



## Students' Gendered Expectations and Evaluation on Thesis Advising Skills and Mentoring Practices of the Local Thesis Advisory Committee (LTAC) in Camarines Norte State College

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### ABSTRACT

**Purpose of the study:** To analyze the students' gendered expectations and evaluation on advising skills and mentoring practices of the Local Thesis Advisory Committee (LTAC) members in the Camarines Norte State College situated in Daet, Camarines Norte, Philippines for academic year 2022-2023.

**Methodology:** The study used descriptive quantitative research design. The respondents of the study were comprised of 42 male, 55 female, and 8 LGBTQ+. A face-to-face interview using survey questionnaire was employed to gather the data and data gathered were analyzed using frequency and percentage distribution as well as the computation of mean. The results were presented in tabular format.

**Main Findings:** The findings revealed differences in preferences for advisor traits as males expected expertise and logical presentation skills, females wanted more guidance in developing the topic and structuring analysis, while LGBTQ+ students desired compassion, interest, and constructive feedback. The male group evaluated advisors as excellent in intelligence and inquisitiveness, while female group in honesty, explicitness, and refined feedback, and for LGBTQ+ advisers as excellent in compassion. All groups faced challenges securing approval and navigating panel perspectives.

**Novelty/Originality of this study:** This study reveals that students, regardless of gender, recognized the importance of advising and mentoring in successfully completing the undergraduate theses. It also emphasizes how higher education institutions can address gender equality and improve thesis writing policies, ensuring that all student across gender groups receive tailored support for a more effective advising experience.

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## 1. INTRODUCTION

The Commission on Higher Education (CHED) in the Philippines has issued various memorandum orders for different academic programs, mandating universities and colleges to require undergraduate students to conduct thesis studies, pass thesis defenses, and submit final bound manuscripts as requirements for completing their chosen courses or curricular programs. The purpose of the bachelor's thesis is to expose students to an opportunity for in-depth analysis on subjects related to their fields of specialization, honing their critical thinking skills and demonstrating their ability to make critical assessments and present answers or solutions to problems or issues

being raised. Moreover, the quality of student theses or studies can reflect positively or negatively on the institutions where the students originated or graduated from [1]. In order to successfully attain these conditions, the quality of student research is the top consideration for many academic institutions. Higher education institutions have implemented various policies and guidelines in accordance with several CHED memorandum orders to enhance students' knowledge of thesis writing. Aside from the quality of the topic as the subject for inquiry, this further includes the qualifications of the teaching staff who play a vital role as advisers or mentors in the process of thesis writing. Hence, the advising skills and mentoring practices of the faculty have a significant impact on the theses undertaken by undergraduate students.

In Camarines Norte State College, the nine curricular programs of the College of Business and Public Administration (CBPA) namely Bachelor of Science in Accountancy, Bachelor of Public Administration, Bachelor of Science in Entrepreneurship, Bachelor of Science in Office Administration, Bachelor of Science in Hospitality Management, and Bachelor of Science in Business Administration majors in Marketing, Human Resource Management, Economics, and Financial Management - include the undergraduate thesis or research subject for students in their junior (3rd) and senior (4th) academic years. Some programs like BSA and BPA offer the subject in two semestral offerings, while the rest require students to take it in one semester [2]. The CNSC set forth guidelines that serve as a clear foundation for the preparation or completion of undergraduate theses. In the approved CNSC Manual of Operation under Board Resolution No. 12, s. 2007, Rule 8. Research Policies and Guidelines, Article 4- Section 3 stipulates the guidelines for selecting undergraduate thesis advisers, research instructors, and panel members. Section 4 of the same Rule clearly specifies the qualifications of advisers and panel members, stating that a faculty must have a master's or doctorate degree, expertise in their field, and be listed as one of the pool of advisers recognized by the respective College Dean. The Rule further outlines the specific roles of the adviser, chairperson of the panel, panel members, panel secretary, and the research instructor. However, the guidelines for thesis advising and mentoring in CNSC have limited specific provisions for in-depth support to student researchers, and the necessary skills and capabilities required of faculty advisers are not clearly defined; additionally, since the thesis advising and mentoring guidelines have been in place for quite a year, their applicability and relevance have become ambiguous. The undergraduate thesis subject requires students to follow format which is very tedious in nature and demands extensive knowledge starting from the formulation of the research topic/problems, objectives, synthesizing topics from previous studies, designing research methodologies, employing critical analysis on the results, formulating necessary project interventions, and completing and submitting the bound manuscript. Moreover, student researchers also need to undergo two presentations of the research papers: the title defense and the final oral defense to the daunting team of the thesis panel, hence students are facing crucial problems in the conduct of thesis writing.

Advising takes place in situations in which an institutional representative gives insight or direction to a college student about a conduct of academic research [3]. Hatemi & McDermott [4] discussed it as a collaborative effort between the academic advisor and a student. It is a sense of connection with the chosen advisor, putting trust and confidence that this individual will lead and guide the researcher in the realization of the research goals. On the other hand, mentoring is somewhat personal responsibilities of sharing knowledge and skills by helping the mentee for the attainment or completion of the thesis. The mentor act not only as a guide, a teacher, but more so a role model. Thesis committee member provides knowledge, advice, challenge and support the mentee needs in order to complete the research project in a given time. The mentor mentee relationship is often times reciprocated and the development of a life-long friendship is not unusual [5].

The conduct of the present study reasoned that writing a research or thesis study is one tough academic task for the undergraduate student, it requires a high level of self -efficacy, sacrifices, endurance and the reality that a support and guidance from an educators' capabilities are indispensable to achieve positive results. Hence, giving direction and having effective understanding in the role of advising and mentoring as focal point of this analysis, a vital review and exploration on the similarities and difference of the present study from the existing literature that addresses the study's gaps within the context of students' gendered expectation in advising and mentoring practices in the higher education settings.

A research by Smith et al. [6] examined how students evaluate mentoring practices based on their experiences, highlighting that students often assess their advisors' effectiveness through the lens of gender dynamics. This concept is relevant to the present study, which seeks to evaluate the local thesis advisory committee's mentoring practices. More over, the study as related to social education take part in shaping students' expectations and evaluations regarding advising and mentorship, it focuses on the moral values, behavioral conduct, and skills that influence interpersonal relationships within academic landscape.

The study of Mendez et al. [7] showed that gender can significantly affect students' experiences in academic settings, as female students often have diverse expectations concerning support and communication from their advisors as compared to male students. Similarly, the present study will provide understanding how students' gender influences their expectations which can lead to more tailored mentoring practices that acknowledge and address the unique challenges faced by different student demographics. Research indicates that building

relationship is vital components of successful mentoring. Fostering an inclusive environment that respect gender perspectives, academician can better support students' academic growth and emotional well-being.

However, Singh [8] suggested that there is no single advising and mentoring style that greatly influence the effectiveness of guiding students in conducting the research. Genuine support to students to use effective strategies for growth and helping them embrace struggles are critical aspect for a successful mentor and mentee relationship.

It support to the idea of the present study in gendered expectations in thesis advising and mentoring within tertiary education which is multifaceted in nature, it is not only cultivates students critical thinking, communication and collaboration, but also promotes success in general academic environment. It reflects on how educational standards, and, social and cultural influences formed students' perception of the roles and support they anticipate from their academic advisors. Fostering an inclusive environment that respect gender perspectives, thesis adviser can better support students' academic growth and emotional well-being, enhance student outcomes and promote equitable academic experiences for all.

In addition, Medaille et al. [9] emphasized that faculty related issues like personal and work attributes and the willingness to accept the hard task of being an adviser or mentor to the researchers are also significant matter to considered, which is also one of the focused of the present study. While in the 2021 study which surveyed 250 graduate students found that female students experienced microaggressions and gender bias from their male thesis advisors compared to male students [10], however the concept of advising and mentoring explored in the current study places a greater emphasis on undergraduate thesis writing and not on gender antagonisms. Moreover, the study of [11], which revealed that female doctoral candidates found that male advisors were less supportive and more critical of their work compared to male students, while, Ferm and Gustavsson [12] analyzed the 500-thesis advising evaluation revealed that female students rated male advisors significantly lower on mentoring, accessibility and overall effectiveness, which could be tested based on the findings of the present study.

Further, Stockard et al. [13] pointed out the adviser or mentor's role being essential not only for academic research development but also in shaping the moral and professional conduct of students which is similar to the present study that sought the respondents' perceived level of expectations towards the advisers and/or advising skills and mentors practices of the local thesis committee. Whilst, Ribeiro et al. [14] found that female students were more likely to seek out female advisors due to expectations of more psychosocial support and role modeling. On the other hand, Creswell and Plano Clark [15] found no significant difference in the outcomes of thesis advising between male and female students and Laerd [16] observed that male advisors spent significantly more time and provided more detailed feedback to male students compared to female students.

Lastly, the previous literature utilized social cognitive career theory while the present study is guided by the theory of social constructivism. Both theories recognized that social interaction plays a significant role in shaping individual attitude, behavior, values and choices. Equally, the theories emphasized the importance of the relationship on individual cognition and social context in molding individual behavior and growth. However, distinct differences were noted, as social cognitive theory focus on understanding the dynamics of decision and behaviors related to career development [17], the social constructivism is an educational philosophy that emphasizes how knowledge is built through social interactions.

The results of the mentioned previous literatures served as a guiding concept for the current study on determining the qualities of the thesis advisers and mentors which could be acceptable among gender groups. This study, which focuses on students' gendered expectations and evaluations of local thesis advising and mentoring practices at Camarines Norte State College (CNSC), addresses gaps identified in the mentioned and existing literature regarding gender expectations in academic advising and mentoring. It highlights the influence of gender on students' perceptions and assessments of advising and mentoring practices, emphasizing the necessity for advisors to understand gender dynamics to provide effective support. One key distinction is the social cognitive career theory that has been used in the previous literature focus mainly on the aspect of career development, while the present study is guided by a philosophy on social interactions. In addition, previous studies often examine a broader or different cultural settings, meanwhile this study is rooted in the Filipino educational landscape. Furthermore, although earlier research has addressed general trends in gendered expectations, it frequently lacks a detailed analysis of how these expectations manifest in specific academic contexts, such as thesis advising and mentoring. Lastly, no cited literature examine the contribution of these concept in the development of policy formulation that would help enhance the advising and mentoring practices in the higher education institutions.

Citing the notable gaps in thesis advising and mentoring practices previously discussed, the researcher decided to undertake this descriptive quantitative study. The objective is to analyze the gendered expectations and evaluations of students regarding the advising skills and mentoring practices of the Local Thesis Advisory Committee (LTAC) members at Camarines Norte State College in Daet, Camarines Norte, Philippines, for the academic year 2022-2023. Specifically, the study sought to 1.) identify the profile of the respondents; 2.) determine the qualities of LTAC as factors considered by the respondents in choosing thesis adviser in terms of personal and educational qualifications; 3.) identify the respondents' perceived level of expectations towards advising skills and mentoring practices of the LTAC; 4.) evaluate the LTAC traits based on the experiences of the

respondents, and, 5.) identify the challenges faced by the respondents' related to thesis advising skills and mentoring practices of the Local Thesis Advisory Committee.

## **2. METHODS**

### **2.1. Research Design**

The descriptive research design was applied in this study to describe and analyze the students' gendered expectations and evaluations towards thesis advising and mentoring practices at Camarines Norte State College. This approach allows the systematic collection and analysis of numerical data using surveys and interview [18], enabling researcher to measure variables, and describe study's result about the student's gendered perception.

### **2.2. Population and Sample**

During the conduct of this study, the College of Business and Public Administration had a total enrollment of 154 students in the Thesis Writing course, comprising 84 fourth-year students and 70 third-year students. Due to the relatively small population size, the researcher opted for total enumeration, including all 154 enrolled students as potential participants [19]. However, in the data collection phase, only 105 students chose to participate, resulting in a valid respondent pool for the study. In line with ethical considerations, the researcher respected the rights of those students who declined to participate, ensuring that no pressure was applied to compel their involvement in the research. In identifying the characteristics of the sample respondents, the researcher set qualifiers as to their gender, age, and year level. These qualifiers are significant in the study since it will give impacts to the validity, reliability, and applicability of the findings. The qualifiers or the profiles of the representative sample is essential in generalizing the findings of a larger group and it allows the researcher to select students who reflects the demographics, behaviors, and characteristics which are relevant to the research objectives. Moreover, a well defined profile of the respondents streamline data analysis.

### **2.3. Research Instrument**

The research instrument used in gathering the data needed in the study is a researcher-made-survey questionnaire. The survey instrument was divided into five (5) parts, each corresponding to the specific objectives of the study. A 4-point Likert scale was used in determining the students' gendered perceived level of expectation, as well as on the evaluation on the advising skills and mentoring practices of the thesis advisory committee. The instrument was submitted to the College Research office for expert critiquing and evaluation, then after being approved, it was tested with a representative sample of students in order to determine if the content of the survey instrument is simple to understand. The outcome of the dry run indicated that the content of the research instrument was easily understood as well as the purpose was easily grasped by the participants, hence, the finalized survey instrument was utilized during the conduct of the face-to-face interview with the respondents.

### **2.4. Data Collection and Technique**

The primary data pertaining to the study, as stated in the objectives, was collected from the participants after the necessary permits and consent had been granted to the researcher by the College Dean. The data collection was conducted through a face-to-face interviews at the respondent most convenient time. The participation of the respondents in the interview was voluntary and the sanctity of their responses was observed and merely used for the sole purpose of this study. The identity of the students who participated in the study were treated with utmost confidentiality, in accordance to the Philippine Data Privacy Act. Further, the refusal of students to participate in the study would not result in any harm or undesirable action to them in any form.

### **2.5. Data Analysis Technique**

Descriptive statistics were used in analyzing the data gathered. Percentage and frequency distribution were employed in describing the profile of the respondents and the qualities considered as factors in selecting a thesis adviser/mentor. Percentage and ranking were used in analyzing the challenges met by the respondents. The computation of the central tendency, specifically the mean was adopted in analyzing the respondents' perceived level of expectations towards advising skills and mentoring practices, as well as in evaluating the traits and qualifications based on the actual experiences of the respondents. The results of the analysis were presented in tabular form, supported with the necessary analysis and implications.

## **3. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION**

### **3.1. Profile of the respondents**

*Gender.* Table 1 shows the gender profile of the respondents wherein majority are female with a percentage of 52 and male with 40.90 percent. The least is from the member of LGBTQ+ community having only 6.67 percent.

Table 1. Gender

Category	Frequency	Percentage
Male	42	40
Female	55	52
LGBTQ+	8	8
Total	105	100

The results of the study implied that more female students are enrolled and taking the subject of Thesis Writing. This is mainly because female students are more adept at adopting the culture of academic writing. Female students tend to be more focused on details and understand that thesis writing is a pre-requisite for other subjects. This drives them to have a higher desire to finish the subject successfully. The result of the study is parallel to the study of Ermiami et al. [20] as both explained women are often willing to navigate all efforts and able to create support networks in order to overcome the challenges in writing a thesis, which helps them progress towards degree attainment. On the other hand, the representation of LGBTQ+ students in thesis writing are relatively minimal. However, it is important to note the views and opinions of this group from other perspectives on how they select and approach their thesis advisors. The findings of this study is similar to the recent study Tafahomi & Chance [21] in which both results points out that LGBTQIA+ students often faced difficulties related to social acceptance, which resulted in self-doubt and negatively impact their academic experiences. The results highlights the need for a more inclusive and supportive environment in higher education, particularly in thesis writing programs, to ensure the success of all students, regardless of their gender identity or sexual orientation.

**Age.** The 22-year-old age group has the highest representation across the gender categories of male and female, with percentages of 35.71 percent and 32.72 percent respectively. In contrast, the LGBTQ+ group has the highest percentage (62.50 percent) in the 21-year-old age range. The lowest age representation is seen in the 20-year-old age group, with percentages of 16.66 percent for males, 14.50 percent for females, and 12.50 percent for the LGBTQ+ category.

Table 2. Age

Category	Male		Female		LGBTQ+	
	Frequency	Percentage	Frequency	Percentage	Frequency	Percentage
20 y/o	7	16.66	8	14.50	1	12.50
21 y/	11	26.19	15	27.30	5	62.50
22 y/o	15	35.71	18	32.72	2	25.00
23 y/o	9	21.43	14	25.45	0	0
Total	42	100	55	100	8	100

The passage of the K to 12 programs in the Philippines has prolonged the duration of basic education from 10 to 12 years, which impacted the scheduling of the time the students need to take certain subjects, including thesis writing. According to a study Hart [22] students taking the thesis writing course are typically 21-22 years old, implying that this subject was included in the later part of the curriculum approved by the Commission on Higher Education (CHED). This scenario is the outcome of the additional two years added in the secondary education in the K to 12 programs of the Department of Education in the Philippines, as well as the changes on the composition of curriculum as mandated by the Commission on Higher Education (CHED). This further imply that the extension of basic education from 10 to 12 years under the K to 12 programs has steered to shift in the scheduling of when students need to take the thesis writing course, and these changes is due to the revised curriculum structure approved by CHED.

Age significantly influences thesis writing quality among students. The high representation among gender groups in the 21 to 22 year old appeared that these group are associated more maturity and confidence in tackling complex task associated with thesis writing, leading to more careful research preparation. The findings of the study is similar with Schwartz et al., [23] denoting that individual in this demographics are more focused on building career and advancement making every approach an opportunities for growth. Moreover, the findings could inform policy development focused on youth engagement across various sectors, including education, career development, and social progress.

**Year Level.** The data presented in Table 3 provides insights into the academic year level of the respondents. The results show that the majority of male, female, and LGBTQ+ students are in their 4th year of study with a percentage of 57.14, 56.36 and 75 respectively. The remaining percentages of each gender group are in their junior college level.

Table 3. Year Level

Category	Male		Female		LGBTQ+	
	Frequency	Percentage	Frequency	Percentage	Frequency	Percentage
3 <sup>rd</sup> year	18	42.85	24	43.63	2	25
4 <sup>th</sup> year	24	57.14	31	56.36	6	75
Total	42	100	55	100	8	100

The findings on the academic year level of the respondents have several important implications, indicating that a significant portion of the sample population is likely focused on completing final course requirements. Given that thesis writing is a common capstone requirement in the final year of study, it is safe to assume that a considerable number of these 4th year students are presently engaged in or have recently completed their thesis projects [24]. The thesis writing process is time-consuming, challenging, and stressful, as it requires students to identify a research topic, conduct a literature review, develop a methodology, collect and analyze data, and write and revise multiple drafts, hence the workload and demands of thesis writing may interject to the overall stress levels experienced by 4th year students. This situation can be a basis for the development of support services, resources, and interventions aimed at promoting student success and well-being during this vital period.

### 3.2. Qualifications of Local Thesis Advisory Committee (LTAC) as factors considered by respondents in choosing their Thesis Adviser

#### 3.2.1. Adviser personal qualifications

**Sex.** Table 4 reveals that gender plays a significant role in the preferences of thesis adviser selection among respondents. The data shows that 78.18 percent of female respondents and 75 percent of LGBTQ+ respondents were willing to choose a female thesis adviser. In contrast, 66.67 percent of male respondents opted for a male adviser. The percentage of female and LGBTQ+ respondents who chose a male adviser was only 21.82 percent and 25 percent respectively and for male respondents, the percentage who selected a female adviser was 33.33 percent.

Table 4. Sex as qualification

Indicator	Male		Female		LGBTQ+	
	Frequency	Percentage	Frequency	Percentage	Frequency	Percentage
Male adviser/mentor	28	66.67	12	21.82	2	25
Female adviser/mentor	14	33.33	43	78.18	6	75
Total	42	100	55	100	8	100

As to the qualification of the LTAC considered by the respondents in looking for thesis adviser which include personal qualities, the finding revealed that female and LGBTQ+ students overwhelmingly prefer female thesis advisors, suggests a strong preference for female mentorship among women in the college. It is likely due to wanting a mentor they can relate to and who will support them and can be attributed to a desire for same-gender role models, shared experiences, and a perceived sense of understanding and support. This preference may also reflect the ongoing efforts to address gender imbalances and promote greater representation of women in leadership positions within the academic field [25]. The results of the current study appear to contradict the findings reported by Fogelman [26] in a study on interventional radiology education. While the previous study emphasized that female residents face greater challenges in finding and receiving mentorship, and perceive significant obstacles in pursuing research and accessing effective mentorship, the findings of the current study suggest that female respondents are more easily able to obtain approval from their faculty members to serve as their thesis advisors.

On the other hand, a male respondent emphasized that having a male thesis adviser is much more acceptable and easier to communicate with, as they find male mentors more willing to spend extra time outside of normal hours to provide guidance and support for their thesis work. The findings of this study are consistent with the analysis by Goldinger & Nesher [27] on mentoring programs for women faculty. Both research highlighted the importance of having clearly defined parameters and an inclusive approach to mentor-mentee matching for institutions to consider when implementing such programs. Initiatives to challenge gender unfair beliefs and actively features the contributions of female faculty members could help to foster a more balanced and inclusive mentorship environment within academic institutions.

**Age.** The data in Table 5 indicates that age is an important factor in the selection of thesis advisers. The majority of respondents, across all gender groups, perceived the appropriate age range for a mentor to be between

46-55 years old. This preference was expressed by 78.57 percent of male respondents, 60 percent of female respondents, and 75 percent of LGBTQ+ respondents. The lowest preferred age range for a thesis adviser was 25-35 years old, which was selected by male and female respondents. For LGBTQ+ respondents, the lowest preferred age range was also 36-45 years old.

Table 5. Age as qualification

Indicators	Male		Female		LGBTQ+	
	Frequency	Percentage	Frequency	Percentage	Frequency	Percentage
25-35	4	9.53	7	12.73	0	0
36-45	5	11.90	15	27.27	2	25.00
46-55	33	78.57	33	60.00	6	75.00
Total	42	100	55	100	8	100

Results of the study shows that regardless of respondents' gender identity, majority perceived that the appropriate age range for a mentor to guide them should be between 46-55 years old. This suggests that experience and maturity are highly valued in a mentor, as individuals in their late 40s to mid-50s are likely to have accumulated significant professional and life experiences to share with their mentees. Additionally, respondents may feel more comfortable being guided by someone who has already navigated the challenges and obstacles they are facing or are likely to encounter in their own careers and personal lives [28]. The perceived age gap between mentor and mentee may be seen as valuable as it allows for a clear distinction in roles and a sense of authority and wisdom from the mentor's side. These results highlight the importance of considering age preferences when matching mentors and mentees in formal mentorship programs [29] as ensuring that mentors are within the preferred age range can help foster more effective and meaningful relationships, leading to better outcomes for both parties [30].

**Years of experience.** Table 6 presents the results of years of experience as a factor in choosing a thesis adviser. The data shows that regardless of gender, the majority of female and LGBTQ+ respondents preferred a thesis adviser with 4-6 years of experience, at 77 percent and 75 percent respectively. In contrast, 50 percent of male respondents preferred to have an adviser with 7-9 years of experience. However, the remaining respondents, across all gender groups, had diverse preferences regarding the years of experience they sought in a thesis adviser.

Table 6. Years of experience as qualification

Indicator	Male		Female		LGBTQ+	
	Frequency	Percentage	Frequency	Percentage	Frequency	Percentage
Below 1 year	0	0	0	0	0	0
1-3 years	2	4.76	2	7.28	0	0
4-6 years	7	16.67	40	77.00	6	75.00
7-9 years	21	50.00	10	18.18	2	20.00
10 years and above	12	28.57	3	5.45	0	0
Total	42	100	55	100	8	100

The findings of the study foster that year of experience is a crucial factor in choosing a thesis adviser. Respondents value the knowledge and guidance that comes with a couple of years of experience likely because it provides a balance between theoretical knowledge and practical application [31]. This concept is parallel to the findings of the current study as one female respondent explained that while the gender of their potential thesis advisers is important, what truly matters is the willingness of the faculty to become their advisers. The experience of the thesis advisers will be a crucial factor in guiding them properly and improving the quality of student's research work.

In the study of Shen et al. [32] it underscores that gender differences persist even when considering factors such as motivations for taking on tasks and the supervisor's role in providing guidance. While this finding shows similar important points to present study, it also emphasizes the continued existence of these gender-based disparities. Further, while the analysis did not find differences in preferences based on gender, for LGBTQ+ group, identity is essential to consider the significant of representation and inclusivity in the selection of thesis advisers. Moreover, the recent study of Carwell et al. [33] coincided with the finding of the current study in which both discussed that experienced advisers are equipped with valuable insights and guidance to their mentee, a seasoned advisers shows higher enthusiasm in their mentorship leading to improve academic outcomes. This ensure

that a sufficient number of advisers with significant years of experience are available to meet the demand for adviser in the college.

### 3.2.2. Adviser educational qualifications

**Educational attainment.** Table 7 revealed the preferences for educational qualification of adviser across different gender groups. LGBTQ+ respondents showed the strongest preference for advisers with a Master's degree, at 87.50 percent as well as male group with 42.86 percent preference. In contrast, female respondents had a higher preference for doctorate degree having 58.18 percent likelihood.

Table 7. Educational attainment as qualification

Indicator	Male		Female		LGBTQ+	
	Frequency	Percentage	Frequency	Percentage	Frequency	Percentage
Post Doctorate Fellowship	9	21.43	3	5.45	0	0
Doctorate degree holder	15	35.71	32	58.18	1	12.50
Master's degree	18	42.86	20	36.36	7	87.50
Total	42	100	55	100	8	100

The findings on educational attainment suggest that three gender groups have different preferences for thesis advisors. The high percentage of female respondents selecting advisors with doctoral degrees indicate a notion that female wishes to have a mentor from individuals already achieved the highest level of academic success in their field. This preference result from the belief that advisors with doctoral degrees possess all-encompassing knowledge, experience, and credibility, which, according to McGill & Joslin [34] is significant for the success of students' thesis projects. These advance academic credentials and deep knowledge in the field will provide them with precious guidance, insights, and support throughout the thesis writing until the submission of bound manuscript. This preference for highly educated and experienced advisors may also be influenced by gender and sexual orientation.

On the other hand, male respondents appear to be more satisfied with a Master's-level advisor, potentially signaling that they prioritize other advisor qualities over the specific degree attained. As male group asserted it is important that an advisor has a degree or advanced studies, however in most cases, those faculty members that have an advance study do not want to be an advisor as they already met the qualification needed for their professional growth. These students' perception of having a master degree level of thesis adviser is similar to the study [35] emphasizing that it does not a bad idea to have a master degree adviser as they also knowledgeable in setting clear expectation for the study, the ability to motivate and develop students' capabilities, and being shrewdness to communicate and involve students to creative process of thesis writing until finally deliver success on it. The findings also revealed a captivating trend that the LGBTQ+ group stood out with the highest percentage at 80 percent choosing a Masters' degree mentor. This suggests that for LGBTQ+ students, factors beyond academic credentials, such as shared identity, values, and life experiences, take priority when selecting an advisor [36] and place less emphasis on formal qualifications and instead prioritize finding a mentor who is supportive, understanding, and accepting of their identity [37].

**Academic rank.** The findings revealed preferences for academic rank as male and LGBTQ groups showed the highest preference for advisers with the rank of Instructor, with 59.52 and 62.50 percent respectively, while the 56.36 percent of female respondents choose the rank of professorial level.

Table 8. Academic rank as qualification

Indicator	Male		Female		LGBTQ+	
	Frequency	Percentage	Frequency	Percentage	Frequency	Percentage
Professorial level	5	11.90	31	56.36	0	0
Associate Professor	6	14.29	15	27.27	3	37.50
Assistant Professor	6	14.29	4	7.27	0	0
Instructor	25	59.52	5	29.41	5	62.50
Total	42	100	55	100	8	100

The academic rank key implication from the results is that most of the male and LGBTQ+ respondents, appear to value the mentorship and guidance provided by faculty instructors more than those academic ranks, such



as professors. This suggests that students may perceive the rank of faculty instructors as more accessible, approachable, and better able to offer personalized support to their advisees. Additionally, the prestige associated with having a professor as an advisor may not be as important as the quality of the mentoring relationship itself.

This finding aligns with the study Artiles [38] which indicates that mentor academic rank and the relationship matching mechanism were not associated with higher-quality mentoring relationships in thesis advising. Furthermore, the widely held belief that students whose mentors have advanced studies experience greater mentorship quality is not as well-supported by the evidence as the conducted study of Atkins et al. [39] in Canadian and Croatian faculty denoted that mentorship practices seemed to have little effect on well-being of the mentee in either country.

On the contrary, females are more likely to choose the factor of professorial rank when selecting a thesis advisor. This could be due to a variety of reasons, such as a desire to be mentored by someone with a high level of expertise and recognition in their field, or a belief that having a professor as an advisor may open doors to future opportunities. It may also reflect a tendency for females to value the prestige and status associated with having a professor as a mentor more than their male peers. The findings of the present study are similar with the study conducted by Roche [40] which found that female students often prioritize mentorship from faculty members with strong background on research and impressive academic credentials. More so a report Kim et al. [41] emphasized the need for academic institutions to develop mentorship programs that tailored to the specific needs and preferences of all students notwithstanding of their sexual orientation. The previous results highlighted similarity to this present study, as the college must consider the students mindset when developing mentorship programs and in providing guidance to students to ensure that they are able to find the appropriate mentor to guide them in reaching academic and professional goals.

**Field of specialization.** The data in Table 9 revealed that the three gender groups had differing preferences for the field of expertise of their thesis advisers. Business administration and entrepreneurship was the most preferred specialization, with 41.82 percent of female respondents and 50 percent of LGBTQ+ respondents selecting this option. In contrast, male respondents showed a stronger preference for advisers with a specialization in administration and governance, at 42.88 percent.

Table 9. Field of specialization as qualifications

Indicator	Male		Female		LGBTQ+	
	Frequency	Percentage	Frequency	Percentage	Frequency	Percentage
Accounting and Finance	10	22.81	15	27.27	2	25.00
Public Administration & Governance	18	42.88	9	16.36	2	25.00
Business Administration and Entrepreneurship	10	23.81	23	41.82	4	50.00
Office Administration and Information Systems	0	0	0	0	0	0
Tourism & Hospitality Management	0	0	1	1.82	0	0
Human Resource and Organization Management	3	7.14	2	2.64	0	0
Economics & Fiscal Management	1	2.38	5	9.09	0	0
Total	42	100	55	100	8	100

The research findings highlight numerous significant implications regarding the preferences of respondents among different gender groups in selecting thesis advisers based on advisors' field of expertise. This finding focuses the importance of offering varied advising and mentorship options in order to cater the diverse needs and preferences of the students. Through offering an array of advisers with expertise in various fields, the respondents will ensure that they have access to mentors who align with their academic and professional interests whatever their gender is. The results of the current study coincided to the findings on scientific identity for STEM students conducted by Grohnert et al. [42] which emphasizes that students searched for a mentor to fill a variety of role and catered different kinds of advice.

However, the findings also shed light on potential gender disparities the fact that female and LGBTQ+ respondents showed a stronger preference for advisers with expertise in business administration and entrepreneurship. This gender groups believed that the knowledge and skills imparted by an adviser could be applicable to their personal entrepreneurial goals like learning how to maintain strong customer relations. This

findings was further strengthened by the previous study of Moore [43] which highlighted the significant influence that an adviser's who shares knowledge and skill development can influence student's academic productivity and overall career development.

Meanwhile male respondents preferred to have advisers with background on public administration and governance. The preference for advisers with a background in this field among male respondents was rooted in the traditional gender roles and expectations in the workplace. It is common connotations in the past that men have been more likely to hold positions of authority and leadership which often require strong administrative and governance skills [44]. The previous analysis confirmed the findings of the current study emphasizing that male respondents gives importance on the administrative and governance skills which often associated with research knowledge usually linked to men.

### 3.3. Students' Gendered Perceived Level of Expectations on Advising skills and Mentoring practices of the Local Thesis Advisory Committee (LTAC)

Advising skills. Table 10 reflects distinct expectations for thesis advisory committee members based on the gender of the respondents. Male respondents have the highest expectations for committee members to possess expertise and specialization in the field of research, as well as proficiency in planning and constructing logical presentations of the research or thesis, with a mean score of 3.80. In contrast, female respondents place the highest expectations on the committee's ability to demonstrate certainty in developing or formulating the research topic, identify variables for the research, and establish direction on structuring the framework for analysis to effectively discuss the results of the study, with a mean score of 3.97. Interestingly, for LGBTQ+ respondents, the highest expectation for the local thesis advisory committee is also in demonstrating certainty in developing or formulating the research topic and identifying variables for the study, with a mean score of 4.0.

Table 10. Level of expectations on Advising Skills

Indicators	Male		Female		LGBTQ+	
	WM	AR	WM	AR	WM	AR
Possess expertise and specialization in the field of research	3.80	HE	3.93	HE	3.80	HE
Articulate in providing clear direction in the conceptualization of the study	3.70	HE	3.93	HE	3.60	HE
With certainty in developing or formulating the research topic and in identifying variables for the study	3.60	HE	3.97	HE	4.00	HE
Acquainted with different sources of information necessary for the research	3.40	HE	3.86	HE	3.20	ME
Cleverness in number analysis or got a problem-solving skill to better understand concepts and theories	3.50	HE	3.93	HE	3.40	HE
With confidence in framing the various research methodologies which are imperative in the writing process	3.50	HE	3.86	HE	3.40	HE
Can establish direction on structuring the framework for analysis to effectively discuss the results of the study	3.50	HE	3.97	HE	3.20	ME
Proficient in planning and in constructing logical presentation of the research/thesis itself	3.80	HE	3.83	HE	3.60	HE
Can help identify the application of the result of the study	3.40	HE	3.90	HE	3.80	HE
Instituting linkages or connection that benefit from the shared result of the study/ or having an extensive research network	3.40	HE	3.90	HE	3.40	HE
Average Weighted Mean	3.56	HE	3.90	HE	3.54	HE

Legend: Level of expectation

WM= Weighted Mean 3.26 - 4.00 Highest Expectation 1.76 – 2.50 Fair Expectation  
AR= Adjectival Rating 2.51 - 3.25 Moderately Expectation 1.00 – 1.75 Low Expectation

In terms of advising skills, the study revealed that male students tend to value their thesis advisers' knowledge and presentation abilities very high. The results emphasized that male students perceive knowledge and feedback from their advisors a crucial factor in academic success. A study conducted in parallel settings also suggested highly valued academic advisors who can provide constructive feedback and demonstrate strong presentation skills that enhance the learning experience and satisfaction with the supervisory relationship [45], this result is similar with the current study's findings. The findings further indicate that male students tend to prefer

male leaders due to societal stereotypes associating masculinity with leadership effectiveness. The research emphasizes that these perceptions can influence students' academic motivation and behaviors toward their educators, suggesting a systemic bias towards male authority figures within educational settings

On the other hand, female and LGBTQ+ students place higher value on the committee's capacity to assist in developing and refining the research topic and identifying relevant variables. This indicates that thesis advisors should consider implementing more personalized and differentiated advising approaches to better assist the unique needs and preferences of the students among the gender groups [46]. The results of the current study supports the presumption of McBrien et al. [47] emphasizing that the selection of a suitable thesis advisor is crucial as these individuals should possess the essential knowledge and skills to guide the diverse group of students throughout the entire research process. The findings also indicate that while there are some common expectations, such as the need for expertise and certainty in research development, the specific priorities and preferences for thesis advisory committee members vary based on the gender role and identity of the respondents. Understanding these differences can help ensure that students receive the most effective and tailored guidance throughout their thesis research process.

**Mentoring Skills.** The data in Table 11 presents the level on the expectations of the three (3) gender groups regarding the mentoring skills of the local advisory committee. For the male group, the highest expectation is for the committee to be familiar with the students and vice versa, and to possess work ethics and moral integrity, with a mean of 3.80. For the female group, their highest expectation is for the committee to possess work ethics and moral integrity, with a mean of 4.0. Interestingly, for the LGBTQ+ group, their highest expectation is for the committee to deliver both positive and negative comments, and to help students receive them in a constructive manner, with a mean of 4.00.

Table 11. Level of expectations on Mentoring Practices

Indicator	Male		Female		LGBTQ+	
	WM	AR	WM	AR	WM	AR
Should belong to the pool of research experts or has a known reputation in research work in the academe	3.50	HE	3.87	HE	3.40	HE
Familiar with the students and vice versa	3.80	HE	3.83	HE	3.20	HE
Shows interest and passion in leading or guiding the student	3.70	HE	3.93	HE	3.80	HE
Must possess work ethics and moral integrity	3.80	HE	4.00	HE	3.60	HE
Willing to make time and will respond to the students concerns	3.50	HE	3.93	HE	3.40	HE
Adopt friendly approach towards the students	3.40	HE	3.76	HE	3.60	HE
Provide regular feedback on students' performance	3.20	ME	3.90	HE	3.80	HE
Deliver positive as well as negative comments and helps students taking it in constructive manner	3.60	HE	3.97	HE	4.00	HE
Interact well with other members of the thesis advisory committee	3.50	HE	3.73	HE	3.40	HE
Lead by example, showing commitment and innovative ideas as fundamental elements in research writing	3.50	HE	3.93	HE	3.80	HE
Average Weighted Mean	3.55	HE	3.89	HE	3.62	HE

Legend: Level of expectation:

WM= Weighted Mean  
AR= Adjectival Rating

3.26 - 4.00 Highest Expectation  
2.51 - 3.25 Moderately Expectation

1.76 – 2.50 Fair Expectation  
1.00 – 1.75 Low Expectation

On the mentoring practices, results denoted that there are distinct expectations across the gender groups of respondents regarding the mentoring skills of the local thesis advisory committee (LTAC) in the college which carries important effects for the effectiveness of the mentoring program. The need for a tailored strategies to mentoring that addresses the unique concerns and needs of each gender group is necessary. The study of [9] further emphasis similarity that male group posits the highest value on the mentor's familiarity with students and their possession of strong work ethics and moral integrity, thereby suggesting that committee members should focus on building rapport and expressing these traits and qualities when working with male students. Conversely, the group of female respondents' primary expectation is for the mentors to prioritize and promote strong work ethics and moral integrity. This expectation noted the importance these students place on having role models and mentors

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who represent positive attributes. By emphasizing the significance of a strong work ethic and moral compass, the female group is signaling that they want to engage with local thesis advisory committee members who will set an example of professionalism, responsibility, and ethical conduct. The findings of current study highlighting the importance of having role model and mentors in the process of thesis writing contradict to the findings of the study by Sobotker [48] suggesting that mentor and peer support were not universal and do not have a significant influence on the respondent's academic research outputs.

Meanwhile, the LGBTQ+ group high expectation for the LTAC is to deliver both positive and negative feedback in a constructive manner highlighting the value of developing specialized communication skills among advisor. The LGBTQ+ students may require a more distinct and sensitive approach to feedback, where the local thesis committee must be skilled at providing balanced, growth-oriented guidance that is tailored to the unique needs and experiences of LGBTQ+ individuals. The findings of the current study are supported by the previous analysis on the inclusion of LGBTQ+ students across education systems conducted by Tzioti et al. [49] which explains that LGBTQ+ individuals often require extra support and protection to succeed in their education and reach their full potential. As members of a marginalized group, LGBTQ+ students are often subjects of social discrimination, physical, psychological, and even mental gender inequality, thus creating a positive and supportive feedback from mentors and role models even more critical.

### 3.4. Students gendered evaluation on the traits of the Local Thesis Advisory Committee (LTAC)

**Traits.** The results in Table 12 reveals that male respondents evaluate their thesis advisers as possessing excellent traits of intelligence and inquisitiveness regarding trends, topics, and developments in a diverse field of industry. These advisers also have substantial knowledge and experience in thesis advising and mentoring, with a mean score of 3.70 interpreted as excellent. On the other side, female respondents rated their thesis advisers as excellent in being honest, explicit, and refined in providing feedback to avoid causing offense, with a mean score of 3.97. The LGBTQ+ respondents evaluated the thesis advisers as excellent in the qualifications of being compassionate, showing genuine interest, and encouraging them to freely and tactfully share their opinions. These advisers also demonstrate objectivity and fairness in guiding the students, which helps them grow intellectually and emotionally, both having a mean score of 3.80.

Table 12. Traits as evaluated by the respondents

Indicators	Male		Female		LGBTQ+	
	WM	AR	WM	AR	WM	AR
He/she possessed intelligent and inquisitiveness on trends, topics, and developments in a diverse field of industry	3.70	E	3.87	E	3.40	E
He/she has knowledge and experience in thesis advising and mentoring	3.70	E	3.93	E	3.60	E
He/she has the ability and willingness to communicate with his/her mentee	3.20	G	3.20	G	3.60	E
He/she is approachable, with available time and the ability to listen which is essential in mentorship	3.10	G	3.00	G	3.10	G
5.5 He/she shows care and concerns on the progress and development of my research study	3.20	G	3.20	G	3.20	G
5.6 He/she is compassionate, shows genuineness and encourage me to freely shares my opinion openly and truthfully honest and tactful way	3.60	E	3.87	E	3.80	E
5.7 He/she is honest, explicit and refined in giving feedback so that I cannot feel offended	3.50	E	3.97	E	3.60	E
5.8 He/she shows objectivity and fairness in guiding me which helps me grow intellectually and emotionally	3.50	E	3.90	E	3.80	E
5.9. He/she has long endurance in dealing with my shortcomings or weaknesses	3.20	G	3.87	E	3.30	G

5.10 He/she has commitment to broad thinking and to innovation which helps in improving my study	3.60	E	3.97	E	3.40	E
5.11 He/she has personal support, emotional, moral upright and values of professionalism	3.50	E	3.20	G	3.60	E
Average Weighted Mean	3.44	E	3.71	E	3.42	E
<i>Legend:</i>	<i>WM= Weighted Mean</i>	3.26 - 4.00	<i>Excellent</i>	1.76 – 2.50	<i>Average</i>	
	<i>AR= Adjectival Rating</i>	2.51- 3.25	<i>Good</i>	1.00 – 1.75	<i>Poor</i>	

Results provides valuable insights in evaluating the traits and qualification of the advisers based on respondents' actual experiences, and the key qualities and qualifications that are highly valued in effective thesis mentorship. The importance of subject matter expertise and intellectual engagement is one of the key traits that the LTAC must possess. This excellent evaluation is crucial for building credibility and trust with male students/mentees. Thesis advisers who can demonstrate cutting-edge understanding of the field and a genuine passion for exploring new ideas are likely to be more effective in guiding and motivating male students throughout the research process [50]. Additionally, the advisor should be updated on the latest trends in conducting research, such as methodology, getting the appropriate sample size, and writing the final phase of the research paper, which can be very tedious.

Apart from male evaluation on traits of thesis advisory committee, female rated highest evaluation on the traits of being sensitive and the desire to give emotional support is significant traits that students are looking for a thesis adviser. The high ratings given by female respondents for advisers who provide honest, explicit, and refined feedback indicated the importance of emotional intelligence and sensitivity in supporting this gender group of students. The result of this study is similar to the study by Tan & Kelly [51] both the analysis are pointing out that thesis advisers who can offer constructive criticism in a tactful manner, while also demonstrating a genuine commitment to the student's intellectual and personal growth, are more likely to foster a positive mentoring relationship with female mentee.

The results of the study further indicate the importance of inclusivity and empowering LGBTQ+ students. The excellent ratings received by thesis advisors who shows compassion, genuine interest, and the ability to create a safe space for LGBTQ+ students to share their perspectives freely highlight the critical need for inclusive and empowering mentorship [52]. Thesis advisors who can exhibit educational and social competence, and a commitment to supporting the unique needs and experiences of LGBTQ+ students are more likely to help these gender groups' thriving academically and personally. This is important because LGBTQ+ students often feel misinterpreted or even accused of "bida-bida" (showing off) [53]. The current finding of this study is parallel to the analysis conducted by Jones [54], which indicated that the best way to serve LGBTQ+ individuals is through a candid yet compassionate approach [55]. Through cultivating a range of intellectual, emotional, and interpersonal skills, advisers can create a more inclusive and supportive environment that empowers all students to reach their full potential.

### 3.5. Challenges encountered by the students across gender groups regarding thesis advising skills and mentoring practices of the Local Thesis Advisory Committee (LTAC)

**Challenges.** Table 13 revealed the challenges encountered relative to the Local Thesis Advisory Committee (LTAC), with distinct experiences across different gender dimensions. The 42 male respondents ranked the challenges of facing rejection from the LTAC to become an adviser or panel member as their primary concern. Despite initial enthusiasm and promises to meet regularly, the LTAC members often delayed their replies, left messages unseen, and failed to religiously keep their commitments, leaving the male respondents in a state of uncertainty.

In contrast, the 52 female respondents experienced that LTAC provided ambiguous suggestions, despite dedicating time to advise them. The comments and suggestions made by the LTAC members often contradicted itself, with recommendations given during one meeting differing in the next. This left the female respondents repeatedly revising the content of their papers based on uncertain, ever-changing advice. The advisers and panel members also delayed their replies, left messages unseen, and only resurfaced to meet the respondents a week before their defense, after their messages had gone unanswered for an extended period.

The LGBTQ+ respondents faced challenges similar to both the male and female groups. Added to that this gender group perceived that LTAC members, though familiar with gender rights, still showed gender bias, making them the subject of some humor. This left them feeling invalidated and sensing an unwelcoming environment. Moreover, the LGBTQ+ respondents also ranked the challenges perceived as faculty advising and mentoring being an additional task (burden) on their workload.

Table 13. Challenges encountered by the students across gender groups

No	Challenges/ issues experienced by the respondents	Male		Female		LGBTQ	
		Freq	Rank	Freq	Rank	Freq	Rank
1	We faced rejection from potential advisers and panel members due to various personal reasons, such as busy schedules, already handling multiple student groups, misalignment with their field of expertise, lacking a master's degree, having reached their maximum advising points, or exhibiting bias towards students with lower intellectual capacities.	42	1.5	48	3.5	6	7
2	Advisers showed little time or interest for students, especially those with slower comprehension. These students proved difficult to approach, ultimately driving us to seek out another faculty for support (parang napilitan lang na tanggapin kami us advisee).	35	6.5	30	8	8	1.5
3	Accepted us but at the middle of the thesis progress, left us and suggested to look for another adviser	20	13	20	9.5	3	12.5
4	Despite their initial enthusiasm and promises to meet with us regularly, advisers and panel members often delayed their replies, left our messages unseen, and failed to religiously keep their commitments, leaving us hanging in the wilderness of uncertainty. They would only resurface to meet us a day before our defense, after our messages had gone unanswered for an extended period.	42	1.5	50	2	8	1.5
5	Mentors provided ambiguous suggestions, though dedicating time to advise us, yet the guidance they offered often contradicted itself. The recommendations they gave during one meeting would differ in the next, leaving us to repeatedly revise the content of our paper based on uncertain, ever-changing advice.	40	3	55	1	5	8.5
6	Lack of knowledge and research skills since they take Non-Thesis program/degrees in Master class	5	15	10	15	2	14.5
7	When it came to other members of our thesis panel, we found it challenging to reconcile the various ideas and suggestions they provided.	35	6.5	48	3.5	4	9.5
8	Instead of supporting us, our adviser is the one who crash us during the defense	30	10	20	9.5	3	12.5
9	Feeling privileged (paimportante) and always wanted to be treated as special	39	4	45	5.5	7	6
10	We found out that some faculty members are not aware of the University's research agenda and process since they are asking us to asked about it at the Research Office	25	11	15	12.5	2	14.5
11	Sometimes our adviser and panel member are difficult to accept suggestions from the students itself and with other panel members	24	12	15	12.5	4	9.5
12	Some LTACs members though familiar with gender rights but there are still showing gender bias especially among us LGBTQ+ students	35	6.5	20	9.5	8	1.5
13	We knew the perception of faculty as advising and mentoring is additional task (burden) on their work load	38	5	45	5.5	8	1.5
14	At times the some LTACs members are making us subject of their humour, feeling us invalidated. As LGBTQ+ students, we often felt hesitant to reach out, sensing an unwelcoming environment	15	14	15	12.5	8	1.5
15	We felt improperly guided as our advisers steered the concept of our paper to align with their own opinions, rather than helping us improve our work. The changes	35	6.5	40	7	5	8.5

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they suggested merely reflected their personal views, sidelining our original concept for the study.

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Results implies that there is a challenge in obtaining thesis advisers as students faced significant hardships in finding suitable thesis advisers and mentors due to various personal and professional reasons. Qudah & Al-Zoubi [56] point out that academic institutions need to level up and fortifying stakeholder involvement in research; this is significant concept to the present study as the findings highlighted the unavailability or unwillingness of some faculty members due to their hectic workload. This can lead to students battling to find appropriate guidance and support for their thesis projects. Another challenges the respondents encountered is the lack of mentorship and commitment from the adviser as the results indicate that even when students are able to secure advisers, the quality of mentorship and commitment from these advisers may be missing. Advisers may exhibit disinterest, provide inconsistent or contradictory guidance, and fail to maintain regular communication and meetings with their advisees. These left students feeling unsupported, uncertain, and unable to make meaningful progress on their theses.

The findings of the current study dealt with the challenges faced by the respondents is the same with the results of the investigation by Smith & Johnson [57] which underscores that academic advising have impact to the student learning outcomes and satisfaction. Both studies highlighted that open communication and regular meetings between advisers and students are critical in improving student performance in their thesis writing. Results further substantiated that when advisers preserve constant communication and show genuine interest in their advisees' progress, students report higher satisfaction levels. On the contrary, many advisers also struggle with time constraints resulted in competing their responsibilities, leading to the inconsistent decisions in evaluating the paper of the students. This makes difficult to the students in reconciling the various ideas and suggestions provided by different members of their thesis panels. The outcomes of the study by Sanchez et al. [58] shows resemblance to the study's results which revealed students' feeling unsupported thus hindering academic success and create confusion and lead to repeated revisions of the thesis content, as students struggle to navigate the conflicting guidance they received. As to LGBTQ+ respondents, they face additional challenges in their thesis advising experiences where some of them reported feeling hesitant to reach out to advisers due to a perceived unwelcoming environment, while others noted instances of gender bias from thesis panel members. The result of the current study is similar to the finding of previous study by Wright-Mair & Marine [59] emphasizing that these experiences can further complicate the difficulties faced by LGBTQ+ students in securing appropriate mentorship and support for their research works.

Henceforth, the results of the study provide valuable insights that have significant implications for both educational practice and policy. Acknowledging that respondents from different gender groups may hold varying expectations regarding their thesis advisors, the LTAC can customize their mentoring strategies to promote more inclusive relationships. This tailored approach not only addresses the diverse needs of students but also aligns with existing literature that features the importance of effective advising in enhancing student success and retention. In fostering an environment where all students feel supported and understood, educational institutions can improve outcomes and ensure that every student has the opportunity to thrive in their academic pursuits.

However, even though the study provides valuable insights into the gendered expectations and evaluations of thesis advising practices among students. This limitation restricts the generalizability of the findings to other educational settings, particularly those with different cultural, social, or institutional dynamics. The distinct characteristics of Camarines Norte State College, including its specific demographics and cultural influences, may not reflect the experiences of students in other educational institutions situated in other regions and other part of the Philippines. Moreso, the reliance on the numerical approach may lead to possible biases as students' perceptions and evaluations can be influenced by personal experiences and subjective interpretations. Combining both the quantitative and qualitative approaches could provide effective perspective thereby strengthening the overall reliability and robustness of the research outcomes.

#### 4. CONCLUSIONS

The findings of this study underscore the pressing need for enhancements within the Local Thesis Advisory Committee (LTAC) to create a more inclusive and supportive academic environment. Aligning LTAC qualifications with gender equality standards, along with improving training for committee members, are critical steps toward meeting student expectations and promoting equity in thesis advising. The diverse expectations surrounding advising and mentoring practices highlight the necessity for comprehensive programs that cater to the varied needs of students. Implementing a structured feedback mechanism will facilitate regular assessments of LTAC performance, ensuring accountability and enabling targeted improvements to enhance effectiveness in this area. Moreover, the study emphasizes the importance of a thorough review of existing research policies related to advising and mentoring practices within the LTAC. This review is essential for adapting to current trends in higher education, ensuring that these practices remain relevant and effective.

To further support all students, the Camarines Norte State College must cultivate an inclusive environment that respects and values diversity, regardless of gender identity or sexual orientation. This commitment will ensure that every student has equitable access to mentorship and resources necessary for their success in thesis writing. Finally, it is recommended that the school governing board, through the Office of the Vice President for Research and Extension, conduct a technical review of current research policies and guidelines. This review should lead to the adoption of new rules and policies that align with contemporary trends in higher education, particularly those that promote inclusive education for all. Through implementing these recommendations, Camarines Norte State College can significantly enhance its thesis advising framework, ultimately benefiting all students and fostering a culture of diversity and excellence.

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