

## **Pedagogical strategies for guiding academic work in the classroom context of higher education**

*Estratégias pedagógicas na orientação de trabalhos académicos em contexto sala de aulas no ensino superior*

*Estrategias pedagógicas para la orientación de trabajos académicos en el contexto del aula en la educación superior*

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### **ABSTRACT**

In the process of supervising academic papers, it is common for lecturers to observe students' difficulties in preparing scientific papers, as this practice requires attention, dedication, understanding, and a critical stance. Many students are not sufficiently prepared for this activity, demonstrating weaknesses especially in their capacity for interpretation. This reality is observed among students at Instituto Superior Politécnico Maravilha (ISPM) in Benguela, particularly those in the 3<sup>rd</sup> year of Primary Education programme, who show difficulties in various subjects of the curriculum regarding structure, methodological procedures, and citations; situations that in some cases stem from a lack of uniformity in the guidance offered by lecturers. Given this, the guiding question is: which pedagogical strategies can be implemented to enhance the guidance of students' academic papers? The objective was to analyse the pedagogical strategies that effectively contribute to enhancing the supervision process. The study is based on an interpretive and descriptive paradigm, of both quantitative and qualitative nature, allowing for the identification of problems in specific contexts, taking into account authors such as Sampieri, Collado and Lucio, Vieira, and Mendes. The results indicate that the most effective pedagogical strategies include lecturer training in the use of information and communication technologies, the organisation of methodological improvement seminars, the promotion of experience sharing among lecturers, and participation in scientific research activities. It is recommended to maintain a consistent supervisory philosophy with unified language.

**Keywords:** Pedagogical Strategy; Supervision; Academic Paper.

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## RESUMO

No processo de orientação de trabalhos acadêmicos, é recorrente a constatação, por parte dos docentes, das dificuldades dos estudantes na elaboração de trabalhos científicos, uma vez que essa prática requer atenção, empenho, compreensão e postura crítica. Muitos discentes não se encontram suficientemente preparados para essa actividade, evidenciando fragilidades especialmente na capacidade de interpretação. Tal realidade é observada entre os estudantes do Instituto Superior Politécnico Maravilha (ISPM) em Benguela, em particular os do 3.º ano do curso de Ensino Primário, que demonstram dificuldades em diversas disciplinas do plano curricular, quanto à estruturação, procedimentos metodológicos e citações, situações que em alguns casos decorrem da ausência de uniformidade na orientação oferecida pelos docentes. Diante disso, a questão norteadora é: que estratégias pedagógicas podem ser implementadas para aprimorar a orientação de trabalhos acadêmicos aos estudantes? O objectivo consistiu em analisar as estratégias pedagógicas que efectivamente contribuam para o aprimoramento do processo de orientação desses trabalhos. O estudo fundamenta-se em um paradigma interpretativo e descritivo, de natureza quantitativa e qualitativa, possibilitando a identificação de problemas em contextos específicos, tendo em conta autores como Sampieri, Collado e Lucio, Vieira e Mendes. Os resultados indicam que as estratégias pedagógicas mais eficazes incluem a capacitação docente para o uso de tecnologias de informação e comunicação, a realização de seminários metodológicos de superação, a promoção da troca de experiências entre docentes, a participação em actividades de investigação científica. Recomenda-se a manutenção de uma filosofia de orientação consistente, com linguagem unificada.

**Palavras-chave:** Estratégia Pedagógica; Orientação; Trabalho Acadêmico.

## RESUMEN

En el proceso de orientación de trabajos académicos, es frecuente que los docentes constaten las dificultades de los estudiantes en la elaboración de trabajos científicos, ya que esta práctica requiere atención, dedicación, comprensión y una postura crítica. Muchos estudiantes no se encuentran suficientemente preparados para esta actividad, evidenciando debilidades especialmente en la capacidad de interpretación. Esta realidad se observa entre los estudiantes del Instituto Superior Politécnico Maravilha (ISPM) en Benguela, particularmente en los del 3.er año de la carrera de Educación Primaria, quienes presentan dificultades en diversas asignaturas del plan de estudios en cuanto a estructuración, procedimientos metodológicos y citas; situaciones que, en algunos casos, se deben a la falta de uniformidad en la orientación brindada por los docentes. Ante ello, la pregunta orientadora es: ¿qué estrategias pedagógicas pueden implementarse para mejorar la orientación de los trabajos académicos de los estudiantes? El objetivo consistió en analizar las estrategias pedagógicas que contribuyan de manera efectiva al perfeccionamiento del proceso de orientación de dichos trabajos. El estudio se fundamenta en un paradigma interpretativo y descriptivo, de carácter cuantitativo y cualitativo, que permite identificar problemas en contextos específicos, teniendo en cuenta a autores como Sampieri, Collado y Lucio, Vieira y Mendes. Los resultados indican que las estrategias pedagógicas más eficaces incluyen la capacitación docente para el uso de tecnologías de información y comunicación, la realización de seminarios metodológicos de superación, la promoción del intercambio de experiencias entre docentes y la participación en actividades de investigación científica. Se recomienda mantener una filosofía de orientación coherente, con un lenguaje unificado.

**Palabras clave:** Estrategia Pedagógica; Orientación; Trabajo Académico.

## INTRODUCTION

Research has been gaining increasing relevance in the academic and professional lives of students and lecturers, becoming an indispensable instrument for theoretical-practical construction and for proposing changes in society. This activity involves essential elements such as research itself, teaching, and extension.

Academic or scientific papers “consist of writings resulting from research developments conducted both in Undergraduate and Postgraduate courses. There are several types of academic papers and their designations, and there is no consensus on the meanings of the different terms employed” (Prodanov & Freitas, 2013, p. 143).

In all scientific papers, quality of method, organisation, rigour, observation, and respect for technical standards are required. The student only achieves success and effective learning when they first conduct an analytical study of the document, seeking to know, understand, and interpret it, in order subsequently to document it. For Marconi and Lakatos (2011, p. 104), academic work “is a process of execution, presentation, and elaboration where data on the subject to be treated are collected”. Any research developed progressively, subordinate to training institutions and the traditional logic of action of higher education, is considered an academic paper.

However, it is observed that many academic papers developed by students in the classroom are not presented uniformly, revealing a disconnect between theory and practice. Difficulties are observed that include spelling and agreement errors, failures in citations, bibliographic references, interpretation, and structuring. Regardless of each specialist’s work plan, every project should bring consistent clarifications about the theme to be addressed in the classroom.

There is therefore an authentic disarticulation and a vicious cycle characterised by excessive use of copying (copy-paste), scarcity of bibliography, and weakness in lecturer guidance. In many cases, students carry out their works solely with the objective of obtaining grades, treating the elaboration as an end in itself rather than as a formative process. The guidance provided is not always satisfactory and does not follow uniform standards, resulting in deficient elaboration and frequently unmet deadlines.

The structure of the academic paper is usually defined by the training institution, which clearly establishes the presentation parameters, as well as the stages, instruments and evaluation strategies (Rampazzo, 2013). The main objective of this study is to present the formatting and graphic presentation norms, as well as to describe the necessary stages for the execution of the academic paper.

The researchers do not intend to carry out an exhaustive approach to the topic, as the main topics of scientific methodology are already regulated by the Institution. For this purpose, reference was primarily made to the current parameters and technical norms in the Institute, as well as to professional experience, in order to offer a modest contribution to the reflection on the issue under analysis, particularly in the classroom context.

In the following sections, the theoretical background related to the theme is presented, followed by the methodology used and, finally, the presentation and discussion of the results, as well as the most relevant conclusions of the study.

## **THEORETICAL BACKGROUND**

### **Characterisation of an academic paper**

Research in science means seeking, through readings, experiments, interviews, surveys and observations, the necessary information to understand the general and specific causes of a particular phenomenon.

Although there are distinctions between the various types of scientific papers, especially those carried out in the classroom, it is essential to recognise that all share research and reflection procedures that require rigour, autonomy and creativity (Severino, 2007). In this sense, an academic paper is understood as a scientific task that addresses a single topic or problem with specific treatment. The term designates a variety of productions that, despite different purposes, result from scientific research. It is characterised, mainly, by the depth of analysis, the consistency of data and the ability to generate knowledge and didactic value.

Scientific or academic papers “consist of writings resulting from activities developed within undergraduate and postgraduate courses. There are various typologies and denominations, without a definitive consensus regarding the meanings of each one” (Cervo, Bervian & Silva, 2013, p. 143). According to Akkaya and Aydın (2018), academic writing is the process of sharing original research with other scholars, following standardised scientific rules and requiring rigorous adherence to methodological stages that guarantee validity and credibility.

In the classroom context, these papers take various forms, requiring students to integrate the content covered and the competencies acquired throughout the course. More than a curricular requirement, such productions represent an opportunity for practical application of knowledge, stimulating intellectual autonomy and research capacity. As Barbeiro, Pereira and Carvalho (2015) note, in universities, preparing students for academic writing is still not an institutional priority, often depending on the interest of individual lecturers.

The relevance of academic papers also manifests as a pedagogical instrument, as it favours the organisation of teaching processes that enhance the development of acquired skills (Faria, Cunha & Felipe, 2007; Morgado, 2004). For the lecturer, the guidance of these activities requires planning that includes: what to do and why, to whom to direct, how to execute, with what resources, in what time and who will participate. Recent studies demonstrate that creativity is an essential element of academic work, adding to extrinsic factors that ensure confidence and scientific recognition (Educação & Realidade, 2019).

When applied in the classroom, academic papers challenge students to seek, in diverse sources, elements that complement the knowledge acquired during the course (Moreira, 2020). In the same vein, Festas, Seixas and Matos (2022) add that, in this process, students reveal distinct reading, writing and source use strategies, which reinforces the need for rigorous follow-up by the lecturer to ensure scientific quality and pedagogical relevance.

### **Structure of academic papers**

Every academic paper should present a logical sequence and a coherent organisation, in order to provide clarity and facilitate the reader’s understanding. According to APA standards (7th Edition), the structure of the document may vary depending on the level of research and the recommendations of the responsible lecturer.

An academic paper is characterised as a formal document, resulting from scientific research, produced based on a structure that follows previously defined rules. This type of production is generally organised in three main levels: chapters, sections and subsections. The corresponding titles for each level should not be excessively long, but must be sufficiently explanatory to ensure understanding of the content (Pereira & Polpa, 2006).

The hierarchical arrangement of chapters, sections and subsections requires uniformity, especially regarding graphic formatting. Thus, chapter titles are usually written in capital letters and in bold, while section and subsection titles use typographic differentiations according to their position in the textual structure. This standardisation contributes to the coherence and readability of the document (Silva & Andrade, 2019).

Regarding graphic presentation, it should reflect the sobriety and rigour inherent to scientific activity, and should not be confused with mere aesthetic presentation. Observance of formatting, citation, and referencing rules is an indispensable condition for ensuring the validity and scientific nature of the work (Costa, 2020). Furthermore, punctuation, spelling, and style play a central role in text quality, as they reveal the researcher's seriousness and their communicative competence (Oliveira & Santos, 2018).

To be considered effective, well-structured, and methodologically consistent, an academic work must meet the previously established technical and scientific criteria. This includes clarity of objectives, relevance of the adopted methodology, and the capacity for critical analysis of results (Machado & Ferreira, 2021).

In this sense, the introduction of Research Methodology curricular unit in various higher education courses represents a relevant strategy to foster research and prepare students for scientific production. The adoption of specific norms and standards favours not only standardisation but also comprehension and guidance in the teaching-learning process.

Nevertheless, the following table presents elements that may be optional or mandatory and the technical standard number that governs them. Remembering that these are proposals whereby lecturers can follow the standard to facilitate the guidance and comprehension of academic papers in the classroom context.

**Table 1.**  
Structure of Academic Paper

Structure	Elements	Requirement
<b>1. Pre-Textual</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Cover, Title page</li> <li>• Dedication, Acknowledgements</li> <li>• Abstract</li> <li>• Table(s) of contents</li> <li>• List of illustrations, of tables.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Mandatory</li> <li>• Optional</li> <li>• Mandatory</li> <li>• Mandatory</li> <li>• Optional</li> </ul>
<b>2. Textual</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Introduction</li> <li>• Development</li> <li>• Conclusion</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Mandatory</li> </ul>
<b>3. Post-Textual</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Bibliographic References</li> <li>• Appendix(es), Annex(es)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Mandatory</li> <li>• Optional</li> </ul>

## **Main Difficulties in the Elaboration of Academic papers**

The term difficulty, in an educational context, should be understood not merely as an obstacle, but as an opportunity for learning. As Perrenoud (2001, p. 35) highlights, “do teachers have knowledge, but do they also have competences?” In this line, the challenge lies in transforming obstacles into possibilities for growth, requiring both the lecturer and the student to mobilise investigative, methodological, and critical competences

In higher education, it is common to observe that many students are not sufficiently prepared to carry out scientific work. Difficulties arise in different dimensions, such as the understanding and interpretation of texts, critical analysis of consulted sources, logical structuring of ideas, as well as the appropriation of writing and formatting norms (Sousa, 2015; Lopes & Silva, 2021).

Academic paper, by requiring high methodological and scientific rigour, reveals itself as one of the most effective instruments for the development of research competencies. However, the production process is still permeated by structural flaws. Among the most common difficulties are: absence of solid theoretical foundation, inadequate use of citations, inconsistencies in writing and a strong dependence on materials available on the internet, which frequently results in plagiarism (Alfredo, 2016; Santos & Rocha, 2020).

Another point to highlight refers to the lack of uniformity in lecturer guidance, which generates insecurity in students regarding the correct elaboration of their papers. In the same vein, Andrade (2007) observes that, without clear guidelines, scientific production loses rigour and becomes more vulnerable to structural and methodological errors. Moreover, pressure for grades to the detriment of learning leads some students to view the elaboration of papers as a mere formality, neglecting the function of research and knowledge production (Ferreira & Lima, 2019).

The impact of these difficulties is visible in fragmented, inconsistent, and scarcely original works, marked by uncritical use of references and absence of articulation between the constituent elements of the research. Such weaknesses result in productions that do not meet minimum scientific requirements, compromising both academic training and the development of research competence (Costa & Menezes, 2021).

Transdisciplinarity and lecturer guidance are, therefore, fundamental elements for the preparation of academic papers in higher education to cease being merely a curricular requirement and become a real opportunity for scientific and research training. Thus, it is up to the institution to promote pedagogical conditions that favour research practice, ensuring the acquisition of competencies and the construction of critical thinking (Andrade, 2007; Moreira, 2022).

## **Pedagogical strategies for guiding academic papers**

Pedagogical strategies play a fundamental role in the qualification of academic research and in the scientific training of the student. These strategies, widely discussed in communities of practice, aim to structure the teaching-learning process in order to make research clearer, more organised and more productive. According to Vieira and Vieira (2005, p. 53), “a strategy can be understood, in a broad sense, as a sequence of procedures, actions and activities selected with the aim of achieving a specific objective”.

From the perspective of Franco (2003, p. 62), pedagogical guidance represents “the way we know and interact with the space around us”. This view evidences that guidance is not limited to technical norms but is also translated into relational practices, mediated by

the interaction between lecturer and student. Before any decision, Cresweu (2007, p. 51) “suggests three fundamental steps: i. identify the research strategy to be used; ii. provide historical information on the topic and, iii. discuss the relevance of the strategy in relation to the proposed objectives”.

In the same vein, Estanqueiro (2012, p. 87) adds that “research papers, whether individual or group, allow the student to deepen competencies in various domains, such as source selection, critical analysis of information and written production”. Therefore, it is indispensable that lecturer guidance be clear and compatible with students’ capacities, available resources and time dedicated for production.

In our view, it is up to the lecturer to foster meaningful learning through appropriate pedagogical strategies, avoiding mere content reproduction. Thus, the guidance of academic papers should stimulate the student to reflect, interpret, analyse and produce knowledge, promoting an environment of motivation and appreciation research.

However, Perraudeau (2006) and Correia (2013) reinforce that the help provided to the student should, above all, be instrumental, in the sense of supplying basic intellectual needs. In this process, we believe that collaboration between different lecturers of the same class is essential, as transversal competencies that cross disciplines cannot be worked on in isolation. The author points out four strategic axes for effective pedagogical practice: i. identify difficulties; ii. plan work forms; iii. distribute responsibilities between lecturers and, iv. reinforce the application of developed competences.

In the same sense, Cardoso (2013, p. 42) also observes that effective guidance requires the active participation of higher education teachers, which includes:

- Delegation of competences: decentralising processes and involving different professionals in decision-making.
- Involvement of teachers: promoting collaboration between teachers in the planning of academic papers.
- Consistency and coherence: ensuring that students' scientific production is aligned with institutional culture, avoiding individualistic practices.
- Positive climate in the classroom: creating a favourable environment for dialogue, cooperation and collective learning.

In summary, the application of appropriate pedagogical strategies contributes to the prevention of plagiarism, improves the organisation of scientific work and ensures greater quality in academic productions. In this context, the teacher should prioritise actions such as: i. requesting preliminary drafts; ii. checking structural coherence; iii. critical analysis of the sources used and, iv. clarity in defining the objectives of each production (Silva & Mendes, 2021; Costa & Almeida, 2022).

Thus, the role of pedagogical guidance transcends mere technical standardisation: it is about creating conditions for the student to learn to communicate ideas clearly, orally or in writing, with linguistic correctness, scientific rigour and investigative autonomy.

## **METHODOLOGY**

### **Methodological approach**

The research is based on an interpretive and descriptive paradigm of qualitative and quantitative nature, allowing the identification of problems in specific contexts that, according to Sampieri, Collado, and Lucio (2013, p. 102), aims to “describe phenomena, situations, contexts, and events, that is, to detail how these manifest themselves”.

The choice of mixed approach is justified by the complexity of the investigated object, which required both the subjective understanding of the meanings attributed by participants and the objective analysis of statistical data, which allowed:

- To describe the complexity of the studied problem;
- To understand and classify dynamic processes experienced by the investigated social groups;
- To contribute to the change process of the analysed group;
- To enable a higher level of depth in understanding the particularities of individual behaviour (Vieira & Mendes, 2019).

Considering the **research problem** “which pedagogical strategies can be implemented to improve the guidance of academic papers to students of the 3<sup>rd</sup> year of the Primary Education course at Instituto Superior Politécnico Maravilha?” The following **objectives** were defined: i. to identify the main difficulties in the preparation of academic papers presented by students of the 3<sup>rd</sup> year of the Primary Education course at ISPM; ii. to describe the pedagogical strategies for improving the guidance of academic papers in the aforementioned course; iii. to present pedagogical proposals that enhance the guidance of academic papers at ISPM, constituting a reference for future students.

### **Population and sample**

According to Carmo and Ferreira (2008, p. 209), the population is understood as “the set of elements covered by the same definition, with common characteristics that differentiate them from other sets of elements”. Thus, the present research considered as its population three members of the board, fourteen lecturers teaching curricular units of the 3<sup>rd</sup> year affiliated with the Primary Education course, and 152 students of the same year.

The sample was defined at two levels:

- Intentional sample: composed of three members of the management and fourteen teachers.
- Simple random sample: formed by fifteen students (equivalent to 10% of the student population).

It is emphasised that, due to unavailability presented, it was only possible to count on six lecturers, making a total of twenty-four participants. According to Martins and Pinto (2001), intentional sampling is characterised by the selection, according to criteria defined by the researcher, of specific groups of elements that can provide relevant information for the study.

For data collection, two complementary instruments were used: a semi-structured interview guide, directed at board members and lecturers at ISPM, composed of six questions formulated in accordance with the research objectives; and a questionnaire applied to students, structured into four dimensions related to profile, guidance practices, difficulties, and challenges, with the purpose of capturing perceptions and experiences related to the pedagogical strategies adopted in guiding academic work in the classroom context. A mathematical-statistical procedure was used. The application of the instruments occurred during the 2024/2025 academic year.

## INTERPRETATION OF RESULTS

### Interview Survey of Board Members

The interviewees highlighted difficulties related to the misalignment of academic paper, pointing to structural and pedagogical causes. The following perceptions were identified:

**M1:** Deficient guidance from some lecturers, associated with a lack of student preparation. **M2:** Curricular incongruence, particularly the absence of articulation between certain curricular units (Research Methodology, Educational Research Methodology and Specialised Seminar), which leads to overlapping or disconnection of content. **M3:** Lack of student motivation, resulting from unawareness about the role of research in higher education, the scarcity of clear scientific guidance, and the shortage of support materials.

These findings reveal a concerning situation, insofar as students tend not to recognise academic research as an integral part of the teaching-learning process, which compromises both their motivation and the quality of the work produced.

Regarding the main difficulties in elaborating academic work, they highlighted:

**M1:** Student preparation in the use of ICT, difficulty in selecting texts taken from the internet, confusion between bibliography and bibliographic references, little capacity for analysis, interpretation, and synthesis. **M2:** Bibliography; limitations of the competencies acquired at the level of the RM discipline and often for the reasons mentioned, such as lack of time. **M3:** Difficulties in selecting and formulating the objectives guiding the research, such as the general and specific objectives.

We think that the difficulties experienced by students are, in some cases, directly linked to the students themselves and in others are the entire responsibility of the institution: being a working student, poor mastery of ICT, is an issue the student must learn to manage.

Regarding pedagogical strategies for improving the guidance of academic work, they said:

**M1:** Training lecturers in the use of ICT, methodological and improvement seminars, exchange of experiences between lecturers from different courses. **M2:** Keeping lecturers with more scientific research experience and with master's and doctoral degrees to teach the RM, ERM, and Specialised Seminar disciplines; class assistance, better alignment between the ERM, RM, Specialised Seminar disciplines that culminates with the FCT. **M3:** Preparing the teaching staff to meet the demands of higher education didactics, such as the case of preparing and administering the cycle of disciplines that contribute to the development of investigative skills, namely RM and ERM disciplines.

In this sense, it is important that throughout professional activity, particularly teaching activity, one possesses adequate methodological preparation for guiding students' academic work. The lecturer should always have an investigative concern in mind, and supporting Alvarenga (2014), regarding the realisation of scientific research as being a simple task, but, one must recognise that it requires time, effort, and the creative spirit of the researcher. Effective communication and qualified feedback are strategies that could enhance the guidance of academic work in the classroom context.

## Interview Survey with Lecturers

From the analysis of the interviews with lecturers, three main categories emerged:

1. Methodological competencies: some teachers pointed out student difficulties in selecting and treating information critically and in adapting works to the established scientific norms.
2. Linguistic competencies: fragility in academic writing, particularly in clarity, grammatical correctness and textual structure.
3. Research competencies: many students show difficulties in formulating research problems, defining clear objectives and supporting their analyses with relevant bibliography.

These results corroborate Perrenoud's (2001) findings, according to which academic competencies do not develop in isolation, but through the interaction between teacher guidance, continuous practice and critical reflection. Regarding the question about the guidance of academic papers and the procedures adopted, the answers revealed different practices:

**E1:** Definition of topics and their distribution; clarification of objectives; methodological guidance; indication of basic bibliography; support in presentation/defence and final considerations on the work. **E2:** Guidance carried out in a non-systematic manner, limited to general guidelines. **E3:** Centred mainly on references without covering other procedures. **E4:** Absence of a formal guidance model, with individual practice prevailing. **E5:** Own guidance model, although not completely structured. **E6:** Difficulties in maintaining uniform standards, although with greater relevance attributed to bibliographic references and the introduction of the work.

From these answers, there is relative unanimity regarding the need for teachers to deeply understand the methodological and bibliographic requirements that guide scientific production. This scientific and pedagogical competence configures as a determining factor for the quality of research in higher education (Correia, 2013; Vieira, 2005).

As Franco (2003) highlights, guidance should constitute a systematic and continuous process, in which the teacher plays the role of mediator, ensuring that teaching and learning move towards the desired result. In this sense, it is understood that the absence of standardised procedures may compromise the effectiveness of academic training.

## Questionnaire Survey with Students

The analysis of students' answers was carried out based on frequencies, considering variables such as preliminary data, foundations, main difficulties in the preparation of papers, pedagogical guidance strategies and relevance attributed to academic research.

For the quantitative data, the SPSS software (version 23.0) was used. The reliability of the questionnaire was validated by means of Cronbach's alpha coefficient, whose result was above 0.9, indicating high consistency. The instrument was structured according to the Likert scale (1 Totally disagree TD; 2 Disagree D; 3 Agree A; 4 Totally agree TA). The variables were subsequently categorised by dimensions and analysed considering degrees of freedom and asymptotic bilateral significance, which guarantees statistical robustness to the results.

### Main difficulties in the elaboration of academic papers

The data pointed to the scarcity of up-to-date and accessible scientific literature as one of the main difficulties faced by students, which confirms findings of previous studies (Estanqueiro, 2012; Andrade, 2007), which had already evidenced the relationship between reference availability and academic production quality.

Students recognise the importance of academic work for their training, but point out significant challenges: i. Lack of clarity in the guidance provided by some lecturers; ii. Difficulties in accessing didactic materials and updated references; iii. Absence of continuous follow-up throughout the paper preparation process.

For Vieira (2005), academic guidance should be understood as an integrated sequence of procedures, steps and activities that guide the student towards a defined objective. The absence of this integration, in our view, directly impacts the quality of the presented papers.

**Table 2.**  
Scarcity of literature

	Frequency	Percentage	Valid Percentage	Cumulative Percentage
TD	1	6.7	6.7	6.7
A	8	53.3	53.3	60.0
TA	6	40.0	40.0	100.0
Total	15	100.0	100.0	

Regarding the main difficulties in the elaboration of academic works, of the total of respondents making up 100%, 53.3% agreed that there is scarcity of literature. To make this fact viable and mitigate it, it is essential that the lecturer stimulates the taste for research, facilitating and making available to students credible and easily accessible bibliographies.

**Table 3.**  
Making citations

	Frequency	Percentage	Valid Percentage	Cumulative Percentage
TD	2	13.3	13.3	13.3
D	4	26.7	26.7	40.0
A	4	26.7	26.7	66.7
TA	5	33.3	33.3	100.0
Total	15	100.0	100.0	

**Table 4.**  
Structuring academic papers recommended by lecturers

	Frequency	Percentage	Valid Percentage	Cumulative Percentage
TD	1	6.7	6.7	6.7
D	4	26.7	26.7	33.3
A	6	40.0	40.0	73.3
TA	4	26.7	26.7	100.0
Total	15	100.0	100.0	

Of the 15 students surveyed corresponding to 100%, 40% agreed with structuring academic papers recommended by lecturers. Despite numerous difficulties, lecturers must know that their scientific and pedagogical competence is a determining factor for the quality of research in higher education institutions.

**Table 5.**  
Internet Difficulties

	Frequency	Percentage	Valid Percentage	Cumulative Percentage
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TD	3	20.0	20.0	20.0
D	1	6.7	6.7	26.7
A	4	26.7	26.7	53.3
TA	7	46.7	46.7	100.0
Total	15	100.0	100.0	

With regard to the question posed, 46.7% strongly agreed that internet-related difficulties exist. Internet access currently constitutes an indispensable resource for the production and updating of scientific work. However, significant barriers persist that hinder the full use of this resource in the context of research. In many cases, students rely on public or institutional networks, which limits their participation in the process of producing scientific work within the classroom context.

**Table 6.**

**Non-standardisation in academic paper guidance**

	Frequency	Percentage	Valid Percentage	Cumulative Percentage
TD	2	13.3	13.3	13.3
D	3	20.0	20.0	33.3
A	5	33.3	33.3	66.7
TA	5	33.3	33.3	100.0
Total	15	100.0	100.0	

Of the 15 students surveyed, representing 100% of the sample, 33.3% agreed and the same percentage strongly agreed that there is a lack of uniformity in the guidance provided by lecturers for academic paper. The indicators presented prompt reflection and confirm the empirical observation initially made.

**Pedagogical Strategies for Improving the Guidance of Academic Papers**

Regarding the question raised, it was expressed that teachers should respect the particular peculiarities of each student and be patient with them, should have in their possession what they expect from the group to perceive if there has been a deviation of content, create their own mechanisms of how to guide the papers, know the difficulties to subsequently guide more effectively, decentralise and involve as much as possible the different professionals in the decision-making processes, reflect on the sustained and participated definition of the institution's culture, contrary to the emergence of unified models, avoiding those of an individualistic or competitive character.

The pedagogical strategies presented by the surveyed students aim to improve the guidance of academic assignment in the classroom context. Taken into account, they could help minimise difficulties in structuring and executing the assignment scientifically. However, for students to derive full benefit from academic papers, lecturers must moderate their demands and provide explicit guidance on what to do and how to do it.

**DISCUSSION OF RESULTS**

The obtained data allow us to affirm that the main obstacle in the production of academic papers lies in the lack of articulation between lecturers and students, combined with a shortage of consistent pedagogical strategies. According to Perraudon (2006), the lecturer must be capable of teaching in a way that facilitates meaningful learning of content, which implies methodological clarity and effective follow-up.

The analysis also points to the need to reinforce student training in transversal competencies, such as academic writing, critical analysis of sources, and mastery of research methodology. Such competencies, as Correia (2013) underlines, cannot be

worked on by only one lecturer but must be developed collaboratively by the set of lecturers in the class.

Based on the presented results, it is verified that students face various difficulties in elaborating academic paper, among them scarcity of literature, making correct citations, structuring work, difficulties in internet access, and lack of uniformity on the part of lecturers in guidance. These factors reflect structural and pedagogical limitations that negatively impact the teaching-learning process. It is suggested to strengthen lecturer support, facilitate access to databases, provide specific training in scientific methodologies, and improve technological infrastructure.

### **PEDAGOGICAL PROPOSALS TO IMPROVE THE QUALITY OF GUIDANCE FOR ACADEMIC PAPER IN ISPM CONTEXT**

The implementation of student-centred pedagogical strategies promotes not only active participation but also favours the development of critical and reflective thinking skills essential for facing classroom challenges (Almeida & Costa 2022). In this way, as a pedagogical proposal, we present a reinforcement of the recommendations highlighted in point 1.4 of the theoretical framework, contemplating the following aspects:

**Table 7.**

Structure and Evaluation of Academic Papers

Work Structure	Assessment Criteria (Marks)
Cover and back cover: institution, topic, members, speciality, city, year.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Fulfilment of formal requirements → 5 marks</li> <li>• Correct use of citations throughout the work → 2 marks</li> <li>• Clear language, correct formatting, and adequate style → 3 marks</li> <li>• Correct methodological framing and contextualisation → 10 marks</li> </ul>
Preamble: thought, acknowledgements, dedication.	
Abstract (work objectives); Table of Contents.	
Introduction.	
Development of the work.	
Conclusions.	
Suggestions.	
Bibliographic References.	
Appendices/Annexes.	

This proposal dialogues with results of scientific studies that defend the importance of systematic and continuous guidance in the preparation of academic papers, highlighting that methodological clarity, training in investigative competencies and teacher follow-up contribute significantly to the improvement of the quality of students' scientific production (Carmo & Ferreira, 2008; Sampieri et al., 2013; Lopes & Silva, 2021). Thus, the proposal not only reinforces the already consolidated theoretical assumptions but also seeks to respond to practical gaps identified in the context of the Instituto Superior Politécnico Maravilha, with the researchers being responsible for implementing, monitoring and evaluating the impacts of its application.

### **FINAL CONSIDERATIONS**

The theoretical foundations on the problem under study sustain that a pedagogical strategy is a carefully prepared plan, involving a sequence of steps conceived to achieve a specific goal. Within pedagogical strategies there are various actions for improving academic assignment, in which the lecturer should be capable of teaching those that facilitate the learning of thematic content.

The main difficulties in elaborating academic assignment are: student preparation in the use of ICT, formatting, alignment, confusion between font type and subtopics, difficulty in selecting texts taken from the Internet, confusion between analysis, interpretation and bibliography and bibliographic references, little capacity for analysis, interpretation, and synthesis. Limitations of the competencies acquired at the subject of Research methodology, time factor, financial difficulties, and the lack of constant guidance from some lecturers.

To improve the guidance of academic assignment, the following pedagogical strategies should be taken into account: training lecturers in the use of ICT, methodological and improvement seminars, exchange of experiences between lecturers, greater involvement of lecturers with more scientific research experience to teach RM (Research Methodology), ERM (Educational Research Methodology), and Specialised Seminar disciplines, verification classes (to verify if the lecturer masters the content), elaboration of a guidance plan (with objectives, goals, and assessment criteria), effective communication (regular meetings) and encouragement of active search for bibliographic references.

It is emphasised that the obtained results confirm the specific objectives outlined in the study, allowing for the identification of students' main difficulties, understanding of methodological and technological limitations, as well as proposing more effective pedagogical strategies for guiding academic assignment. These findings contribute not only to improving teaching practice at ISPM but also to strengthening the quality of academic training for future primary school teachers.

In conclusion, although this study has contributed to understanding pedagogical strategies in guiding academic assignments in higher education, limitations are recognised that restrict the generalisation of results, such as the focus on a specific institutional context and the reduced number of participants. Future research could broaden the scope of analysis, incorporating different institutions, courses, and research methods, in order to deepen the evaluation of the effectiveness of these strategies and strengthen practices in academic guidance.

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