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Issue on Research in Modern Society:

Addressing Global Challenges

Editorial: Research in Modern Society: Addressing Global Challenges

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A b s t r a c t

This editorial provides an overview that summarises the third Granite symposium held in March 2019. The symposium spanned over two days and witnessed a series of presentations from PhD students in various departments in the university. Research presentations also ran alongside student engagement activities and intellectual workshops from experienced staffs in the university. The symposium was organised to aid student confidence in articulating their research, receive feedback on their public speaking skills and network with other students from an interdisciplinary background. It is deemed that the continuation of the Granite symposiums will help PhD students in the university learn the essential skills that boasts their personal development as they progress through the PhD journey.

[K e y w o r d s] : Student engagement, research workshop, modern society

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OVERVIEW

Following Cherrstrom (2012: 148–149) who exclaimed

“I have heard conference attendees proclaim they learned as much in informal conversations with colleagues over lunch, during breaks, or before and after sessions, as they learned in formal sessions”

This symposium was organised as an opportunity for PhD students to engage with other students' especially in an interdisciplinary nature. This year's symposium entitled Research in Modern Society: Addressing Global Challenges was coined to capture the wide range of research PhD students undertake in the university. Also, considering the wider scope of the Journal and its interdisciplinary focus the topic was placed to encourage participation across disciplines within the university. In this 3rd granite symposium we were pleased to have the symposium consisting of PhD research presentations across various academic disciplines from engineering, medical sciences, social sciences collaborating to present their work to a multidisciplinary audience. For the first time, the journal also had workshops running along with the presentations which spanned across two days.

The selected participants who presented their work received written and verbal feedback not just from students in their discipline but also from other disciplines. This enabled them to perceive the applicability and relatedness of their research to a wider academic audience. It was interesting to see the researchers from different disciplines give feedback to those from other disciplines which broadened their horizons. The symposium represented an opportunity for PhD students to develop their public engagement skills. As Stanley (2015: 143) articulated “Doing PhD is a black box” to expand this experience we invited academics who talked to the participants on publishing in academic journals and the useful tips they would need to prepare their article for peer review. We would like to thank Professor Paul Nimmo who gave a talk on Advancing in Academia, Professor Michael Brown for his talk on Navigating peer-review and the Public Engagement with Research team for the public engagement activity. This helped students to understand the importance of publishing in academia, getting an academic Job, demonstrating research impact and collaborative research.

It was important for research students to become increasingly aware of the wider research opportunity that is available within and beyond their research careers. The symposium also involved a bit of networking among the participants to increase student participation and confidence. As “writing for publication is a vital activity for academics” (McGrail et al., 2006: 19), this Symposium in addition to providing postgraduate students a great opportunity to present their work to colleagues from other disciplines they also learned the rudiments of publishing standard academic research work. This issue is hence, supported by short papers from three of the participants whose entry reflects multidisciplinary research in modern society. We are grateful to the postgraduate research school who have supported the organisation of this symposium. We hope to continue the interdisciplinary nature of the journal and strive for more interdisciplinary collaborative work in future. We also hope that the continuation of the symposium will provide PhD students exposure and more confidence to attain greater heights.

R E F E R E N C E S

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