



Empowering and Optimising Postgraduate Research: An In-Depth Exploration of the Impact of Writing Camps on Academic Writing Skills and Self-Efficacy

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ABSTRACT

The higher education landscape in South Africa is characterised by alarming levels of student attrition and the prolongation of academic programmes. The lack of proficient academic writing skills hinders their achievement and impacts their success rates. This study examined the transformative effects of postgraduate writing camps on students' academic writing skills and self-efficacy. This article drew its data from the larger project, 'Postgraduate Research Support for Enhanced Throughput', conducted by the Centre for Teaching and Learning at the North-West University (NWU), South Africa. Based on Halpern's four-part model of critical thinking, the research investigated the acquisition of skills, development of disposition, transfer of skills, and metacognitive processes in a sample of 50 postgraduate students. The findings revealed that writing camps effectively enhance language skills, encourage individual voices in academic discourse, and improve professional competence. A well-structured writing environment and effective feedback mechanisms play a crucial role in increasing productivity and satisfaction. Additionally, the study highlighted the acquisition of functional and self-management skills, including effective time management and collaborative interaction. The recommendation to target newly admitted postgraduate students emphasised the potential to address writing difficulties from the outset. The implications for supervisors and institutions include utilising the insights for mentoring practices, investing in conducive and structured settings, and integrating effective feedback mechanisms.

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INTRODUCTION

The challenge of student retention and throughput in higher education has been a prominent global issue since the 1960s and remains an ongoing concern worldwide.¹ In the past five decades, Australia, along with other English-speaking nations such as the United Kingdom (UK), United States of America (USA),

¹ R J Botha, "Student Throughput Trends on Postgraduate Level: An African Case Study," *The Independent Journal of Teaching and Learning* 13, no. 2 (2018): 53–66.

Canada, and South Africa, has witnessed a shift from exclusive to inclusive higher education, resulting in a more diverse student body.² The evolving demographic of students, together with the expectations from government bodies and employers, has heightened the significance of reading, writing, and other general academic skills and abilities.³ The challenges faced by many students in achieving academic success can be attributed to various potential factors. One possible explanation, among others, is the presence of inadequate or unsuitable academic literacy skills.⁴

It is widely accepted in academia that the skill of academic writing can be taught in a detached educational setting and subsequently applied across various subject areas.⁵ Contrary to the prevailing notion, this assertion lacks empirical support. Academic writing is a form of literacy that requires the acquisition and application of knowledge within a specific academic discipline.⁶ Engaging in postgraduate academic writing can be a complex and often innovative undertaking for students. Undoubtedly, the demands for extensive knowledge and comprehensive understanding, along with the various writing tasks such as critical evaluations of articles, scholarly papers, and grant proposals, necessitate fresh perspectives and enhanced expertise.⁷ The act of writing itself requires the utilisation of advanced cognitive abilities.

Competence in academic writing has emerged as a specific challenge at the postgraduate level.⁸ Therefore, significant government and Higher Education Council reports. For instance, an in-depth analysis of master's and doctoral degrees conferred in 2020 (Master's = 722, and Doctorate = 251) and 2021 (Master's = 698, and Doctorate = 264) at the North-West University (NWU), a traditional university in South Africa, revealed a notable decline compared to 2019 (Master's = 798, and Doctorate = 314).⁹ This decline indicates that a substantial portion of students who enrol in postgraduate programmes either do not successfully finish their studies or exceed the prescribed duration required for graduation. However, it is important to note that this decline does not solely account for issues related to writing and research literacies.

The article recognises the efforts of the Directorate for Faculty Teaching and Learning Support in the Centre for Teaching and Learning (CTL) through its established project, 'Postgraduate Research Support for Enhanced Throughput' (PGRS), to enhance the research skills of its students, with a particular focus on those who have exceeded the expected duration of their studies to increase throughput rates. The focus is on organised writing camps aimed at improving writing literacies and developing the necessary skills to compile and submit their dissertation and publications.

This article, therefore, aims to analyse the development of postgraduate academic writing skills. It specifically focuses on the progression from participating in writing camps to the eventual completion and submission of their dissertations at the master's and PhD levels for evaluation. The goal of the article is to uncover the acquisition and progression of academic writing skills among postgraduate research students through the instructional design of academic writing camps offered by the CTL at NWU.

² Gerald M Holder et al., "Academic Literacy Skills and Progression Rates amongst Pharmacy Students," *Higher Education Research & Development* 18, no. 1 (1999): 19–30; Christelle Lison, *Choisir Une Direction de Recherche: Quelles Stratégies. La Thèse Projet et Défi* (Montréal, Québec: Presses de l'Université de Montréal, 2016); R Somn, "The Challenge for a Historically Disadvantaged South African University to Produce More Postgraduate Students," *South African Journal of Higher Education* 30, no. 2 (2016): 226–41.

³ National Planning Commission (NPC), "National Development Plan 2030.," Beverley Thaver, Lorna Holtman, and Cyril Julie, "Inducting BEd Hons Students into a Research Culture and the World of Research: The Case of a Research Methods Course in the BEd Hons Programme: Part 2: Introductory Article," *South African Journal of Higher Education* 27, no. 5 (2013): 1135–48.

⁴ Holder et al., "Academic Literacy Skills and Progression Rates amongst Pharmacy Students"; Carol M Roberts, *The Dissertation Journey: A Practical and Comprehensive Guide to Planning, Writing, and Defending Your Dissertation* (Corwin Press, 2010); Christelle Lison and Annick Bourget, "Pourquoi Faire Une These? ," in *La Thèse. Un Guide Pour y Entrer... et s' En Sortir*, ed. Emmanuelle Bernheim and Pierre Noreau (Québec: Les Presses de l'Université de Montréal, 2016), 13–22; Algrenita Silvina Budjalemba and Listyani Listyani, "Factors Contributing to Students Difficulties in Academic Writing Class: Students Perceptions," *UC Journal: ELT, Linguistics and Literature Journal* 1, no. 2 (2020): 135–49.

⁵ Arlen Archer, "Challenges and Potentials for Writing Centres in South African Tertiary Institutions," *South African Journal of Higher Education* 24, no. 4 (2010): 497.

⁶ Elvira Rafaelevna Daminova, Veronika Vladimirovna Tarasova, and Anna Andreevna Kirpichnikova, "Academic Writing as a Key Component of Academic Literacy," *Turkish Online Journal of Design, Art and Communication* 7 (2017): 698–703.

⁷ Richard Bailey, "Student Writing and Academic Literacy Development at University," *Journal of Learning and Student Experience* 1, no. 7 (2018), 4.

⁸ Anna Pot and Albert Weideman, "Diagnosing Academic Language Ability: An Analysis of the Test of Academic Literacy for Postgraduate Students," *Language Matters* 46, no. 1 (January 2, 2015): 29, <https://doi.org/10.1080/10228195.2014.986665>.

⁹ Council on Higher Education. (CHE), *Vital Stats Public and Private Higher Education Data 2020* (South Africa: Council on Higher Education, 2022).

LITERATURE REVIEW

Higher Education and Postgraduate Studies

Higher education is constantly evolving to adapt to changes in society and advancements in technology. In the last five decades, there has been a noteworthy increase in the number of postgraduate students enrolling in both master's and doctoral programmes worldwide. According to the World Bank, the global number of postgraduate students has risen from 28.5 million in 1970 to 100 million in 2000, and further to 225 million in 2017.¹⁰ While higher education refers to study programmes offered by colleges and universities,¹¹ in the context of South Africa and other countries, postgraduate studies specifically refer to advanced academic pursuits that occur after the completion of a bachelor's degree. These postgraduate studies encompass honours (in some education systems), master's, and doctoral degrees.¹² However, this article focuses on master's and doctoral studies, as completion rates for these degrees are concerning in most countries.¹³

Contributing Factors to Writing Development Difficulties

There are several factors that contribute to the development of writing difficulties. These factors can be categorised into three main areas: cognitive, socio-emotional, and linguistic. *Cognitive* factors refer to the underlying cognitive processes involved in writing, including working memory and executive functions such as planning. The *socio-emotional* component refers to the cognitive processes involved in encoding, interpreting, and reasoning socio-emotional information. These cognitive processes are closely linked to an individual's self-sufficiency, self-understanding, moral development, and ability to communicate emotions.¹⁴ The systematic development and instruction of vocabulary, grammatical structures, and functions are essential in cultivating academic language proficiency which makes up the linguistic component.¹⁵

While writing plays a crucial role in English classes, academic writing often does not receive adequate emphasis. For example, writing instruction typically focuses heavily on grammatical rules and language precision, but places considerably less emphasis on process-oriented writing training.¹⁶ Several elements impact academic writing, including time limitations, metacognitive processes, co-regulation patterns, students' motivation levels, and proficiency in the English language.¹⁷ Other aspects of academic writing may include the need to effectively organise ideas, engage with opposing arguments, skilfully paraphrase source material, adeptly synthesise information, and succinctly summarise complex concepts.¹⁸

The preceding paragraph highlighted several aspects, and it is worth noting that factors such as student attitude and insufficient practice also exert significant influences. Like other language skills, writing demands active engagement and practice with the languages acquired. The acquisition of knowledge alone, without the application of practical skills, diminishes its significance for students.

¹⁰ World Bank, "School Enrollment, Tertiary (% Gross)," accessed October 12, 2023, <https://data.worldbank.org/indicator/se.ter.enrr>.

¹¹ Scientific and Cultural Organisation (UNESCO). United Nations Educational, "Draft Preliminary Report Concerning the Preparation of a Global Convention on The Recognition of Higher Education Qualification," accessed October 12, 2023, <https://unesdoc.unesco.org/ark:/48223/pf0000234743>.

¹² Yasmine Dominguez-Whitehead, "Evaluating Postgraduate Preparation in the South African Context," *Assessment & Evaluation in Higher Education* 40, no. 7 (2015): 914.

¹³ Botha, "Student Throughput Trends on Postgraduate Level: An African Case Study"; Morongwa A. Bopape, "Factors That Influence the Through-Put Rates of Masters Students at the University of Limpopo" (University of Limpopo, 2018), 19.

¹⁴ Carroll Izard et al., "Emotion Knowledge as a Predictor of Social Behavior and Academic Competence in Children at Risk," *Psychological Science* 12, no. 1 (2001): 20.

¹⁵ Colleen du Plessis, "Inferences from the Test of Academic Literacy for Postgraduate Students (TALPS)," *Southern African Linguistics and Applied Language Studies* 34, no. 1 (2016): 7.

¹⁶ Lindy Woodrow, "College English Writing Affect: Self-Efficacy and Anxiety," *System* 39, no. 4 (2011): 511.

¹⁷ du Plessis, "Inferences from the Test of Academic Literacy for Postgraduate Students (TALPS)"; Feng Teng and Jing Huang, "Predictive Effects of Writing Strategies for Self-Regulated Learning on Secondary School Learners' EFL Writing Proficiency," *Tesol Quarterly* 53, no. 1 (2019): 232-47.

¹⁸ Mark Feng Teng, "Interactive-Whiteboard-Technology-Supported Collaborative Writing: Writing Achievement, Metacognitive Activities, and Co-Regulation Patterns," *System* 97 (2021): 102426; Teng and Yue, "Metacognitive Writing Strategies, Critical Thinking Skills, and Academic Writing Performance: A Structural Equation Modeling Approach," 239.

Consequences of Inadequate Proficiency in Academic Writing

According to the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD), the dropout rates of postgraduate students in member states for PhD programmes across all disciplines have consistently fluctuated around the 50% mark, while for master's programmes, the rate is approximately 40%.¹⁹ Furthermore, a notable proportion of graduating students surpass the prescribed time frame for completing their studies, as evidenced by Litalien and Lison.²⁰ The phenomenon of students dropping out of postgraduate programmes and the extension of programme durations have significant social, financial, and human capital consequences for students, universities, governments, and funding agencies.²¹ These arguments have received support from numerous scholars across different regions, including the Southern African Development Community (SADC) and sub-Saharan Africa (SSA).²²

In Canada, it has been reported that a substantial proportion of students, ranging from 30 to 50%, do not successfully complete their studies and obtain a degree in masters and doctoral programmes.²³ On average, students pursuing a PhD in various fields usually require six years to successfully complete their studies, surpassing the anticipated duration of four years. This claim is corroborated by Botha, who found that only 60% of postgraduate students in the USA graduate within six years.²⁴

While the curriculum structure of PhD studies in the USA is research and module-based, a report by the Gouvernement du Québec highlights a notable trend in Quebec where a significant portion of students discontinue their studies after three years.²⁵ This pattern becomes particularly evident when students enter the stage of thesis writing, after completing mandatory coursework and the acquisition of research data. The cumulative graduation rates in South African higher education institutions (excluding the University of South Africa [UNISA]) for 2016, 2018, and 2020 were 75%, 81%, and 82%, respectively, while the dropout rate remained constant at 18%.²⁶ The researchers argue that a significant part of the low throughput and dropout can be attributed to a lack of academic writing skills within their respective disciplines.

Intervention Programme

In response to the challenges, the CTL at the NWU, South Africa, established the PGRS project. The project organises academic writing camps for postgraduate students. This initiative aims to assist postgraduate students who encounter difficulties in the realm of academic writing in order to enhance and expedite their academic writing skills. Specifically, the purpose of the programme is to facilitate the acquisition of skills and provide support to postgraduate students, particularly those who have exceeded the stipulated "time-to-degree-completion" for masters and doctoral studies due to challenges encountered during the writing process of their theses/dissertations. Thus, writing camps are integral to the attainment of these goals. Conducted three times a year, students gain access through motivation provided by their supervisors.

The project commenced in 2021 and continued until 2023. There are notable distinctions between CTL writing camps and traditional academic writing retreats. The latter requires attendees to promptly

¹⁹ Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD), "Tertiary Graduation Rate," accessed October 10, 2023, <https://data.oecd.org/students/tertiary-graduation-rate.htm>.

²⁰ David Litalien, "Persévérance Aux Études de Doctorat (Ph.D): Modèle Prédicatif Des Intentions d'abandon" (Université Laval, 2014); Lison and Bourget, "Pourquoi Faire Une These? "; Christelle Lison, "Et Si l'encadrement Des Étudiants Au Troisième Cycle Universitaire Devenait Une Priorité?," *Charles Dionne*, n.d., 375.

²¹ Anton Styger, Gary Van Vuuren, and Andre Heymans, "Case Study Of Postgraduate Student Dropout Rate At South African Universities," *International Business & Economics Research Journal (IBER)* 14, no. 1 (December 23, 2014): 1, <https://doi.org/10.19030/iber.v14i1.9027>; Jarno Einolander and Hannu Vanharanta, "Assessment of Student Retention Using the Evolute Approach, an Overview," *Procedia Manufacturing* 3 (2015): 581–86.

²² Temesgen Zewotir, Delia North, and Mike Murray, "The Time to Degree or Dropout amongst Full-Time Master's Students at University of KwaZulu-Natal," *South African Journal of Science* 111, no. 9/10 (September 25, 2015): 6, <https://doi.org/10.17159/sajs.2015/20140298>; Uduak Imo Ekpoh, "Postgraduate Studies: The Challenges of Research and Thesis Writing," *Journal of Educational and Social Research* 6, no. 3 (2016): 67–74; Bopape, "Factors That Influence the Through-Put Rates of Masters Students at the University of Limpopo."

²³ Association Canadienne pour les études Supérieures, "L'achèvement Des Études Supérieures Dans Les Universités Canadiennes: Association Canadienne Pour Les Études SUPÉRIEURES Rapport et Recommandations." (Ottawa, Canada, 2004), http://www.cags.ca/documents/publications/working/achevement_etudes_supe_2004.pdf.

²⁴ Botha, "Student Throughput Trends on Postgraduate Level: An African Case Study," 54.

²⁵ Gouvernement du Québec, "Indicateurs de l'éducation" (Montreal, QC.), accessed October 10, 2023, <https://www.education.gouv.qc.ca/references/indicateurs-et-statistiques/indicateurs>.

²⁶ Council on Higher Education. (CHE), *Vital Stats Public and Private Higher Education Data 2020*, 115.

produce scholarly journal publications upon their return to their respective universities.²⁷ CTL writing camps do not impose overly stringent requirements. However, their primary objective is to optimise students' writing proficiency by adopting various techniques including Pomodoro sessions, thereby enhancing their overall research aptitude, and guiding them toward successful professional trajectories beyond the scope of their degree requirements. The Pomodoro Technique is a method of managing time that consists of five-minute pauses interspersed with 25-minute segments of concentrated effort.²⁸

THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

The theoretical framework chosen for this study is Halpern's four-part model.²⁹ This model comprises a dispositional or attitudinal component, instructional practice with critical thinking skills, structured training activities, and a metacognitive component used for directing and evaluating thinking. Halpern integrates these four components into the definition of critical thinking. According to Halpern, critical thinking refers to the use of cognitive skills or strategies that increase the likelihood of achieving a desired outcome.³⁰ Halpern also characterises critical thinking as purposeful, reasoned, goal-directed, and engaged in activities such as problem-solving, making inferences, assessing probabilities, and decision-making. The definition further specifies that the thinker must employ appropriate skills for a specific "context" and "type of thinking task."³¹ Halpern's initial two points outline specific content to be taught to enhance critical thinking skills. In the last two, Halpern presents a methodology for instruction; specifically, how to structure the teaching process to ensure effective learning and practical application when necessary.

Part 1: Overt Teaching/Learning

The initial component of the paradigm involves explicit instruction and the acquisition of critical thinking abilities.³² Halpern suggests the following skill areas for guiding instruction: (a) proficiency in verbal reasoning; (b) the ability to analyse arguments; (c) the capacity to confirm hypotheses; (d) competence in dealing with probability and uncertainty; and (e) adeptness in decision-making and problem-solving. Critical thinking skills are ontologies and epistemologies derived from the research study area and its associated discipline-based inquiry methods. Students enter the programme with prior knowledge and a range of thoughts through developmental plans. The project develops the critical skills necessary for successful writing through its instructional design of the writing camps.

Part 2: Developing disposition and attitude

The second aspect of the approach pertains to cultivating the mindset of a critical thinker. It is crucial to differentiate between the ability to think critically and the inclination to utilise these talents. The dispositional component is crucial as it determines whether those with exceptional skills will truly utilise them. Halpern identifies several dispositions, including: (a) the inclination to fully engage and persevere in a challenging task; (b) a predisposition to carefully plan and resist impulsive behaviour; (c) adaptability and fairness; and (d) the willingness to discard ineffective techniques, among others.³³ Halpern suggests that these attitudes form the foundation of any thinking that increases the likelihood of achieving goals

²⁷ Ian H Stanley et al., "Increasing Research Productivity and Professional Development in Psychology with a Writing Retreat.," *Scholarship of Teaching and Learning in Psychology* 3, no. 3 (2017): 251; Joanne Noone and Heather M Young, "Creating a Community of Writers: Participant Perception of the Impact of a Writing Retreat on Scholarly Productivity," *Journal of Professional Nursing* 35, no. 1 (2019): 66.

²⁸ Gobbo, Federico and Vaccari, Matteo, "The Pomodoro Technique for Sustainable Pace in Extreme Programming Teams". In: Abrahamsson, P., Baskerville, R., Conboy, K., Fitzgerald, B., Morgan, L., Wang, X. (eds) *Agile Processes in Software Engineering and Extreme Programming. XP* (2008). Lecture Notes in Business Information Processing, vol 9, p. 12. Springer, Berlin, Heidelberg. https://doi.org/10.1007/978-3-540-68255-4_18

²⁹ Diane F Halpern, "Teaching Critical Thinking for Transfer across Domains: Disposition, Skills, Structure Training, and Metacognitive Monitoring.," *American Psychologist* 53, no. 4 (1998): 449; Diane F Halpern, *Thought and Knowledge: An Introduction to Critical Thinking* (Psychology press, 2013):18.

³⁰ Halpern, "Teaching Critical Thinking for Transfer across Domains: Disposition, Skills, Structure Training, and Metacognitive Monitoring," 450.

³¹ Halpern, *Thought and Knowledge: An Introduction to Critical Thinking*, 22.

³² Halpern, *Thought and Knowledge: An Introduction to Critical Thinking*, 19.

³³ Halpern, "Teaching Critical Thinking for Transfer across Domains: Disposition, Skills, Structure Training, and Metacognitive Monitoring," 452.

and resolving difficulties.³⁴ The likelihood of students being able to develop these dispositions is tested during the camp when they are expected to engage in discussion activities and interact with advising specialists who, in turn, can determine if they have developed the dispositions to apply the critical thinking skills needed to progress.

Part 3: Transfer skill

Halpern's third section delves into the transfer of crucial abilities among students. The ultimate objective of teaching critical thinking is not only for students to comprehend and utilise the skills or techniques taught, but also for them to be able to apply them in new contexts when necessary.³⁵ According to Halpern, in order for students to effectively transfer skills, they must move beyond the specific details of a given subject and instead focus on recognising the underlying structure of a problem or argument.³⁶ It is this recognition that will activate the thinking skill required for application. Halpern provides the following recommendations: (a) prioritise the significance of the structural elements of issues and arguments; (b) foster the habit of practice; (c) provide feedback for improvement; and (d) stimulate the effective expansion of knowledge in memory.³⁷ At this level, it is crucial to comprehend the discipline and current discourses to effectively apply research skills for improving writing.

Part 4: Track the Effectiveness of Thinking

Ultimately, the fourth section requires students to utilise metacognition to oversee and assess the effectiveness of their cognitive processes.³⁸ Halpern's definition and model prominently emphasise the importance of decisions, goals, and problem resolution.

METHODOLOGY

The study cohort comprised N=70 students who had participated in the CTL writing camp between 2021 and 2023. However, only n=49 students agreed to participate in the interviews. These interviews were conducted as part of the PGRS project, which also included other activities such as workshops on critical junctures for master's and doctoral studies, as well as referrals and walk-ins to postgraduate hubs. The interviews were conducted in the form of seven focus group interviews at every camp, which took place over a three-year period. Voluntary participation was granted and informed consent was obtained prior to the commencement of the research.

The group of participants included postgraduate students from various academic disciplines, such as microbiology, nursing, law, engineering, education, environmental science, and English literature. The racial composition of the group consisted of individuals from both Black and White ethnic backgrounds.

In this study, an interview protocol was employed to collect data from the focus groups, which were audio recorded. The interviews were conducted in English to minimise potential miscommunication. Following the interviews, the recordings were transcribed. The interview format utilised a semi-structured approach, providing students the opportunity to express their viewpoints while also enabling the researchers to ask clarifying questions on the subject matter.

Thematic analysis was used to analyse the data, following the six steps proposed by Braun and Clarke, namely: reading the transcripts for understanding, generating initial codes, identifying, and exploring themes, reviewing, and refining the themes, defining, and naming the themes, linking the codes and categories to the themes, and finally, producing a report.³⁹

PRESENTATION OF FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

Four themes emerged in the study, namely: acquisition of academic writing skills and advancement, Contentment with a well-organised writing setting (structure, organisation, and composition of the camp), Mechanism for receiving feedback on evaluation increases motivation, and other acquired skills – functional and self-management. These are described in more detail below.

³⁴ Halpern, *Thought and Knowledge: An Introduction to Critical Thinking*, 21.

³⁵ Halpern, *Thought and Knowledge: An Introduction to Critical Thinking*, 25.

³⁶ Halpern, *Thought and Knowledge: An Introduction to Critical Thinking*, 26.

³⁷ Halpern, *Thought and Knowledge: An Introduction to Critical Thinking*, 21.

³⁸ Halpern, *Thought and Knowledge: An Introduction to Critical Thinking*, 27.

³⁹ Virginia Braun and Victoria Clarke, "Using Thematic Analysis in Psychology," *Qualitative Research in Psychology* 3, no. 2 (2006): 87.

Theme I: Acquisition of Academic Writing Skills and Advancement

Academic writing is a crucial skill that postgraduate students are taught as part of their socialisation into the academic community of practice. Based on the findings from the interview, it was established that specific skills were acquired through the instructional design of the writing camp. The following skills are elaborated upon in subsequent sections:

(a) Specialised knowledge (language skill and the golden thread): All participants confirmed that they received instruction in basic language abilities, including vocabulary, grammar, and the structure and usage of words, as evident in the participants' excerpts below:

The first was training exercises and feedback from experts in the field where they taught us how to write properly, how to communicate and how to write and speak and communicate in a specific genre (Participant 9).

Ja, I wanted to talk based on the teachings on how to write. The teachings done by you, by Dr R! The information we've had, the materials we were given you know. I was able to get things from them on how to make my own writing better... The other day, ..., one thing leading to another. That one now is going to stick. I'm not going to forget about him in no time. So that is one thing I'll always be thinking of when I'm writing and all.... (Participant 14).

The term "R" used by the participant refers to the designation of a faculty member who served as a facilitator and shared their expertise with the students during the camp. This individual is recognised as an experienced researcher, productive writer, and skilled educator, holding a doctoral degree. Dr "R", who also led the writing camp, imparted his expertise and instilled essential critical thinking skills in the participants. The effectiveness of this teaching and learning process aligns with Halpern's perspective on teaching and learning. It involves transferring critical thinking methods rather than relying on traditional approaches used in many fields to teach subject matter. Consequently, the objective of enhancing trans-contextual thinking skills and cultivating students' awareness and ability to guide their own thinking and learning, as defined by Halpern, was successfully achieved.⁴⁰

As noted by several researchers, student writers encounter challenges in areas such as language proficiency, proficient organisation of ideas, and concise summarisation of complex concepts.⁴¹ However, through the instruction provided at the writing camps, many students have been able to overcome these obstacles. Writing camps, such as the one mentioned in Castle and Keane's work,⁴² have played a significant role in establishing these skills. For instance, the participants acknowledge that the skill of directed or guided writing, which involves maintaining a coherent and logical flow in their written work, is something they have gained. This aligns with Halpern's argument that individuals capable of critical thinking can effectively articulate a persuasive and cohesive thesis on a contentious and current topic.⁴³ Several of these skills were acquired through instructional materials, such as the 'writing videos' and the 'academic phrase bank' that were distributed. This resource is a compilation of several academic phrases that can be freely utilised to enhance the vocabulary and grammar of student writers, particularly those engaged in academic writing.

(b) Lending your own voice: Participants also expressed that they acquired the ability to include their perspectives in their written work. This is often referred to as the writer's voice.

I managed to acquire valuable skills on how to improve my academic writing. The major one was how to insert my voice in my writing (Participant 23).

In this writing camp, I have been able to understand the fundamental ways in which I can write. I am now able to worry less about perfection but focus on being able to put something down in the

⁴⁰ Halpern, "Teaching Critical Thinking for Transfer across Domains: Disposition, Skills, Structure Training, and Metacognitive Monitoring," 450-451.

⁴¹ du Plessis, "Inferences from the Test of Academic Literacy for Postgraduate Students (TALPS)"; Teng, "Interactive-Whiteboard-Technology-Supported Collaborative Writing: Writing Achievement, Metacognitive Activities, and Co-Regulation Patterns."

⁴² M Keane, "Quiet Writing: Retreat as Pedagogy," *South African Journal of Higher Education* 31, no. 2 (2017): 138.

⁴³ Halpern, *Thought and Knowledge*: 18.

best way I know how. Finding my voice and getting a flow has been a struggle, but now through the engagements, presentations, and guidelines, I have been able to slowly start getting my way there (Participant 24).

The participants' statements support Halpern's assertion that mastery of verbal reasoning and the capacity to examine arguments are the foundational elements in the explicit education and acquisition of specific critical thinking skills.⁴⁴

Firstly, attending the writing camp was a blessing. I managed to re-write chapter one by using my own voice, which is a very important skill I will cherish forever (Participant 30).

By verbalising their thoughts, students can actively engage in the discussion within a particular discipline, thus presenting arguments supported by evidence from their specific field of study. According to Halpern's theory, effectively transmitting skills to students necessitates a focus on comprehending the fundamental structure of an argument, as discussed in the third component of Halpern's four-part model.⁴⁵ Recognising this aspect stimulates the cognitive abilities needed for practical application. For a student to make a meaningful contribution, it is crucial to possess a thorough understanding of the argument. Learning this specific skill has proven to be beneficial for students in their academic pursuits and beyond, as evidenced by a participant who stated, "...which is very important skills I will cherish forever" (Participant 30).

(c) Professional competence (self-evaluation and confidence): Multiple attendees affirmed that they also gained professional proficiency as both a talent and a tool for their academic writing during the writing retreat. This is demonstrated by the following excerpts:

I hope the confidence gained from the writing camp will also help me to publish journal articles after all my dissertation has been accepted. That will be a dream reached (Participant 37).

The time spent at the writing camp has given me invaluable skills and confidence in academic writing (Participant 4).

Confidence instilled in the students made them critical thinkers who now have the ability to evaluate the evidence in support of a conclusion as well as that which refutes it. Critical thinkers consider factors such as the relative strength of different types of evidence, the reliability of information sources, the influence of language on cognitive processes, and other relevant considerations.⁴⁶ The previously mentioned passages specifically relate to the level of confidence, whereas the subsequent excerpts are connected to the element of self-evaluation.

The writing camp provided me with time to re-organise my thoughts and create milestones I wish to accomplish. It also motivated me to again, re-evaluate my planning and set new deadlines (Participant 12).

Ideally: rewrite chapter one and sort which would be discussed in chapters one and two without repeating the published article (in chapter four) (Participant 45).

I got the opportunity to organise my thoughts and re-evaluate where I am currently with my PhD – and where I want to be and what I need to do to get there (Participant 7).

These excerpts clearly demonstrate that the participants have progressed from being inexperienced student researchers in terms of their academic writing skills to becoming more introspective and proficient at identifying their writing weaknesses. This change in behaviour can be explained by Halpern's fourth

⁴⁴ Halpern, *Thought and Knowledge: An Introduction to Critical Thinking*, 19.

⁴⁵ Halpern, *Thought and Knowledge: An Introduction to Critical Thinking*, 25.

⁴⁶ Diane F. Halpern and Heather A. Butler, "Teaching Critical Thinking as If Our Future Depends on It, Because It Does," in *The Cambridge Handbook of Cognition and Education*, ed. John Dunlosky and Katherine A. Rawson (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2019), 53.

component, which reveals that students ultimately use metacognition to observe and assess the effectiveness of their cognitive processes.⁴⁷ The process of self-evaluation is influenced by Halpern's assertion that critical thinking involves assessing various aspects used to reach a conclusion.⁴⁸

Regarding skill advancement, it is important to note that acquiring the skills is not enough; applying these skills after the camp is also crucial. Typically, students attending the camp do not complete their research work within the five-day period. The expectation is that they can apply the skills they have learned to complete their work. The fourth section, "Track the effectiveness of thinking", requires students to use metacognition to monitor and evaluate the efficiency of their cognitive processes. To assess the progress of the students after the camp, CTL conducted follow-up interviews with some of the participants. During the interviews, several participants confirmed that they have continued to utilise the skills they acquired in their respective cohorts at the writing camp. These skills include critical thinking, free writing, Pomodoro sessions, and expressing their perspectives in their written work.

This writing camp has been one of the best opportunities that I have had in my research journey as I was able to come out of my roadblock and have a different view on how to go about everything I need when it comes to writing (Participant 47).

The excerpt above suggests that the participant acquired extensive knowledge during their time at the writing camp. It is believed that these newly acquired skills will prove beneficial for their future academic pursuits. Furthermore, the participant mentioned that they applied these skills in the writing of their dissertations, which were subsequently submitted for examination, as well as in the creation of journal articles for publication. It is worth noting that while some participants have completed their programmes or successfully graduated, others are still in the process of completing their studies.

Theme II: Contentment with a well-organised writing setting (structure, organisation, and composition of the camp)

An assessment of the students perspective on the structure and organisation of the writing camp revealed that most participants expressed satisfaction. They opined that the camp significantly contributed to their success, particularly in terms of acquiring the essential skills for academic writing. Presented below are excerpts from the participants' feedback pertaining to the structure and organisation of the camp:

...that being said, we also had the second facet which is where we are disciplined, in a conducive setting for writing and doing well focused work and thereby completing tasks and eventually finishing our dissertation or thesis or even a scientific article (Participant 20).

Overall, I was able to work in a focused and more organised manner for longer than I have in a long time! (Participant 29).

These attributes are derived from the findings of Listyani.⁴⁹ In her study on process writing, Listyani discovered that students exhibit a preference for learning in a conducive environment and within optimal time periods. This preference is attributed to its positive influence on their motivation and the facilitation of idea development.⁵⁰

It's been a worthwhile experience, thank you to the organisers and the management for making this possible. I doubt I would have completed everything in this short space of time (Participant 35).

In summary, the participants enthusiastically endorsed the activities at the writing camps, acknowledging a substantial improvement in the acquisition of various skills. They reported notable progress in their ongoing dissertation preparations and conveyed their intention to submit their dissertations for examination by the end of the year. The following are excerpts from participants

⁴⁷ Halpern, *Thought and Knowledge: An Introduction to Critical Thinking*, 27.

⁴⁸ Halpern, "Teaching Critical Thinking for Transfer across Domains: Disposition, Skills, Structure Training, and Metacognitive Monitoring," 451.

⁴⁹ AWEJ Listyani, "Enhancing Academic Writing Skills through 'Reading to Learn' Strategy," *Arab World English Journal (AWEJ)* 9, no. 1 (2018): 276.

⁵⁰ Jane Castle and Moyra Keane, "'It Was an Oasis in a Busy Life, a Busy City': The Centre for Learning, Teaching and Development Writing Retreat," *Journal of Education*, no. 66 (2017): 207–25.

expressing satisfaction with the organisation of the writing camp and its positive impact on their academic progress:

I think it was very relevant. The programme had a sort of focused environment in the sense of Pomodoro sessions. We were able to focus on reading and writing and so forth and so on. But then I also enjoyed the learning element of the programme. So those videos that we were watching, on how to build your argument, how to keep your reading journal. So, I think it was very relevant because it touched on every single sphere that forms part of your postgraduate study (Participant 50).

The goal is to submit my dissertation and graduate during the next graduation phase (Participant 2).

Murray underscores the importance of establishing a regular and disciplined practice during writing camps in the book titled, *Writing in Social Spaces*.⁵¹ Implementing a predefined schedule that dedicates time for writing enhances the overall efficacy of the retreat endeavour. Regarding the composition of these writing camps, it is advisable to include a blend of university professors, seasoned educators, and students, as previously suggested by Garside et al.⁵² This composition lends itself to enhanced guidance and expertise.

Theme III: Mechanism for receiving feedback on evaluation increases motivation

Finally, I realised that I am not alone in my struggle to complete my post-graduate studies. Mentally, I'm now in a better space and am motivated [with a plan] to complete my PhD this year. I also enjoyed the conversations we had with each other and learned from my fellow writing camp colleagues (Participant 11).

I received credible feedback and suggestions from a mentor who was attending the camp and completed it last night. I was motivated to submit the manuscript to an international nursing journal, currently registering on the referred journal and plan to submit it before I leave the camp (Participant 31).

Seeking feedback from knowledgeable individuals enhances the confidence of student writers, particularly when the critique is constructive rather than harmful, as it may impact their self-confidence. Halpern emphasises the transfer of essential skills. The goal of teaching critical thinking is twofold: to facilitate students' understanding and application of the taught abilities or strategies, and to empower them to employ these skills in unfamiliar contexts as necessary. To tackle this concern, Halpern offers several suggestions, such as providing feedback for the purpose of improvement.⁵³

I got to write, rewrite and rewrite Chapter 1 and got valuable feedback from a critical [concerned] reader [thank you, M!]. Managed to adapt according to the feedback provided (Participant 22).

The quote suggests that the expert supported the student's belief in their ability to succeed in various ways. First and foremost, they imparted valuable and superior knowledge that the student could apply during the revision of the chapter. This feedback also aided the student in developing proficiency in writing activities that were initially challenging. The student's statement – *'I got to write, rewrite and rewrite...'* – further confirms Halpern's recommendation of consistent practice, as outlined in the third component of her model.⁵⁴ This also aligns with the conclusion reached by Grabe and Kaplan, who stated that the writing process does not occur spontaneously; rather, it requires dedicated effort and deliberate practice.⁵⁵ As students engage in continuous practice, their proficiency in skills increases proportionally.

⁵¹ Rowena Murray, *Writing in Social Spaces: A Social Processes Approach to Academic Writing* (Routledge, 2014).

⁵² Joanne Garside et al., "Developing a Culture of Publication: A Joint Enterprise Writing Retreat," *Journal of Applied Research in Higher Education* 7, no. 2 (2015): 434.

⁵³ Halpern, *Thought and Knowledge: An Introduction to Critical Thinking*, 27.

⁵⁴ Halpern, *Thought and Knowledge: An Introduction to Critical Thinking*, 25.

⁵⁵ William Grabe and Robert B. Kaplan, *Theory and Practice of Writing: An Applied Linguistic Perspective* (London: Routledge, 2014), 6.

Furthermore, as noted by Weaver et al., an organised writing camp can streamline the writing process by incorporating consultations with subject experts and peers, predetermined writing assignments, and peer feedback on initial drafts, thus enhancing the effectiveness of writing.⁵⁶ This assertion is supported by other scholars who have highlighted that writing workshops can boost the confidence and motivation of both academic and student writers by providing platforms for discussion and feedback on writing.⁵⁷ Additionally, these workshops can equip participants with the necessary skills to confront challenges rather than avoid them.

On the other hand, the participants were asked to assess the extent to which the facilitators fulfilled their roles and met their expectations. The prevailing consensus among the participants was that topic leaders displayed outstanding performance and executed their duties exceptionally well, as noted below:

Talking about the delivery method, personally, I appreciated the whole thing. Why? Because for me personally, I am not an abstract- I don't like learning in abstracts. I love to see things. Tell me this, show me, I take it in. It sinks into me. So, watching the video alongside you know, the presenters talking, went a very long way. One thing I appreciate most about the presenters is that they are experienced and knowledgeable people. They knew what they were talking about, and they were able to deliver the message right (Participant 14).

This solidifies the notion that the transfer of abilities and the corresponding aptitude were executed flawlessly. These traits depend on Halpern's second and third components of the four-part model – fostering inclination and attitude and transferring skills.

Theme IV: Other acquired skills – functional and self-management

In addition to the foundational skills and specialised knowledge obtained by postgraduate students during the writing camps, the observed skills acquired can be categorised as functional and self-management skills. These acquired skills include but are not limited to, maintaining a reading log and developing strong interaction and communication skills.

Participant 10's comment, “Gained more insight on “soft skills” that will also help my future post-grad students”, affirmed the acquisition of soft skills and their potential benefits, not just for herself but also for a wider community.

(a) Interaction with peers

I'm busy writing a proposal for PhD in bioinformatics when I consult with people who are doing biology, it becomes helpful to my line of study as I gain insights into how I can make my study better (Participant 38).

.... I also enjoyed the conversations we had with each other and learned from my fellow writing camp colleagues. Besides, I now feel that we are all going through similar challenges (Participant 15).

The mindset of a student plays a significant role in their ability to solve problems and ultimately achieve goals. As stated by Halpern, these attitudes form the foundation for cognitive processes that increase the likelihood of attaining objectives and overcoming challenges.⁵⁸ For instance, one participant in this category successfully overcame the challenge of developing a PhD proposal in bioinformatics by engaging in discussions with peers in the same field. Additionally, the second passage indicates that the student experienced a sense of relief upon realising that she was not alone in facing academic difficulties, which has now motivated her to overcome these challenges.

⁵⁶ Debbi Weaver, Diane Robbie, and Alex Radloff, “Demystifying the Publication Process—a Structured Writing Program to Facilitate Dissemination of Teaching and Learning Scholarship,” *International Journal for Academic Development* 19, no. 3 (2014): 219.

⁵⁷ Sarah Moore, Maura Murphy, and Rowena Murray, “Increasing Academic Output and Supporting Equality Of Career Opportunity in Universities: Can Writers’ Retreats Play a Role?,” *The Journal of Faculty Development* 24, no. 3 (2010): 21–30; Claire Aitchison and Alison Lee, “Research Writing: Problems and Pedagogies,” *Teaching in Higher Education* 11, no. 3 (2006): 273.

⁵⁸ Halpern, *Thought and Knowledge: An Introduction to Critical Thinking*, 22.

According to MacLeod et al., participating in an academic writing camp provides extra time for writing, coupled with the opportunity to collaborate with other scholars who share research goals.⁵⁹ Building a climate of trust and support involves creating a shared vision and common objectives,⁶⁰ as well as fostering social cohesion among individuals with similar experiences.^{61,62} It is evident that humans are inherently social beings, and therefore, functioning in isolation is not conducive to success. Establishing connections and interacting with others is imperative, as the well-known quote by John Donne suggests, "no one is self-sufficient; everyone relies on others". Our inclination to engage with colleagues regarding our work determines what we gain from these interactions. Furthermore, Budjalemba and Listyani, in their study, also found that many students choose to collaborate with their peers or work in groups as a strategy to overcome academic difficulties.⁶³

(b) Keeping a reading journal

Being taught to use the journal has also helped me for this week. I used the journal to write my thesis (argument) in the size of a matchbox. This skill has helped me with my writing thus far so that I do not derail as I continue writing (Participant 36).

Based on the above quotation, the participants' acquisition of skills significantly influences their ability to maintain focus on the subject matter and resist distractions. Many students struggle to stay focused on the line of argument, leading to writing errors. The participants acknowledged the potential benefits of keeping a journal, particularly those who faced challenges in writing accurately and maintaining a clear focus in their written work. This supports Halpern's model, which emphasises the importance of prioritising the relevance of structural elements in issues and arguments, as well as the effectiveness of students' cognitive processes. In alignment with Halpern's argument on metacognitive monitoring, which suggests that students must actively monitor their cognitive processes during critical thinking, it is crucial to ensure progress toward a suitable objective while avoiding any deviation. Moreover, students should prioritise accuracy and make deliberate choices regarding the allocation of their time and mental energy.⁶⁴ It can be inferred that keeping a reading journal can assist students in monitoring their metacognitive abilities.

(c) Time management, commitment, and attitude

Got inspiration, from 'burning desire' [thank you, R!], to dedicate time to work at least 2,5 hours per day, to give my best attempt to hand it in before 25 November (Participant 49).

On a more personal note, I learnt that my children and household can survive without me for a few days at a time – they should do so more often (Participant 27).

Time management is a challenge faced by many postgraduate students, as noted by Itua et al., due to various commitments such as employment and family responsibilities.⁶⁵ However, the participants at the writing camp were able to acquire a significant amount of knowledge on effective time management, as evidenced by the quote. During the writing camp, students receive guidance on setting specific

⁵⁹ Iain MacLeod, Laura Steckley, and Rowena Murray, "Time Is Not Enough: Promoting Strategic Engagement with Writing for Publication," *Studies in Higher Education* 37, no. 6 (2012): 642.

⁶⁰ Melissa M. Patchan and Christian D. Schunn, "Understanding the Benefits of Providing Peer Feedback: How Students Respond to Peers' Texts of Varying Quality," *Instructional Science* 43, no. 5 (September 30, 2015): 607, <https://doi.org/10.1007/s11251-015-9353-x>; Castle and Keane, "It Was an Oasis in a Busy Life, a Busy City": The Centre for Learning, Teaching and Development Writing Retreat," 221.

⁶¹ Kornhaber, Rachel, Merylin Cross, Vasiliki Betihavas, and Heather Bridgman, "The Benefits and Challenges of Academic Writing Retreats: An Integrative Review," *Higher Education Research & Development* 35 (2016): 1221; Bart Huisman, Nadira Saab, Paul van den Broek, and Jan van Driel, "The Impact of Formative Peer Feedback on Higher Education Students' Academic Writing: A Meta-Analysis," *Assessment & Evaluation in Higher Education* 44 (2019): 875.

⁶² Rachel Kornhaber et al., "The Benefits and Challenges of Academic Writing Retreats: An Integrative Review," *Higher Education Research & Development* 35, no. 6 (2016): 1221; Bart Huisman et al., "The Impact of Formative Peer Feedback on Higher Education Students' Academic Writing: A Meta-Analysis," *Assessment & Evaluation in Higher Education* 44, no. 6 (2019): 875.

⁶³ Budjalemba and Listyani, "Factors Contributing to Students Difficulties in Academic Writing Class: Students Perceptions," 146.

⁶⁴ Halpern, "Teaching Critical Thinking for Transfer across Domains: Disposition, Skills, Structure Training, and Metacognitive Monitoring," 27.

⁶⁵ Imose Itua et al., "Exploring Barriers and Solutions to Academic Writing: Perspectives from Students, Higher Education and Further Education Tutors," *Journal of Further and Higher Education* 38, no. 3 (2014): 315.

objectives and are motivated through a series of activities, including Pomodoro sessions, to help them achieve their goals. The students' motivation to succeed is enhanced by their preparedness and proficiency in essential abilities. This is supported by Halpern's second component of the theoretical framework, which mandates the propensity to employ skills.⁶⁶

The attendance of this workshop has been a saving grace in my research journey. It has given me a renewed sense of hope in completing my writing and submitting a thesis that I can truly be proud to have my name associated with (Participant 18).

Students' ability to utilise skills effectively hinges on their temperament, as emphasised by Halpern.⁶⁷ These temperaments include commitment and perseverance in writing tasks, careful planning, avoiding impulsive habits, working with passion, and being willing to abandon unproductive techniques. These attitudes form the foundation for any thinking that improves the likelihood of achieving goals and addressing problems. A study conducted by Maddock and Maroun found that learners' success depends on their ability to exert effort and their disposition.⁶⁸ Halpern and Butler further state that developing a critical thinker's disposition or mindset is a crucial aspect of the critical thinking process.⁶⁹ Optimal thinkers are driven and prepared to apply deliberate effort to complete tasks, verify information, collect data, and persist in situations where the solution is elusive or requires multiple stages. Individuals possessing critical thinking skills are more likely to achieve positive outcomes compared to those lacking such skills. This statement aligns with Halpern's findings, illustrating that individuals with critical thinking abilities attain higher levels of success.⁷⁰

Discussion Summary

The investigation into postgraduate writing camps has revealed a nuanced and impactful landscape, marked by notable developments in academic writing skills, self-efficacy, and overall student well-being. The study illuminated the pivotal role of writing camps in imparting essential language skills, fostering individual voices in academic discourse, and enhancing the professional competence of postgraduate students. The structured and supportive writing environment has emerged as a critical factor, contributing to increased productivity and satisfaction among participants. Furthermore, the feedback mechanisms within the camps, whether from mentors or peers, have played a pivotal role in shaping students' confidence and refining their academic work. The acquisition of additional functional and self-management skills, such as effective time management and collaborative interaction, underscores the holistic impact of writing camps on postgraduate students.

It is unsettling to see the "skills gap" that exists among postgraduate students. Writing camps can be a practical and exciting developmental context for research supervisors who are interested in finding ways to help postgraduate students build abilities, so they are ready for both postgraduate studies and academia. This study bolsters the idea that writing camps can be a beneficial way to support postgraduate students in developing the fundamental skills required to succeed in their early onset research journey and in the industry.

The study confirms that camps can be a source of experiential learning for writing skills development. The participant's physical, emotional, and cognitive engagement—all of which are required by application and practice—was evident in the interviews as they acquired new knowledge and skills in the instructional learning design of the camp.

RECOMMENDATION

It is essential to specifically target newly admitted postgraduate students for participation in writing camps, rather than solely focusing on those who are nearing the completion of their research report. This approach ensures that students gain the necessary skills early on to address writing difficulties associated with

⁶⁶ Halpern, *Thought and Knowledge: An Introduction to Critical Thinking*, 18.

⁶⁷ Halpern, *Thought and Knowledge: An Introduction to Critical Thinking*, 20.

⁶⁸ L Maddock and W Maroun, "Exploring the Present State of South African Education: Challenges and Recommendations," *South African Journal of Higher Education* 32, no. 2 (2018): 201.

⁶⁹ Halpern and Butler, "Teaching Critical Thinking as If Our Future Depends on It, Because It Does," 22.

⁷⁰ Halpern, "Teaching Critical Thinking for Transfer across Domains: Disposition, Skills, Structure Training, and Metacognitive Monitoring," 19.

dropout, retention, and throughputs from the onset of their research work. In addition, support structures are to work closely with research entities to develop a standard writing camp opportunity as part of university planning to support its students.

CONCLUSION

These findings have profound implications for supervisors and institutional support structures in the context of postgraduate studies. Supervisors, as influential figures in students' academic journeys, can utilise the insights from this study to enhance their mentoring practices. Implementing peer support systems within departments can counteract the potential isolation experienced by postgraduate students, fostering a sense of validation and support. Integrating regular free-writing sessions into supervision activities can mitigate the impact of unrealistic academic standards on student procrastination, promoting a more proactive and confident approach to writing. Additionally, supervisors should actively engage with disciplinary expertise and maintain open communication channels with students to create a supportive environment for knowledge-sharing. Institutional support structures, particularly those encompassing organised writing programmes, should emphasise the significance of a well-organised and structured setting. The positive impact of such environments on student motivation and productivity suggests the need for ongoing investment in creating conducive spaces for academic work. This study advocates for the incorporation of effective feedback mechanisms in writing camps, highlighting their role in shaping students' confidence and refining their writing skills. Finally, the cultivation of soft skills, peer interactions, and the promotion of time-management strategies should be integral components of institutional support instructional strategies, contributing to the overall development of postgraduate students and enhancing their academic success.

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