have not spent time visiting library before they are enrolled in the PhD program. They feel that, once they are enrolled, that library work starts. Infact, this is wrong. Before library time investment than later, will save lots of error one usually does later.

3. Expert Advice and Discussion:

Participating in discussion forum related to academic and research is one initiative the scholars should initially invest some time. A fairly good idea as what area that you wish to work is finalized initially, that, finding experts in the area, through review of literature or social media, or any form of forums will help the scholar to fairly get a good idea about the pro-cons of the work that one intends to undertake. A list of Expert and Professor who are known in the field may be listed out, and reached. The purpose is, clarity and initial dough's about the inns-outs of the topic that one intends to research will give later the clarity that one wish to take the research further. What I have found personally is, lack of clarity is the most problem area by researchers. Initially, all areas/topics/ subjects seems to be easy, and one starts the feeling that, they can undertake research. Later, one starts the temperature go up, ones they realize that, the work that they are doing, do not fall in the scope of the subject or faculty that they are working. This inhibition will be sorted out, with expert advice, discussion and talk.

4. Network with Forums: For any quality research work, the buzz word is the network. The network in the form of having connects with the experts in the field; the professors working in different Universities air research Institutes; or the network with the Professional Association in the field. For example, any research work in the field of management, network with professionals association like: NHRD, SHRM, NIPM, CII, NASSCOM, and like, will give that great leap in the research work. My personal experience is that, for past 10 years, I have been associated with these forums. I participate in their discussion, workshop, evening talks, conference and annual meets. And my experience is, each times these Professional Association member's meet, they discuss the latest happenings in the organisation, real issues, and real time solutions. To know the latest what's happening in the business world, get connected with this Professional Association, through various forums. This is the first hand stuff that you get the information for your initial thoughts for research work. Most of the time, connecting with these Professional Association, will give you an idea, as to which-ever area research topic that we intend to select, is it really worth doing a research work !!. This will be answered through your understudying and discussion with the Professionals in the field.

5. The Work done:

Every researchers wish to do work which is new and innovative. Everyone starts with the big bang, and top of the mind is the creation of knowledge and innovativeness, that the work should address. This is a nice feeling and thinking, and intact, one has to have such mind map. But, invest in understanding the work done and the maturity of the subject in which one intends to work further. Reviewing varied work undertaken in the area will have the right researchable direction. Most proposals are neither addressed properly nor directed to the issue sand solutions. In many cases, the work is researchable, but doesn't fall in the scope of the faculty/ subject one intends to work. For example, if one intended to work in the area of management science, that, among the subject that management has the scope, your work should focus. There has to be link between the title, the objectives, the research questions and the intended outcome of the work. All these should sink in line.

The Role of Guide: A Catalyst:

In any research work, the quality and the outcome of work, depends on two factors: 1. The work that address the current needs of the community and society; 2. The methodology that the Research Guide/ supervisor adopts. The first address the need for the society's improvements, from the research work undertaken. If the research work is done just for the sake of academic purpose, it does not better the life of the people in the society. It is just another addition to already huge numbers of work, that are coming out, from every corner of the Institutes. Secondly, what inputs the guides brings to the table, the innovative methods that can be adopted to improve already existing literature, matters. The quality of work depends on the maturity of the research guide / supervisor, in terms of the research depth. The more the wide horizon of the guide, the better is the guidance and direction that the guide can set for the research student. Based on my experience of guiding the students for the doctoral degree work, my experience is that, the role of guide in this entire process of Doctoral work is crucial, and adds value at all the stage of work, i.e.: at the end to end process. Here are few experiences and practices that guides can adopt, to make the process more profession, focused, and add value at each stage of work, per se.

1. The Network:

The more the network of the guide at different set of group, the better would be for the student. Collaborations with Corporate Houses and Research organisation, not only support the student with required inputs for the work, it adds for knowing the updates of whats happening in the organisation, and if the scholar is working in the area of Management Sciences, than, it would add value to the solutions and design of the work. The Guide network with these bodies will boost the morale of the scholar, better the work approach, and get the required necessary connects with the Corporate. Guides role in getting the connects with the corporate house is crucial, and this bridge and gap between the Research scholar- Institute and Corporate house can be narrowed dawn. My personal experience while looking at my students is, after all hard work put in designing the work, questionnaire for the data collection, getting the required permission and participation from the corporate house is a challenge. It is not that they reject the permission, but the connect is not developed. And, most corporate wish to understand the work in terms of ROI of their time, and 'what's in it for me'. If this is

addressed at the right time, getting better samples and the quality of respondents would enhance the work output. The Guides/ Supervisor role in these matters most and that connect by the Guide makes the journey smooth and right direction.

2. Governance:

There are different types of Guides/ Supervisors, depending on the personality and the background one comes. If one category these Guides/ Supervisors, we find 3 types: 1. Those Guides/ Supervisors, who guide the scholar, whenever the scholar approaches the Guides/ Supervisors; 2. Another category of Guides/ Supervisors are the ones, who look at the work done by the scholars, and once the scholar does the work, they guide depending on the work done by scholar. The move is more from the scholar; 3. Those Guides/ Supervisors who are demanding and believes in deadlines. Any work that is assigned is assigned with deadlines. These type of Guides/ Supervisors, go out and show apart from the regular work that is expected by the scholar, what other work contribute to the personality of the scholar. The entire three categories are required, but if one is looking at breakthrough research work, than the Guides/ Supervisors, who is demanding is the one who comes with the right output of the work. 'What else' can I give to the scholar, apart from the regular work that is part of work, matters most? Most scholars don't like to work under deadlines, for various reasons, and one such reason could be, balancing the teaching- research work, if one is into teaching, along with research work. The guide, who sets the deadlines, is the guide who is goes to create that edge for the student and the work, per se.

3. Participation elsewhere:

Branding the work, branding the scholar and branding oneself give that visibility. The role of Guides/ Supervisors is to see that, the scholar's scholarly work is projected in different related forums. The best forums could be the Annual Conferences, Seminars, Workshop, Summits, and the like. The Guides/ Supervisors role to give the apt direction, inputs, and letting the scholar be at these conference and forums is highly needed. The more the participation in an appropriate forum, the better is the branding of the scholar and the work. These forums not only have an oppournity to be part of it, but will have great time in terms of discussion, inputs and updates that one receives on the work, per se. The better the network one develops in these forums, the better will be post

discussion amongst the scholars and experts. This also opens eyes in letting know, why other scholars work is, and who is addressing from what angle and lenses.

4. Guide Branding:

The more the visibility of the Guide / Supervisor in the peer group amongst the research community, the better it is for the scholar, in terms of connects. Guides visibility can be seen from different lenses; weather the guide is Member or Editor of Professional journals; Committees on different Universities and research institutes; Member on different Professional Association and organisation; Member for libraries and centers; and the like. The Guide / Supervisor can support the scholar by putting a word in all these forums, for scholar benefit. The Guide / Supervisor play a role in branding the scholar and the work, get buy in for the work, and can enrich the already progress of the work.

5. Professional Connect:

The more the professional connect, the better is the research work richness. There are various forums which the guide / supervision can be of great help to scholar. The guide can be member of this association, which in turn, will benefit the scholar. Forums like: NHRD; SHRM; NIPM: ISTD: Strategic Management forum of India; AIMA; and the like. The role of guide is to see that the scholar gets connected with these Professional associations and get connected with the practitioners, and get the updates. These connect also help at the time of getting the corporate buy-in, when the study gets progress and those required permissions to conduct the work is needed.

Researcher BRANDING as a core competitive advantage: How to get work noticed

Looking into the numbers of Business Schools and the Teaching and Research population associated with these schools, sometimes we miss the good work to get it noticed. This may be due large number of people associated with the profession, or the number of work that is coming out is too huge, to get noticed and acknowledged the way it has to. The other reason could also be the visibility issues, and may be enough effort or methodology may not have been adopted by the scholar. At the end of the day, weather the work dint get noticed or the scholar has not made the required efforts, the result is that, YOU ARE NOT A BRANDED RESEARCHER. What is the solution? The solution lies with the person, who wish to get the work and the person recognize at

the right place and right time for the right reason, per se. There are ways through which the Scholar- Work can get noticed, and these could be the way or methodology that may be adopted. Let us remember, in the crowd, one can still stand tall and get that edge for the work to get that appropriate attention.

1. Social Media:

Both advantage and disadvantage are associated with the usage of social media as a method of getting connected with the peer community. The best way is to have a profile, preferably the one with address the needs or the Academic - Research community. For Eg: A profile on LinkedIn will be an appropriate forum to get posted. There was the old saying that- Don't ever discuss or reveal the title of your PhD/ Research work openly or talk this to anyone, till you complete and get the degree. This holds no good as of today. Post your work on this media, and let people notice what is the work that you are doing. By this, you allow people have an opinion and views on your work. The feedback that you get is valuable in shaping the work that you intend to do. Also, you are getting it to the attention of others that, this is the area of your work. When I did my PhD in early '90, I was told by several academic members that to be silent on the work that you are doing, and don't ever discuss the area/ title that you are working. As a scholar, I blindly followed, and practically dint ever discuss. Now, when I am on the other side, as Guide and Supervisor, I have practised with my scholars that, the work has to be discussed through social media, and that's the way you get yourself and your work get noticed.

2. Professors and Experts database:

Across the academic field, you find Professors and Experts, with varied areas of work. Researchers are found in all fields of work. Once the work gets started, through your ROL- Review of Literature, you find some patter of work done in your selected area, and a pattern of Experts and Researchers writing in the area or similar area of what you are working. Since, reaching Professional today is not that difficult, make a database of experts and professors, and try reaching them. Making a connect is what matters. Either they may be on some social network, or through websites of University/ Department, you can get the details. Once the connect is established, try to sell yourself and the work that you are doing. I am sure, after some protocol and formalities, knowing each other follows. Try discussing with these Professors and

Experts about their work and what your work all about is. Have an agenda as and when you start getting connected and discussion gets progressed. Again, when I undertook my PhD work, it was talked that, apart from your Guide/ Supervisor, you are not supposed to discuss or talk about your research work any other professionals, and Yes, I followed that rule. May be at that point of time that was appropriate. As times have changed to very great extent, apart from your Guide / Supervisor, you need the inputs from other corner with some other perspectives. Sure, don't miss this methodology, and at the end of the day, you may decide what's that is helpful and what's that should be ignored. The value of any work with joint collaborations is viewed as more credible than, any work or publication published single. To say, join hands with more than two, and having an Professors and Experts from outside your University/ Research Institute during the publication matters most, during the review process of any journals final selection, per se. When you refer the papers published in the AOM- Academy of Management Journal, you invariably find that, most papers are joint authored, and most are with Professors and Experts from more than one-two different Universities and Organisation.

3. Fellow Researchers

Any amount of connect with the peer community is not enough. In today's competitive world and knowledge economy, getting connected with fellow researchers is one way to assure that, you're have the open space to discuss your work. Once you commence your work, you tend to get to know the fellow researchers in your area, or similar to your work. List out some good University / research Institutes related to your work/ domain, and make a database of fellow researchers. As discussed, get connected and make a beginning. There is nothing like telling what your work to the peer community is, and letting know what's their area, per se. It requires some time and knowing each fellow researcher, but it is worth focusing. Get your work audited by the peer researcher, and try getting feedback on the work, and vice versa. This refines your thought process on the work that you are doing. It also helps you to understand different perspectives and lenses that once can see the work. A group of such peer researchers will give you to look your work from different lenses and angles, thus, improves the methodology and opportunity one can take the work. Any amount of inputs in any work of research is not enough. Hence, get connected with the peer Fellow researchers. Also, once in 2-3 months, arrange for peer presentation and debate

on the area that you and they are working. This will polish your work, as you get started. Presentations will give a confidence in the work that you are doing. And, as my personal experience goes, the confidence is what's makes the researcher gain advantage on the work.

4. Conferences and Professional Meetings:

The number of conference and the nature of such conferences today has diluted to great extent. There are all sort of conference organized. For Eg: conferences in India, organized by any of the top 100 Business Schools including the world presence institutes like IIM's, be there and participate. There are two ways that you may register. 1. If you have worth paper to be presented, than have a paper and present your work. There will be lots of learning while you present. The feedback on the paper by experts will improve your paper further. You can also get any clarification discussed. 2. If you don't have paper, get registered as delegate. You may take the advantage if such expert gathering in conference and try gets connected and talk about your work. Do remember to have a copy of proposal of your work, and don't hesitate to hand over a copy to expert or whom you feel, get give you further inputs. Conference is also to know, what other fellow researchers are working, the methodology, and what's that is new in their work. Well-connected researchers in such forums may lead to understanding each other, and joint papers and projects may be the outcome of such participation.

Every other profession has their own Professional Association, through which they get connected and discuss the newness in their respective subjects. As far as Human Resource area is concerned, you have the National Human Resource Network- NHRD; in Management, you have the All India Management Association- AIMA; for Strategic area interest, you have Strategic Management Society of India; and the like, few are mentioned, but different area of subject, have different Professional association. The membership and community that these associations are composed of Academic expert, Professionals and Corporate people, including the practices. There is an advantage to get connected with people who are in the field. The company predictive and inputs are mostly discussed, and as a researcher, this is great advantage. The other benefit is that, you get connected with community who is part of corporate, and those connects

will help you during your work and data collection. Most research work in management relies on corporate community as sample, and hence, such connects and participation in professional association will have positive advantage, per se. To cite a practical example and rerun of investment, with my personal benefits. I am Associated with NHRD, for almost a decade. I attend meetings and annual gatherings of NHRD, where you have an oppournity to get connected and meet the Professionals in HR domain. This association has professionals from all walks of life who are HR interested. All the latest updates and happenings in corporate are discussed. Great inputs for a researchers as to understand the research areas that may be looked and try understand that, weather the work that is planned / proposed address what the corporate is looking. This will give a maturity of the work that intends to be undertaken and the limitations, per se.

5. Get Personal Newsletter

Most professionals are on FB and linked in. They are the one which give us maximum personal visibility as a person and the work that we are doing, apart from our professional details that we post. In terms of communicating the larger part of the work, they have some limitations. For immediate attention, those forums are most effective. Take the advantage of designing your personal newsletter. This specifically should focus in the area of your research work. Start debate through this newsletter. Don't hesitate to brand yourself through this newsletter. Keep this newsletter short, and allow for people to have discussion on the content that you post in it. For any research work to get enriched, ideas matter, and this newsletter should be the mode through which ideas are posted, debated and discussed. Now and then, tweet about your work through this newsletter, and get feedback. regular newsletter communication to peer community and researchers will have that visibility for oneself and the work, per se. remember to have a profession newsletter, where personal matter don't get the space.

Conclusion:

Inspite of more advancement in technology and the advantage that everyone takes, there would be somewhere a missed oppournity, for you to get noticed. Getting noticed the work that you are undertaking will help you as a researcher and the acceptance from the peer community would be high. Apart from social media putting almost everyone visibly to each other, there is one thin line, which still makes some to get

unnoticed. A constant communication through the strategies that are highlighted in the present discussion will have a positive advantage for one to get noticed. Getting personal notice for the work is a competitive advantage for any personal work to get acceptance. Many times, the work is of high standard, break-through outcome, and contribution to knowledge is positive. But, in this era of rapid media explosion, it may miss the required recognition, and the beauty of work gets unnoticed. Everyone has their way to get visibility and work projected. Remember, the rules have changed, because the game has changed. Get that changed framework and format for you to get - Researcher BRANDING as a core competitive advantage.

Conclusion:

There is certain work one undertakes in life time. And one such life time work is the PhD work. It is not just for the degree and proton or to seek a job, once should undertake the phd work. Instead, start with the object of creating a breakthrough work, to create knowledge and contribute to the society. The big work you plan, than the big preparation one should think. Your game is as good as your preparation. If you prepare well, than, your game on the final day will be better. Any research work, at the end of the day, should be utilized form various angles and for various purpose. It should lead to developing a course, should figure in the bestselling books, and should be part of any executive program of business school or the corporate program. Further, it should serve as the modules and models in executive training, and lead further in consultancy, Workshop and FDP/ MDP of the business school. The work one does should not just restrict to academic work; instead, it should be of greater part of any of the corporate decision making process, and global dialogue and discussion at various forums.

The paper tries to communicate, that, the guide experience and visibility in the research community shadow should fall on the good work that the scholar works. The guide by virtue of being in the field will always have a positive advantage and edge for the scholar. If the guide just restricts to the defined role of guiding, instead hand holding of the scholar, till one gets that visibility, does more good for the scholar. The acceptance of scholars work by peer group needs the guide duty calls for more than that is defined in JD of the guides. What Do We Really Know and What Do We Need to Know, will be engulfed by the guide.

Likewise, you're well prepared PhD work will end with well researched conclusions and suggestions, which I am sure, will help the society, business and community at large. They are certain myths about PhD work, and one needs to address these myths. Few tips before we end:

1. Don't go with the mindset that, once i register for PhD, I will get the degree.
2. It is just that the quality and standard PhD work one should do, is just spoken orally and in practice, none such theory exist.
3. Any type of work or topic or area one does, they can undertake research work. Anything will work. This is surely not true.
4. Everyone is registered for a PhD work; hence I will also get registered for PhD work.
5. Most of the work is cut-paste-repast and again cut. Don't do PhD for the heck of doing, because everyone ran the horse, hence I also ran the horse.

DISCLAIMER

Views, opinions, or strategies presented are what I personally think and believe to reflect "Life of PhD", and do not necessarily reflect the views, opinions, or strategies of the Organisation..... As a researcher, guide and supervisor, this is my views/ experience and observation...