Scholarly Writing and Educational Institution Growth Mechanism in Social Sciences: The Role of Gantt Chart in Scholarly Achievement

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ABSTRACT

In this era of "publish or perish" on promotional requirement, this paper proposes a Gantt chart for writing a scholarly article for publication in reputable journals using four developed levels and eight sub-levels to achieve quality publication. The method used was partial exploratory research where only literature was consulted. Although the Gantt chart is not without assumptions and the chart could be useful in other fields, the paper was written to stimulate new entry into the social science academic forum, to arrange their time, efforts, and activities using the proposed Gantt chart arranged in four different Tables. However, the paper x-rays the typical constraints for achieving scholarly writing comprising the endogenous and exogenous factors. Among others, the scholar's load of work, availability of electricity, knowledge of statistical software and family demands are structural and personal constraints. While there is no rigidity in the use of the proposed Gantt chart, the contents make it flexible to be rearranged for timing and optimality. Thus, using a Gantt chart, for preparing a manuscript for publication, matter to academic institutions and faculty members' personal career growth. The Gantt chart is expected to assist researchers to maximize productivity and stimulate industriousness within the academic community towards achieving optimum educational institution growth mechanism (EIGM) in the long run. With the Gantt chart, noticeable achievements can be observed among faculty members within the institution, as well as in terms of societal development.

Keywords: Gantt chart, postgraduate studies, predatory journal, faculty member, "publish or perish"

INTRODUCTION

A toddler has two things in common: interest to walk and the support from the immediate environment. While interest is the individual concern, the support comes from the skilled and the immediate environment. Hence, it is pertinent to ask who is a scholar in the social sciences. Being called a *scholar* (who formerly was an academic toddler) means an honour attributable to an individual who has made recognised *scholarly achievements* in the national and international knowledge development. In other words, a scholar refers to intellectual individual who spends fruitful time reading and studying to acquire knowledge about specific areas of academic subjects. Collins online dictionary puts achievement as "something which someone has succeeded in doing, especially after a lot of effort" (Collins Dictionary, online). Examples of those who have made significant contributions in the field of economics include Adam Smith, John Maynard Keynes, Robert Solow, Polish Economist Karol Adamiecki, Milton Friedman, etc. Hence, scholarly achievement is a bunch of recognised successes that an academia or researcher was able to put up in making an impact on the society and theory development, which are presentable in a academic curriculum vitae (CV). In so doing, writing is an important indicator for making quality scholastic impact.

The question remains: does Gantt chart matter in scholarly writing? This basic rhetorical question is an issue for those in academics in the tertiary institutions. The question addresses the writer's personal organisation for paper writing optimization in tertiary educational development. In particular, this paper targets the newbie and intermediate researchers as well as lecturers in the tertiary institutions to avoid the popular slogan: "publish or

perish" in personal academic growth (Banda 2016; Christian, Barton & Merolli, n.d.; Dani, 2018; Harzing, 2010; L'Huillier, 2012). Reading the phrase, "publish or perish", are two constraint words that are understood to be a threat to academic jobs. While the Administrative Staff have little publishing responsibility in the universities (i.e. writing engagement on administrative capacity), the phrase connotes, on the one hand, positivity and contrarily, negativity, in the academic community. In other words, the concept connotes "success and failure" which often confined all academia to their reading desk. In recent times, "publish and perish" syndrome has been extended to postgraduate students. They have been placed on the requirement of publishing a certain number of articles from their research findings in recognised journals before graduation, as a copyright for the university. They are to share their research findings with the public (Banda, 2016). Failure to publish an article attributed to the institution attracts failure to graduate, which was based on the premise that research done in the university is to disseminate knowledge and increase the rate of societal development (Wadesango, 2014). It is at this point that this paper argues that achieving success in scholastic publishing calls for standard and scientific procedure or writing organisation to which the newbie could follow, known as Gantt chart. Simply, using Gantt chart (or writing structure) as a guide in scientific writing and preparing manuscript(s) for publication, matter to the institution and faculty members' career growth.

Brief History of Gantt Chart and Justification

The philosophy of Gantt chart was started by a Polish Economist, Karol Adamiecki. Karol Adamiecki had steel industry where he developed management ideas, known as "harmonogram" to direct the steel mill operations. This idea of harmonizing the system management operations was not attributed to Karol Adamiecki because his writings were in Russia and Polish languages, not in the popular English language. His attempt to publish his work in a widely accepted language (English), a similar method had been developed and popularized by a person in the field of engineering. The Gant chart was developed by an engineer and an American known as Henry L. Gantt (1861-1919) in conjunction with his colleague, Frederick Taylor. They proposed it for an engineering project in the close of 19th century, specifically, 1896 (Lyons, 2018; Geraldi & Lechler, 2012; Project Management Nerd, 2021). Although the first presented Gantt chart was like a table, these engineers "devised a method of describing production planning and resource loading for factories and workshops." (Lyons, 2018) Hence, Gantt chart is a "display of schedule related information", formerly known as bar chart (Mubarak, 2010, p.16; Clark, 1923). In application, Gantt chart is a graphic research instrument which enables researchers to schedule research work over a period of time (Imperial College London, n.d.). Simply, Gantt chart is the breaking down of all the processes of a research project into a series of tasks and proposing a time frame for completing the project.

Gantt Chart and Justification for Research

The threat or tension that comes with the phrase, "publish or perish" connotes two assumptions in relation to individual faculty members and the institution. The assumption arises because various governments around the world have placed conditions and responsibility on the University lecturers to make new discoveries and impact significantly, not only on theory, but on the society's development. The two assumptions include: "publish or perish" for promotion proposition and "publish or perish" for article quality proposition (Banda, 2016). The former assumption postulates that all academic staffs of the upper quintile of educational institutions are required to publish a number of articles to qualify for annual increment and three-year promotional exercise. Failure to publish would result in denial of promotion. When an individual is consistently not publishing, unequivocally lead to work disengagement in many institutions. In this current paper, it is known as the *'theory of individual publishing achievement'.* This is the supply side of the academic publishing mechanism (See L'Huillier, 2012, Poem lines 3-5). Whereas, the second assumption postulates that academic staff are not to publish only for promotion but to publish quality manuscripts in reputable journals and publishers to raise institutional ranking.

Although the Beall list is out of visibility, between 2012 and 2017, Beall, a university don, published a list of predatory journals to avoid publishing quality manuscript in predatory journals. The rationale for publishing the list of the predatory journals was to prevent good manuscripts being published in quark, money-making or low-quality journals. The fight for quality has been on, such that the University Managements around the world have decided to specify certain journals where their academic staff and postgraduate students in their institutions

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should publish their research findings. This was made clear in the argument of L'Huillier (2012), when she said: "Is the "new" catch cry of the university mandarins" (p.1072). I call this proposition *'theory of institutional publishing achievement'* (see L'Huillier, 2012, Poem - line 2 and 17).This is the demand side of the equation. Thus, it is on this premise that we assume that having a scientific Gantt chart would assist researchers and faculty members to be a master of their time, maximize writing productivity, and stimulate industriousness within the academic community. In line with these arguments, the objective of the paper is to develop a scientific framework that would guide newbie researchers and postgraduate students in publishing in reputable journals. The paper has five sections comprising introduction, literature review, methodology, the proposed Gantt chart and conclusion.

LITERATURE REVIEW

In the day of Newton and in his famous quote, every academic writer usually rests on the shoulders of the giants (Amjad, Ding, Xu, Zhang, Daud, Tang, & Song, 2017; Vom Brocke, Simons, Riemer, Niehaves, Plattfaut, & Cleven, 2015; Isaac Newton 1642-1727). As such, publishing an article comes with adequate knowledge from the previous authors in the relevant field. Hence, publishing is about continually communicating ideas and research findings to the intended community (Banda, 2016). On the one hand, it is easier for the old researchers to write quality manuscripts and make them available for acceptability in reputable journals. On the contrary, the newbie in research usually faces challenges in publishing. The challenges are more realistic for postgraduate students who knew little about the doctrine of research (Banda, 2016). They often face the challenge of article rejection. They are often encountering writing phobia including these rhetorical questions:

How do I start my research work?

What should I write about in this study?

How do I start my research work?

What should I write about in this study?

When shall I start the study?

Who should I consult if I start preparing my manuscript?

Where are the sources of materials for the study?

Will the research findings be acceptable to the academic community after publication?

If it is rejected, what should I do to improve the manuscript?

Faculty member's interest in communicating research findings to the public, one should prepare to be a "suspect" (Banda, 2016). Explicitly,

"Communicating your research to the public exposes you to criticism and public scrutiny, which could be harsh at times. However, if you aspire to make your research relevant to your community, or if you wish to pursue a lifelong academic career, you must be prepared to face criticism positively" (Banda, 2016, p.228).

Since every faculty member has been under the pressure of "publish or perish", L'Huillier (2012) posits that everyone is mandated by the institution to publish so as to witness "rises in pay" arising from promotional reward and the seeking for higher positions. Otherwise, the benefits of writing and publishing would be elusive to any faculty member seeking promotion and/or postgraduate student seeking graduation. In the previous section, we discussed individual publishing and institutional publishing achievements' ideologies. The individual publishing achievement represents the supply side of the equation. The supply side is a function of workload (L'Huillier, 2012), personal time available for research, funding (L'Huillier, 2012), knowledge/skill of the researcher in research (Banda, 2016), family responsibility and degree of social engagement. For example, most Africans have

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a culture that engages people in most weekends such as funerals, wedding ceremonies, religious functions, etc. Both the research and the faculty member's social activities have equal technical operations. On the other hand, the publishing demand side represents what institution is getting from each academic staff (i.e. the endogenous factors) in return to their pay. This is referred to as institutional publishing achievement. The indicators for accelerating the demand side include teaching, research and administrative activities such as appointment as Head of Department (HOD), Dean of Faculty, Director of a Directorate, member of university committees, etc. Other exogenous factors include production of quality manuscripts that would promote the ranking of the institution.

Educational Institution Growth Mechanism

The educational institution growth mechanism (EIGM) explains the process to achieve collective institution ranking through quality article writing by the lecturers and academia. As such, the integrated scholarly achievement provides a clearer picture of the EIGM.

Integrated Scholarly Achievement

Pulling together the ideas of L'Huillier (2012) and Banda (2016), in all, Management demands that there is efficiency in both endogenous and the exogenous variables to bring about academic excellence or productivity thereby increasing institutional growth and ranking. The point of equilibrium is when the desire of personal growth equals the corporate goals of the institution. This, I called, the integrated scholarly achievements (ISA) for the entire institution representing educational institution growth mechanism (EIGM). The ISA presents an educational growth mechanism which is a collective responsibility of academia/researchers and the corporate goals that would yield optimum rating for the institution. The ISA is pictorially presented in Figure. 1.

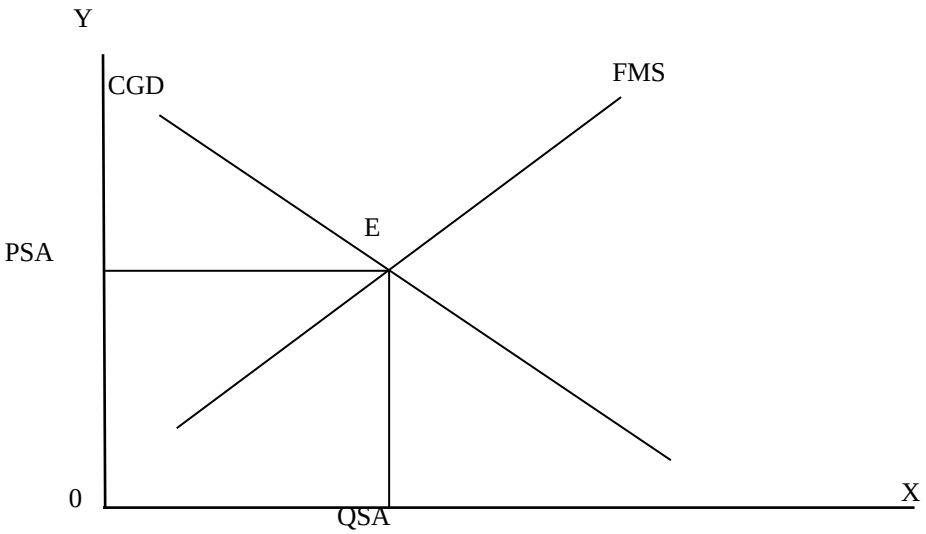

Figure 1: Integrated Scholarly Achievements Mechanism

Source: Author (2024)

Note: *CGD = Corporate Goals Demand (demand side); FMS = Faculty Members' Supply (supply side); PSA = Price of Scholarly Achievement (which represents the optimum price between the institution and academic/researchers' contributions); QSA = Quantity of Scholarly Achievement (which represents the optimum quantity demanded and supplied by the institution and academic/researchers' contributions) and E = the point of equilibrium is CGD equals FMS at point E.*

Hence, the supply and demand sides of publishing would need to converge to the point of equilibrium by having quality of manuscripts (either in book, monograph, articles or reports). The equilibrium would be achieved by learning communication skills which correlates with quality of manuscript (Banda, 2016; Besley & Tanner

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2011). The communication skill in this regard is expected to be the one that "involves the sharing of proven or tested information, educated assumptions and factual data. Sharing, therefore, requires proper and thoughtful planning to make it effective" (Banda, 2016, p.229). For effective sharing, most institutions have communication or writing centres (e.g. University of Malaya, Malaysia) to assist researchers build their skill in quality manuscript writing. In so doing, every academic staff would stay alive by communicating their research findings, publishing a book, reports and sharing it with the intended public.

Right-Paper Publication

Another area we need to discuss relates to where manuscripts should be published. There are reputable and predatory journals in circulation. The reputable journals are currently measured in two ways: the "stated preference and the revealed preference" (Harzing, 2010, p.2). The stated preference is also known as peer review. In this instance, Harzing (2010) argues that this area of publishing associates with institutional ranking journals whose judgment is based on the institutions' experts' recommendations or judgments. On the contrary, the revealed preference is about how a particular publication such as a journal or textbook is acceptable by the intended users. The behaviour of such publication is known through "citation rates" (Harzing (2010, p.2). The citation rates are obtained through Web of Science metrics, Google Scholar metrics, h-Index, etc. Institutions' publication rating assists the demand side of publishing to understand the institution performance in institutional ranking, given as impact factor (IF) and defined as "scientomentry" (Dani, 2018, p.20). Other reputable journals are found in Scopus where Elsevier is the Publisher and a custodian of the journals under it, sometimes found in Scimago database. Hence, the supply side of publishing ensures that their manuscripts are published with publishers whose journals are in the Web of Science and Scopus, to make such manuscripts earn a good reputation. Besides, there will be several levels of interactions that would yield optimality for the affiliating institution and its academic staff through high ranking. Thus, the manuscript passes the publishing process resulting in an impact factor either for the journal, publisher or institution. The publishing process and impact framework is presented in Figure 2.

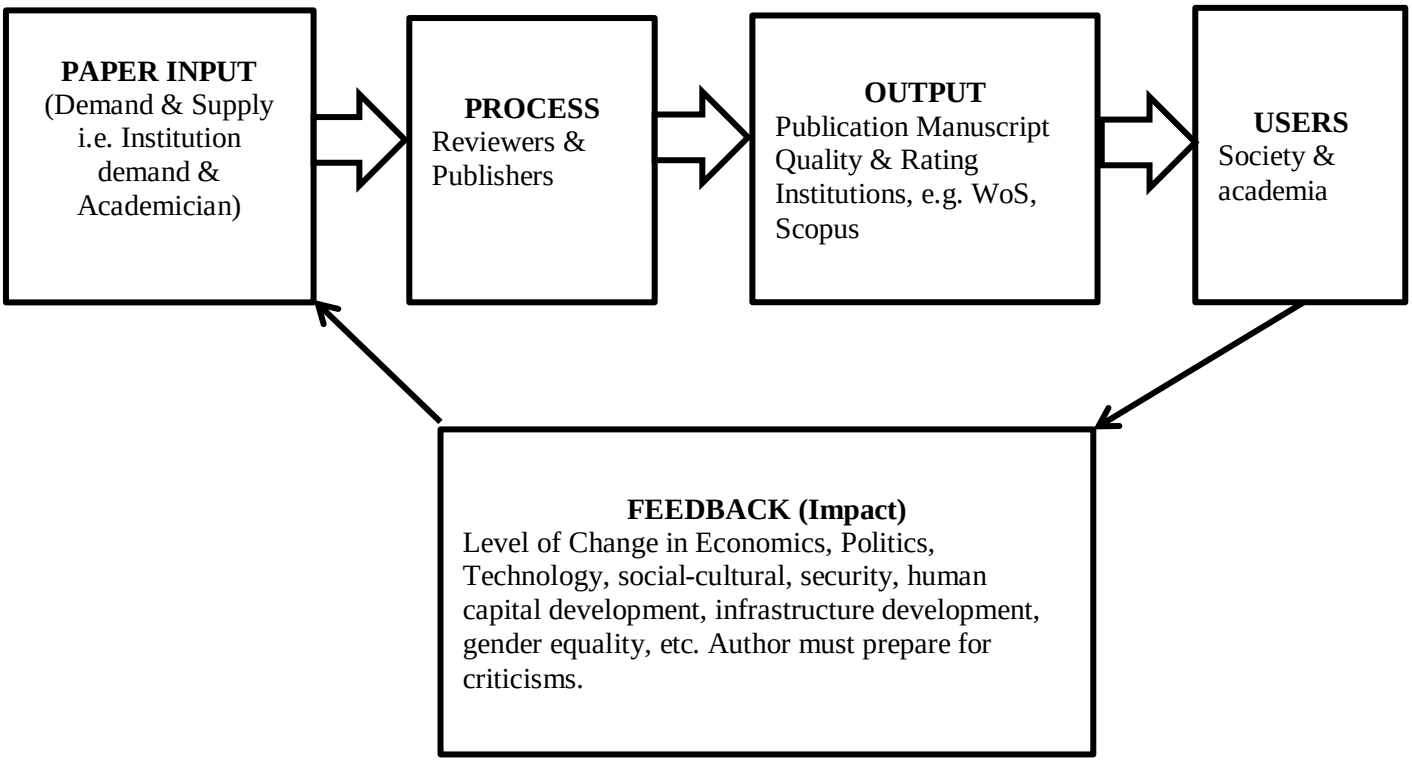

Figure 2: Publishing Process and Impact (PPI) Framework

Source: Author (2024)

Figure 2 shows the process of publishing an article in reputable journals comprising university based peer-reviewed journals as well as publishing in WoS and Scopus journals. The society is the user of the publication.

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Thus, the society will provide the feedback in all the areas covered in the study. The deficiency or gap of the paper is noted by another faculty member who starts to write for a new publication.

Although much has been analysed about the need for publishing manuscripts in reputable journals, the gap in previous literature is about the processes available for researchers to achieve the quality manuscript within a shortest time. The achievement could be through individual or joint authors' efforts. Whereas, previous authors laid emphasis on quality of manuscripts, as may be published in quality journals and with quality publishers without recourse to the process. Hence, the gap to fill in this paper is to prepare a Gantt chart to explain the process for quality manuscripts for publication in high impact factor journals. However, the time required to write the paper is endogenously determined by the author while the time the paper would be published is exogenously determined by the reviewers and publisher. So, the target of this paper is on the author and the abilities to coordinate psychological and economical factors including time, interest, effort and investment in publishing high quality articles.

METHODOLOGY

To build confidence in the newbie faculty member and intermediate authors/researchers in publishing, the method used was partial exploratory research where only literature was consulted. Hence, the paper is proposing a Gantt chart for paper writing. Thus, the writer used five stages of conventional research writing procedure to draw the Gantt chart. This comprises introduction, literature review, methodology, results/discussion and conclusion. However, the five sections were divided into eight stages before an article is completed. An academic year was split into three equal parts. The first four months consist of January, February, March and April each year. The months were split into weeks totaling 16 weeks. Generally, Universities Management expects that an academic staff publishes, at least, one article/per year. In three years, he has three additional papers for promotion.

The Assumptions of the proposed Gantt Chart

The Gantt chart is based on the under-listed assumptions.

It is assumed that;

1. Researcher demonstrates interest, show commitment and ready to carry out the study.
2. The researcher's health is optimized during the period of the research.
3. The researcher is hardworking and well organized during the writing process.
4. Author's shows readiness to invest money in the research proposed project i.e. the article.
5. There is accessibility to academic databases for quality literature search.
6. Statistical data of the study is accessible within a shortest time.
7. The Researcher/Lecturer has the knowledge of the method of analysis. In other words, he or she understands the use of statistical software such as SPSS, E-view, Gretl, STATA, Warp-PLS, R, MatLab, etc. in data analysis.
8. Researcher/Lecturer minimizes his/her social activities during the writing including placing restrictions on the attendance at funeral ceremonies, wedding ceremonies, own and friends birthday ceremonies, etc.
9. There is regular power supply either through the PHCN grid, generating set or solar power to accelerate the speed of the study.
10. The chart fit into all the academic writing styles including descriptive, analytical, persuasive and critical writings.

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The Proposed Gantt Chart Framework

Taking into consideration the assumptions, the Gantt chart is developed as presented in Tables 1 – 4.

Table 1: Level 1 in Paper Writing

Items	Week 1	Week 2	Week 3	Week 4
Stage 1: Topic selection	Search for appropriate topic through reading previous literature. Ensure you have at least 20 maximum words. The lower the number, the merrier of the topic. However, all ingredients of the topic should be present. However, the topic is subject to change as the study continues ***Note**: Search for appropriate journals in that field. Select, at least, two journals that the manuscript would be submitted to understand the author's guidelines.*			
Stage 2: Getting materials for the study -		Gather and start reading/studying materials that cover the last five years. It will allow you to know where knowledge stopped. However, earlier studies would be required as well, to enhance the structure of the study, i.e. theories and empirical works. ***Note:** If you have not got any, continue to search. Get familiar to, at least, two journals that the manuscript would be submitted to understand the style of writing.*		
Stage 3: The problem Identification				After reading and studying of the materials for two weeks, start developing the introduction and the problem statement. Make sure you justify your topic in the first paragraph of the introduction section. Knowing the problem enhances the focus of the study.

Source: Author (2024)

Note: On the Tables (1-4), the portions painted red are cells that represent no-activity in each stage.

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Table 2: Level 2 in Paper Writing

Items	Week 5	Week 6	Week 7	Week 8
Stage 4: (a) Developing the introduction and problem statement (Contd) (b) State the RQ, RO and or RH (optional)	After reading and studying of the materials for two weeks, start developing the introduction and the problem statement. Make sure you justify for your topic in the introduction section. State your objective clearly for them to be measured without much stress. Discuss with friends in a first-round table discussion in just one-hour presentations and Q&A aspect. Minimize objective to only 2 or maximum of 3 to avoid excess work.			
Stage 5: Writing the literature review			After the objective is well developed, start to write the literature aspect. First, determine the theory that explains the idea of the study. Residual knowledge is expected to speed up the development of the theories. Discuss with colleagues in the field to identify suitable theory. Second, select the most related empirical works to provide route for contribution. Here, write scholarly. Avoid "According to". Be an 'argumentator'. Look at the right and the left of issues as related to each of the objectives. Avoid copying and paste but synthesise all the articles according to each objective.	

Source: Author (2024)

Table 3: Level 3 in Paper Writing

Items	Week 9	Week 10	Week 11	Week 12
Stage 6: Methodology – writing the methodology section and Data collection	During the literature search stage, you would have known various methods used in the previous data analysis. If you have reservation for the method used, you can adapt to come up with a new method. If no reservation, you can adopt the previous method used. **Research with Primary data** If the study is primarily structured, determine the population and the sample size; develop the study instrument, validate the instrument, and subject it to appropriate reliability test. Primary data structure requires more time than time series or survey secondary data. At this point, researcher needs Research Assistant (RA) to assist in the collection of data and data entry into the Excel work file (software) after deciding on the coding. The exercise could spill to week 12. In this instance, there could be little adjustment to time. Be sure that you obtain Ethical Clerance prior to the collection of primary from appropriate institution. **Secondary data or Time series data** *Collection of required data regarding the dependent and explanatory variables*. During the literature review, the researcher might be checking for and downloading the required data in preparation for data analysis. First, check World Bank database if the			

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	data would be available. Later, check National Bureau of Statistics, (NBS), CBN, Federal Ministry of Finance, private institutions hosting data like Demographic Health Survey (DHS), IPUMS, etc. For analysis, use the best software that could enhance quality results. STATA is good for both primary and secondary data. If your data is hierarchical, use Structural Equation Modeling (SEM) software such as SmartPLS and WarpPLS to analyse hierarchical data. **Note:** To researchers, either using primary or secondary data, have residual knowledge of a software at least, one(1) of the following: SPSS, STATA, SmartPLS, WarpPLS, R, Mathlab, etc. For Lecturers in the Department of Economics, the use of Eview and Gretl software are necessary.

Source: Author (2024)

Table 4: Level 4 in Paper Writing

Items	**Week 13**	**Week 14**	**Week 15**	**Week 16**
Stage 7: Data Analysis, Writing the result/discussion section	After data collection (be it primary data, survey secondary or time series data), start to analyse the data using the accurate and required data for such study. Avoid spurious results by using appropriate technique. Compare your results with the previous findings under the literature review. What did the previous study say? What does your study say? Is there any agreement between the two? Does disagreement occur? Where is the disagreement located? Synthesize and write critically.			
Stage 8: Conclusion & Referencing			Based on your new findings, write the conclusion section, and referencing. Use Endnote or Mendeley for referencing for accuracy.	
Paper Editing and submission				The author uses three days for editing the paper and four days to submit to the chosen journal, perhaps the last day of April of the year.

Source: Author (2024)

THE EXPECTED CHALLENGES OF THE GANTT CHART

For achieving a robust publication in high impact journals, it is much necessary to present the challenges that the newbie in paper writing could face. These challenges are categorised into personal and institutional. The personal challenges are those issues that individual researchers and faculty members could be facing in completing their papers, whereas the institutional are those challenges that could be imposed by the institution of residence and the structural environment. Hence, the observed writing challenges that could impose constraint on the use of the expected Gantt chart is presented in Figure 3.

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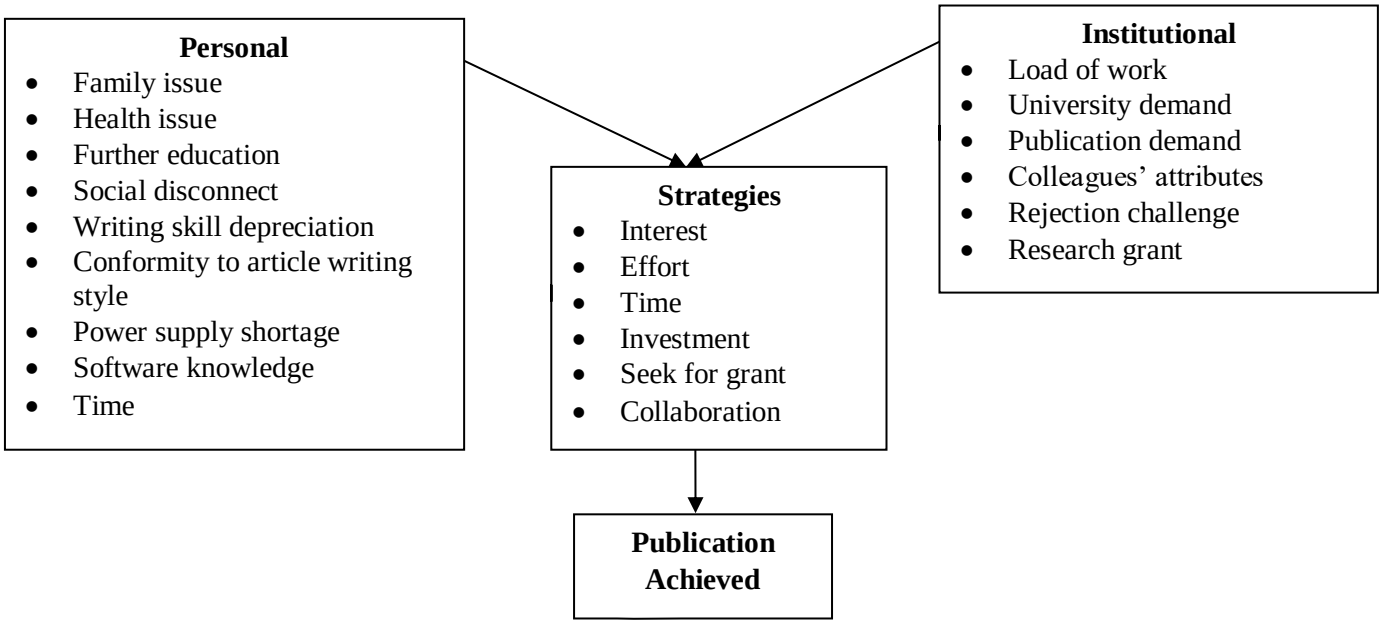

Figure 3: Article Writing Achievement Framework

Source: Author (2024)

The researcher or the faculty member whose interest and goal are known is/are expected to explore the strategies provided in Figure 3, especially the first four strategies to achieve a quality publication with a right publisher.

CONCLUSION

This paper proposed a Gantt chart for the newbie and intermediate researchers, which proposed four levels of article writing with eight stages in a manuscript processing. Although there are four main academic writing styles (descriptive, analytical, persuasive and critical writings) to deal with, the Gantt chart could be adjusted to each style selected. Hence, the researcher or faculty member is expected to allot a time frame for each of the levels, otherwise it could result in an indefinite writing of a manuscript. The paper presented a publishing process and impactful framework to explain how manuscripts are processed to yield significant impact on the threefold-publishing participants - the author, publisher and institution. We equally argued that the institution level of satisfaction is attained when corporate goals demand for publication equals faculty members' supply in scholarly writing achievement.

Bearing in mind the Gantt chart and the constraints to academic writing, in article writing, researchers or faculty members should focus on these salient points. First, article writers should, at the starting point of the study, search for an appropriate and reputable journal to publish the proposed manuscript. At this initial stage, the researcher should understudy the guidelines or requirements for publishing an article in the journal chosen. It will reduce time wastage, increase quality of the article and acceptance rate.

Second, it should be noted that investment in paper writing for publication in reputable journals is highly essential. At this point, the researcher may search for sponsors to finance the research project subject to the quality of the research.

Third, co-researcher (collaborative work) and or research assistant (RA) may be required to assist the author/researcher in meeting the deadlines of the paper. The current trend of publication in human capital development, especially in academic writing, is centred on collaboration.

Fourth, identification of areas for further study is necessary, thereby keeping them standby to proceed for the next paper. No research or study that has an absolute end. Always attempt to submit to high impact journals. Hence, author should prepare for acceptance and or rejection of the paper after submission. Rejection is one of the writing challenges that prepare one for future quality publication.

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Finally, take enough rest, eat good food/fruits and recreate with friends and families to avoid 'writing skill depreciation'. Nevertheless, the proposed Gantt chart could be amended to suit each person's condition as well as personal and social activities. Although the current study did not carry out empirical study, it is suggested that a descriptive survey and experimental research be carried out to determine the suitability of the proposed Gantt chart for the newbie and intermediate researchers/Lecturers.

In conclusion, writing is a serious task in the process of becoming a scholar. Persistence in quality writing leads to scholarly achievement. So, using a Gantt chart, as a guide for quantitative scientific writing and preparing the manuscript for publication, does matter to academic institutions and individual faculty members. In this respect, Gantt chart would assist researchers to be masters of their time, maximize writing productivity, and stimulate industriousness within the academic community.

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