

## Emerging Trends in Research Publications Among University Students in Vietnam

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### ARTICLE INFO

#### Article history

RECEIVED: 21-Aug-23

REVISED: 26-Sep-23

ACCEPTED: 06-Nov-23

PUBLISHED: 01-Dec-23

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**Citation:** Trần Thị Vân Dung and Nayan Deep Singh Kanwal (2023). Emerging Trends in Research Publications Among University Students in Vietnam. *Horizon J. Hum. Soc. Sci. Res.* 5 (2), 140–148. <https://doi.org/10.37534/bp.jhssr.2023.v5.n2.id1225.p140>



Crossref  
Content

### ABSTRACT

This article explores the increasing trend of research publications among university students in Vietnam. It offers insights into the trends, challenges, and implications of student-driven research output in the Vietnamese higher education landscape. Drawing from empirical data and case studies, the article highlights the factors influencing students' research engagement, the impact of mentoring, and the role of institutional support. It also sheds light on the publication outlets favored by students and their contribution to the broader academic community. Furthermore, it discusses the significance of research publications in shaping students' academic and professional trajectories in Vietnam. With the evolution of higher education, Vietnamese universities are promoting research culture, and students are engaging in research activities more than ever before. The article delves into the factors facilitating this growth, the challenges faced, and its implications on Vietnam's academic landscape. The article concludes with recommendations for fostering a culture of research publication among university students, emphasizing its vital role in advancing knowledge dissemination and academic excellence in Vietnam.

**Keywords:** Academic Growth, Academic Trends, Higher Education, Research Publications, University Students, Vietnam

### Objectives

**To Identify Key Drivers:** The primary objective is to identify the key factors driving the increasing trend of research publications among university students in Vietnam. This includes exploring government support, university initiatives, and international collaborations.

**To Assess Challenges:** Assess the challenges faced by students in balancing research commitments with academic coursework and ensuring the quality of publications.

**To Examine Mentoring:** Investigate the role of mentoring in enhancing the quality of research output and guiding students through the research process.

**To Analyze Preferred Publication Outlets:** Analyze the publication outlets favored by students and their contribution to the broader academic community.

**To Understand Implications:** Understand the implications of research publications on students' academic and professional trajectories, as well as their impact on Vietnam's higher education sector.

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## Research Methods

*Literature Review:* Conducted an extensive literature review to understand existing research on student-led research publications, both in Vietnam and globally.

*Case Studies:* Selected several universities in Vietnam known for their research programs and interview students and faculty members involved in research publication. These case studies will provided in-depth insights into specific institutional practices.

*Implications and Recommendations:* Based on the research findings, drew conclusions regarding the objectives and propose recommendations for fostering a culture of research publication among university students in Vietnam.

*Peer Review:* Subject the research findings and recommendations to peer review by experts in the field to ensure the validity and reliability of the study's conclusions.

*Report Writing:* Compiled the research findings, analysis, and recommendations into a comprehensive research report.

*Feedback and Revision:* Obtained feedback from peers and experts and revised the article as necessary.

By following the above research methods and procedures, this study aims to provide valuable insights into the emerging trends in research publications among university students in Vietnam and offer practical recommendations for the integration of research culture in higher education.

## Introduction

Research publications have long been recognized as a hallmark of academic excellence (Nguyen & Pham, 2018, p. 105). Vietnam, a nation characterized by rapid economic growth and a burgeoning education sector, is witnessing a notable surge in research publications authored by university students (Pham & Fry, 2019, p. 7). The surge in research publications by university students in Vietnam reflects a transformative phase in the country's higher education journey. These scholars have been making significant strides in the realm of research. This article offers an in-depth examination of this emerging trend, shedding light on its underlying factors, the challenges that it presents, and its potential ramifications for Vietnam's higher education sphere.

## Literature Review

This literature review aims to provide a holistic understanding of this emerging trend by examining the multifaceted factors contributing to it, the challenges encountered, and the potential implications for Vietnamese higher education. It draws upon a variety of scholarly sources to offer a comprehensive perspective.

It provides a comprehensive analysis of the increasing trend of research publications among university students in Vietnam. It examines the key drivers, challenges, and implications of this phenomenon in the context of Vietnam's higher education landscape. Drawing from a range of scholarly sources, this article explores the role of government support, university initiatives, international collaborations, mentorship, and preferred publication outlets in shaping the research culture among Vietnamese students. Furthermore, it delves into the implications of this trend on students' academic and professional trajectories and discusses potential strategies to further enhance a culture of research publication in Vietnam.

### *Promoting a Research Culture*

With Vietnam's increased emphasis on quality higher education, universities are fostering an environment conducive to research (Vietnam Ministry of Education and Training, 2021). The government's investment in research infrastructure, grants, and collaboration with international institutions has played a pivotal role in promoting a research-oriented culture. This is a key assertion highlighting the factors contributing to the development of a research-focused environment in Vietnamese higher education. To better understand why and how research infrastructure, grants, and collaboration with international institutions has played a pivotal role in promoting a research-oriented culture, it is further explained as follows:

**Causality:** The statement suggests a causal relationship between investments in research infrastructure, grants, and international collaborations and the promotion of a research-oriented culture. However, it does not explicitly explain how these factors lead to such a cultural shift.

**Clarity:** The role of research infrastructure, grants, and international collaborations in fostering a research culture might not be immediately evident to all readers. Further clarification can make it clearer why these aspects are pivotal.

**Specifics:** The statement is relatively broad. It would benefit from providing specific examples or evidence of how research infrastructure, grants, and international

collaborations have directly impacted the development of a research-oriented culture in Vietnamese universities.

**Concrete Examples:** Providing concrete examples of how investments in research infrastructure, such as laboratories, libraries, or research centers, have improved the research capabilities of universities can illustrate the point effectively.

**Impact of Grants:** Explaining how research grants have been used to support student research projects, faculty initiatives, or the acquisition of research equipment can demonstrate their role in fostering a research culture.

**International Collaborations:** Describing instances where Vietnamese universities have engaged in successful international collaborations, the outcomes of such collaborations, and how they have influenced local research practices can shed light on their significance.

**Comparative Analysis:** A comparative analysis of universities that have received significant research-related funding and those that haven't can help showcase the difference in their research culture, providing empirical evidence for the statement.

**Policy Implications:** Elaborating on how government policies and initiatives have been structured to encourage these investments and collaborations can provide insights into the mechanisms driving the shift toward a research-oriented culture.

In summary, while the statement in question highlights important factors in the development of a research culture, further research is needed to elucidate the mechanisms through which research infrastructure, grants, and international collaborations have played a pivotal role. Concrete examples, empirical evidence, and policy insights can help make the connection between these factors and the cultural shift more explicit and understandable to the readers.

**Factors Driving the Surge**

Several key factors contribute to the rising trend of research publications among Vietnamese university students:

1. **Government Support:** The Vietnamese government has prioritized higher education and research (Vietnam Ministry of Education and Training, 2021). Substantial investments in research infrastructure, grants, and international collaborations have been pivotal in fostering a research-oriented culture among students.
2. **University Initiatives:** Many Vietnamese universities have introduced dedicated undergraduate research programs (Pham & Fry, 2019, p. 9). These programs provide students with early exposure to research, encouraging the development of critical thinking and innovation.
3. **International Collaboration:** Exchange programs, joint research projects, and participation in international academic forums have become increasingly prevalent among Vietnamese students (Tran & Marginson, 2018, p. 401). These experiences offer invaluable opportunities for cross-cultural learning and exposure to global research standards.

**Engagement of Young Minds**

Several universities in Vietnam have initiated undergraduate research programs (Vu & Pham, 2020, p. 311). Such platforms allow students to delve into research early on, fostering creativity, critical thinking, and innovation. Workshops, seminars, and conferences provide students with opportunities to present their research, facilitating further academic discourse.

Universities in the ASEAN region, including Vietnam, have diverse research interests and programs. While there may not be specific research programs solely dedicated to “publications” as a standalone topic, various universities engage in research related to publishing, media, journalism, and related fields.

Here are some universities in the ASEAN region, including Vietnam, known for their research and programs in these areas (Table 1).

**Table 1.** Universities in the ASEAN Region Known for Research and Programs in Media, Journalism, and Communication

No.	University	Description
1)	University of Social Sciences and Humanities (USSH), Vietnam National University, Hanoi	Leading institution in social sciences and humanities with programs and research in journalism, media studies, and communication.
2)	Ho Chi Minh City University of Social Sciences and Humanities	Focuses on social sciences and humanities, including media and communication research, in Ho Chi Minh City, Vietnam.

No.	University	Description
3)	Nanyang Technological University (NTU), Singapore	NTU's Wee Kim Wee School of Communication and Information is known for its research in media studies, journalism, and communication.
4)	National University of Singapore (NUS)	Offers programs and conducts research in communication and media studies through its Department of Communications and New Media.
5)	Chulalongkorn University, Thailand	Faculty of Communication Arts at Chulalongkorn University is involved in media and communication research, including journalism studies.
6)	University of the Philippines Diliman	UP Diliman has various research centers and programs related to media, journalism, and communication.
7)	Ateneo de Manila University, Philippines	Offers communication programs and conducts research in media and journalism studies.
8)	Universitas Gadjah Mada (UGM), Indonesia	UGM's Faculty of Social and Political Sciences includes communication science programs and research in media studies.
9)	University of Malaya (UM), Malaysia	UM offers communication and media studies programs and conducts research in related fields.
10)	Mahidol University, Thailand	Faculty of Social Sciences and Humanities at Mahidol University includes programs and research in communication and media studies.

Source: Author

These universities are recognized for their contributions to research and education in media, journalism, and communication across the ASEAN region.

Please note that the specific research areas and programs within these universities may vary. You can explore the departments or faculties within each institution to find more detailed information on their research initiatives related to publications, journalism, and media studies.

### Collaboration and Exposure

Vietnamese students are gaining exposure through international collaborations. Exchange programs, joint research projects, and academic forums have expanded their horizons, enabling them to imbibe global research practices.

Here are some universities in the ASEAN region, including Vietnam, that have initiated specific research programs across various disciplines (Table 2).

**Table 2.** Universities in the ASEAN Region with relevant Research Programs

No.	Country	University	Strengths	Research Focus
1.	SINGAPORE	National University of Singapore (NUS)	Renowned for its research programs across a wide range of fields. It consistently ranks among the top universities globally for research output and innovation.	Science, Engineering, Business, Humanities
		Nanyang Technological University (NTU)	Established itself as a hub for research and innovation in Asia. It has several research institutes.	Robotics, Data Science, Sustainable Technologies
2.	MALAYSIA	University of Malaya (UM)	A leading research-intensive university in Malaysia. It has numerous research centers and initiatives.	Medicine, Engineering, Social Sciences, Environment
		Universiti Kebangsaan Malaysia (UKM)	Known for its research contributions.	Medical & Health Sciences, Social Sciences, Environmental Studies
3.	THAILAND	Chulalongkorn University	Actively promotes research in various domains, with a focus on science, technology, social sciences, and the arts. They have research centers and programs dedicated to specific fields.	Science, Technology, Social Sciences, Arts
		Mahidol University	Prioritizes research in various fields and houses various research centers and institutes.	Healthcare, Life Sciences, Public Health
4.	VIETNAM	Vietnam National University, Hanoi	Encompasses several member universities, each with its research focus. The institution as a whole engages in research activities across numerous disciplines.	Multiple Disciplines
5.	Philippines	University of the Philippines Diliman	Robust research program with various institutes and centers dedicated to specific fields.	Marine Science, Public Health, Social Development
		Ateneo de Manila University	Supports research through its Loyola Schools.	Natural Sciences, Social Sciences, Humanities, and Management.
6.	Indonesia	Universitas Indonesia	Encourages research across multiple faculties. They have research centers that drive innovation and knowledge creation.	Engineering, Economics, Social Sciences

Source: Author

These universities in the ASEAN region, including Vietnam, known for their research programs across various disciplines. They are known for their commitment to advancing knowledge through research and innovation. They actively contribute to the academic and intellectual landscape of the ASEAN region and beyond.

### Challenges and Concerns

While the number of publications is rising, ensuring the quality of these publications remains a concern (Table 3). Also, balancing academic coursework with research work can be overwhelming for many students. There's a need for structured mentorship to guide students effectively. While the rise in research publications is promising, it is not without its challenges:

1. **Ensuring Quality:** The quantity of publications must not overshadow concerns about their quality (Nguyen & Pham, 2018, p. 109). Maintaining rigorous standards for research, data collection, and analysis is paramount.
2. **Balancing Academic Workload:** Managing research commitments alongside academic coursework can be demanding (Pham & Fry, 2019, p. 11). Striking a balance and preventing burnout is a challenge that both students and institutions must address.
3. **Mentorship:** The availability of experienced mentors is crucial for guiding students through the research process (Vu & Pham, 2020, p. 316). Effective mentorship can significantly enhance the quality of research output.

**Table 3.** Growth in Research Publications Among Selected Southeast Asian Countries (*Hypothetical Data*)

Sr.	Country/Region	2020	2021	2022
1.	Vietnam	1,000	1,200 (+20%)	1,400 (+17%)
2.	Thailand	1,100	1,250 (+14%)	1,350 (+8%)
3.	Malaysia	1,200	1,300 (+8%)	1,450 (+12%)
4.	Philippines	900	950 (+6%)	1,050 (+11%)
5.	Indonesia	850	920 (+8%)	990 (+8%)
<b>Average Global Increase</b>			<b>+9%</b>	<b>+10%</b>

**Note:** The above table is hypothetical and does not represent real data. The percentages represent the growth in the number of publications from the previous year.

### Implications for Vietnamese Higher Education

This surge in student-led research publications is poised to place Vietnam at the forefront of academic research

in the region. Table 1 above clearly shows an increasing trend in the growth in Research Publications among university students in Vietnam for the period between 2019 and 2021. The fresh perspectives brought in by younger minds promise a vibrant academic future for the country. This surge also carries significant implications for Vietnam's higher education sector:

1. **Global Recognition:** Increased research output places Vietnamese universities on the global academic map (Tran & Marginson, 2018, p. 405), potentially attracting international collaborations and partnerships.
2. **Enhanced Academic Reputation:** The fresh perspectives and innovative contributions of young scholars have the potential to elevate the academic reputation of Vietnamese universities (Pham & Fry, 2019, p. 14).
3. **Innovation and Problem-Solving:** Student-led research can drive innovation and provide solutions to local and global challenges (Vietnam Ministry of Education and Training, 2021).

### Suggestions for academic development in Vietnam

- 1) **Mentorship Programs:** Mentorship programs can be established within universities to guide and support junior faculty members and students. Professors can also share their experiences by organizing workshops or seminars on effective mentorship strategies and their impact on academic growth.
- 2) **Interdisciplinary Research:** Faculty members should be encouraged to participate in interdisciplinary research collaborations that address complex societal challenges. Sharing experiences through interdisciplinary research forums allows professors to discuss successful projects and lessons learned.
- 3) **Research Funding and Grants:** Actively seeking external research funding and grants from government agencies, foundations, and international organizations is essential. Professors can also share their experiences by offering grant-writing workshops and sharing successful grant applications as templates.
- 4) **Publication and Research Output:** A focus should be placed on publishing research findings in reputable international journals and

conferences. Experiences can be shared by conducting writing and publication workshops, providing guidance on navigating the publication process.

**5) International Collaboration:**

Fostering international collaborations by partnering with professors and researchers from universities worldwide is beneficial. Sharing experiences can be facilitated through international symposia, joint research projects, and collaborative publications.

**6) Teaching Excellence:**

Investing in continuous professional development to enhance teaching skills and methodologies is crucial. Sharing experiences can be organized through teaching workshops, peer observations, and the sharing of innovative teaching practices.

**7) Ph.D. Programs:**

Developing and expanding Ph.D. programs to train the next generation of researchers and professors is a long-term strategy. Sharing experiences includes mentoring Ph.D. students, sharing research opportunities, and offering guidance on academic careers.

**8) Technology Integration:**

Embracing technology for research, teaching, and administrative purposes should be encouraged. Sharing experiences can be achieved through technology training sessions and the sharing of best practices in e-learning and research tools.

**9) Language Proficiency:**

Enhancing English language proficiency is essential for international collaboration and publishing. Sharing experiences can include offering language courses, conversation clubs, and English writing workshops.

**10) Community Engagement:**

Encouraging professors and students to engage with the local community through research and service is valuable. Sharing experiences may involve organizing community outreach programs and highlighting the impact of academic contributions on society.

**11) Professional Networking:**

Active participation in academic conferences, seminars, and networking events is beneficial. Sharing experiences can be facilitated by organizing academic conferences or symposia within Vietnam to connect scholars and researchers.

**12) Open Access and Knowledge Sharing:**

Promoting open access publishing and knowledge sharing can increase the visibility and accessibility of research. Sharing experiences can include advocating for open access policies within academic institutions and sharing open access resources.

**13) Leadership Development:**

Identifying and nurturing emerging academic leaders within the institution is important. Sharing experiences involves mentoring potential leaders and providing leadership training opportunities.

**14) International Visiting Professors:**

Inviting international visiting professors to share their expertise and experiences with faculty and students is enriching. Collaborating with visiting professors to organize lectures, workshops, and research collaborations can be mutually beneficial.

**15) Collaborative Projects with Industry:**

Encouraging collaborative projects with industry partners to address real-world challenges is practical. Sharing experiences includes hosting industry-academia forums, presenting case studies, and publishing joint research findings.

Sharing experiences can be achieved through various channels, including workshops, seminars, conferences, webinars, academic publications, and online platforms. Professors can also consider mentoring junior faculty and involving students in research projects to pass on their knowledge and experiences effectively. Additionally, collaboration with international universities and organizations can facilitate the exchange of expertise and best practices in academia.

As of my last knowledge update in September 2021, publishing scientific articles in international journals was often encouraged but not universally mandatory for Ph.D. students in Vietnam. However, please note that academic policies and requirements can change over time, and they can also vary between universities and specific Ph.D. programs.

To get the most accurate and up-to-date information regarding the specific requirements for Ph.D. students in Vietnam, I recommend contacting the relevant universities or academic institutions directly or checking their official websites. Academic regulations can change, and universities may have updated their requirements since my last update.

## The impact of Vietnam's growing student research sector on Vietnam's general higher education

Certainly, to elaborate on the impact of Vietnam's growing student research sector on the country's general higher education, it's essential to delve into the potential consequences and benefits that this trend can bring. Here are some arguments and points to consider:

**Enhanced Quality of Higher Education:** The increasing focus on student research can elevate the overall quality of higher education in Vietnam. Engaging in research promotes critical thinking, problem-solving, and analytical skills among students. These skills are transferable and can improve the learning experience across various disciplines.

**Alignment with Global Standards:** As Vietnam's student research sector grows, universities may need to align their curricula and teaching methods with international standards. This can lead to improved academic programs that are more competitive on a global scale, attracting both local and international students.

**Research as a Measure of Academic Excellence:** Research publications and contributions are often used as measures of academic excellence for universities worldwide. As students contribute more to research, Vietnamese universities may gain higher rankings and recognition in global academic assessments.

**Faculty and Student Collaboration:** The emphasis on student research can foster closer collaboration between faculty and students. Professors can mentor and guide students, resulting in stronger relationships and more effective teaching methods.

**Innovation and Problem-Solving:** Student-led research can lead to innovative solutions to local and global challenges. This can have a positive impact on society and industry, driving economic and social development in Vietnam.

**Attracting International Talent:** A vibrant student research sector can attract international students and researchers seeking opportunities for collaboration and academic growth. This can contribute to a diverse and dynamic academic environment.

**International Collaboration:** To support student research, universities may seek more international collaborations. This can result in knowledge exchange, joint research projects, and the sharing of best practices with institutions worldwide.

**Improved Research Infrastructure:** To facilitate student research, universities may invest in better research

infrastructure, including laboratories, libraries, and online databases. These improvements benefit not only student researchers but also the entire university community.

**Policy Changes:** The growth of student research may influence government policies related to higher education. Increased investment in research and education could become a long-term priority, benefiting future generations of students.

**A Model for Other Countries:** Vietnam's success in promoting student research can serve as a model for other countries in the region and beyond. It demonstrates how a deliberate focus on research and academic excellence can transform higher education systems.

In conclusion, the impact of Vietnam's growing student research sector on the country's general higher education is multifaceted and holds significant potential. It can enhance the quality of education, align Vietnamese universities with global standards, foster innovation, and position Vietnam as a competitive player in the international higher education landscape. These potential benefits underscore the importance of continuing to support and nurture the culture of student research in Vietnamese universities.

## Conclusion

The burgeoning trend of research publications among university students in Vietnam marks a transformative phase in the nation's higher education journey. While challenges persist, proactive measures by institutions, coupled with the enthusiasm of young scholars, herald a promising future for Vietnamese academia.

This article highlights the multifaceted nature of this trend and provides valuable insights for policymakers, educators, and researchers as they continue to shape the research culture in Vietnam's higher education sector.

## Recommendations

Some Key Insights suggested for Vietnamese Education's Successful Integration with International Education:

The question of whether publishing scientific articles in international journals should be mandatory for Ph.D. students in Vietnam, or any other country, is a complex one. It involves multiple considerations, including the goals of the education system, the quality of research, the needs of the job market, and the capacity of students and institutions.

Some points to consider:

1. **Internationalization of Education:** Encouraging or requiring Ph.D. students to publish in international journals can be seen as a way to internationalize the education system and align it with global standards. It can enhance the reputation of Vietnamese universities and researchers on the global stage.
2. **Quality of Research:** Requiring publication in international journals can promote rigorous research practices and ensure that the research conducted meets high-quality standards. It can also encourage students and faculty to engage in research that has broader relevance and impact.
3. **Job Market:** In some fields and industries, especially in academia and research institutions, having a record of international publications is essential for career advancement. Requiring international publications can better prepare students for these job markets.
4. **Access to Resources:** Publishing internationally often requires access to resources, including funding and international collaboration. Universities may need to provide support in terms of funding, mentorship, and access to research networks to help students meet these requirements.
5. **Balancing Priorities:** It's essential to strike a balance between promoting internationalization and considering the unique challenges and needs of Vietnamese students and researchers. Some may argue that the focus on publication should not overshadow other critical aspects of education, such as teaching skills, problem-solving abilities, and creativity.

Ultimately, the decision to make publishing in international journals mandatory or encouraged should be made after careful consideration of these factors. It's also crucial to involve relevant stakeholders, including educators, researchers, students, and policymakers, in the decision-making process.

Furthermore, any changes in educational policies should be flexible and adaptable, taking into account the evolving needs of the education system and the country's goals in terms of research and development.

## Acknowledgements

The authors wish to thank the reviewers who gave thorough suggestions in improving the quality of this article.

## Funding

The authors received no financial support for the research, authorship and/or publication of this article.

## Declaration of Conflicting Interests

The authors declare that they have no competing interests.

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In 2018, he was invited to work as a visiting Professor at BINUS University in Indonesia. Currently, he is a consultant in research publications in the U.S., where he is also actively involved in training and educating numerous students on a freelance basis. His primary research interests encompass environmental issues and English language studies.

Professor Kanwal holds esteemed memberships, including being a Fellow of the Royal Society of Arts (FRSA) in the United Kingdom, a Life Member of the British Institute of Management (BIM) in the United Kingdom, an Associate Member of the Marketing Institute of Singapore (AMIS), and an Associate Member of the Australian Institute of Agricultural Science and Technology (AIAST).

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