Methodological Criteria for the Preparation of Monographs

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ABSTRACT

Failures in the development of research skills to analyze and systematize information to construct new knowledge are related to academic deficiencies of the teacher. This paper analyzes how to improve students' research skills through the writing of monographs. For this purpose, the difficulties faced by students are studied and methodological and didactic guidelines are proposed to overcome these deficiencies. In this way, the discussion revolves around the main research competencies that should be achieved in students to strengthen formative and specialized research. This qualitative research presents an analytical-synthetic methodology that starts from the nature and typology of a monograph for academic and research purposes. The methodological processes are addressed with their respective examples, ending with the systematization processes and conclusions. The study shows that the difficulties arise from the selection of the topic, the definition of research problems, the statement of objectives, the methodological and didactic processes and the management of information. In conclusion, there is a lack of knowledge of the macrostructure and superstructure of this type of academic text, for which a writing scheme and the analytical development of the content are proposed.

Keywords: Monograph, methodological criteria, capabilities, formative research.

1. Introduction

Developing skills to understand information and produce academic texts at various levels of education has become an increasingly complex and hard-to-master task since the student must show a high level of knowledge of information processing of textual typologies and their macro structures. Only with mastery of information at this level will it be possible to use the language to understand, produce, and disseminate diverse knowledge, and guarantee solid academic and research training. Hence, students, especially in higher education, must manage a series of cognitive, methodological, and socio-affective processes to process information and produce various types of academic texts which, due to their condition, also require the use of formal linguistic registers and a cultivated mastery of grammar. The academic texts that students must produce can be monographs, essays, commentary texts, academic reports, scientific articles, dissertations, and opinion articles, among others. However, learning and teaching to produce academic texts is very complex because it requires becoming aware of the pedagogical and didactic purposes, the cognitive, procedural, and attitudinal skills that should be developed in these activities, the methodology and strategies that should be promoted, and the conceptions as a basis for determining appropriate strategies.

For this reason, this article emphasizes the importance of adequately carrying out these academic works, basically the monograph, and analyzes the pertinent pedagogical and didactic processes to guide these activities. It discusses aspects that generate confusion and illustrates, with concrete cases, the strategies and methodology that can help to a better understanding of the final purposes of monographic research. On the other hand, an analytical development of the whole process is shown, which is concatenated with the transcendent curricular purposes in academic and research training. In this sense, it offers some conceptual and methodological criteria for the elaboration of a monograph, an academic text that today is of great importance due to the massification of information available to this generation. This brief article seeks to make teachers and students aware of the importance of developing concepts and techniques to manage information to forge new knowledge and offers a series of methodological processes and perspectives that guide the development of these academic abilities. In short, it is an initiative aimed at promoting the development of strategies and skills for understanding and producing information. Therefore, this type of text called a monograph is defined and then a series of processes for its elaboration is offered.

It should also be noted that the procedures and criteria suggested in this guide are the result of pedagogical experience in teaching and learning in the production of various types of academic texts, both in basic and higher education. This experience has required to specify methodological criteria, raise comments, and perhaps imply some conceptions that may help to approach information with greater responsibility and critical spirit to favor the development of fundamental cognitive skills for carrying out the tasks of problematization, analysis, observation, description, explanation, discrimination, systematization, and criticism.

2. Frame of reference

2.1. General aspects

2.1.1. What is a monograph?

The monograph is an academic text or document resulting from a process of documentary research or a series of experiences organized with methodological criteria around a predefined objective and an initial problem that prompted a concern for knowledge. This academic task implies mastery of complex cognitive processes such as search, analysis, discrimination, evaluation, and systematization of information on any human, political, social, literary, or cultural topic. It is worth noting that the analytical method is generally imposed in this work; that is, it starts from a general perspective (approach of a problematic situation) to then analyze and describe the particularities of the object of study. In the words of [1], the monograph is:

> *(...) a document resulting from completed documentary research where the results of published or unreported research on a specific topic in the scientific, technological, humanistic, or different phenomena of historical, psychological, and sociological, among others, are analyzed, synthesized, and integrated. With the purpose of giving an account of the advances and development trends in these areas. Characterized by presenting a careful bibliographic review of scientific publications, technical articles, theses and review articles, it uses very precise techniques of the existing documentation, which directly or indirectly, provides the information.*

The monograph is an ideal academic work to strengthen students' research training. It addresses three fundamental learning dimensions: the exploratory inquiry of diverse sources to strengthen knowledge, the development of complex cognitive processes to understand the principles and foundations of research, and the promotion of the undertaking of research as a way to understand reality and commit to its transformation [2].

The greatest difficulties faced by students are their limitations in understanding and processing information and integrating them into a body of content that gives them the ability to use them for different purposes and needs. Formative research through monographs enhances abilities to locate, select, analyze, and synthesize information through a series of cognitive and metacognitive processes, such as comparison, comprehension, critique, assessment, and judgment on what is understood [3].

For the collection of information, the sources are not limited to bibliographic references, but may also include testimonies, and witnesses, among others. In a monographic work, the search, analysis, and systematization of information stand out. In this regard, Carlino in [4] states:

> (...) *the monograph is to reveal, demonstrate, and argue with logical and reasonable evidence the scientific reality of a fact, through other findings related to the subject studied. That is, it allows the integration, organization, and evaluation of existing theoretical and empirical information on a problem, focuses on the progress of current research and possible ways for its solution to*

explain novel arguments that have not yet been addressed before, and support theories or refute existing ones. In addition, it helps the researcher in the orientation and research training to delimit a problem, discover and gather adequate information, classify materials, establish contacts with personalities and academic and research institutions, access information, exercise the critical spirit and express oneself orally in front of an audience, for the presentation of the results obtained.

2.1.2. Types of monographs

In the *Guidelines for the Submission of Papers* from the First International Congress on Social Evaluation of Projects in Santiago, Chile, held by the Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean [5], the types of monographs to be presented are specified, giving an idea of their classification:

Compilation monograph: Starting from a topic already studied, all the existing information is gathered to later analyze it and make a personal critical presentation of the bibliography collected on the subject. It is essential to refer to different points of view and to present one's own opinion on the subject and the information gathered.

Research monograph: From a new or little studied topic, original research is carried out; seeking to discover some novel element, considering the available information. It is a study close to experimentation or scientific research.

Experience analysis monograph: The selected topic refers to an experience lived by the researcher, from which conclusions are drawn and compared with other similar ones. It is used in situations that can only be demonstrated from practice, testing existing theories, or investigating experiences not related to the sciences of experimentation.

The monograph can be approached from different perspectives and varies according to the subject to be dealt with and the methodology to be used. Thus, the monograph can be a compilation, research, or analysis of experiences. In the first, after choosing the topic, a critical presentation of the bibliography consulted is analyzed and written. For this purpose, it is essential to evaluate the different points of view and present the author's personal opinion after an exhaustive review of the topic under study. Logically, this suggestion depends on the nature of the topic to be investigated. In the second type of monograph, the aim is to investigate a novel topic, where there are not many studies done on this subject. Consequently, the collection of information can be extended to surveys, interviews, observations, etc. In summary, the types of monographs would be:

Compilation monograph: The purpose of this document is to attain new knowledge or knowledge on any subject in any field of science or other field of knowledge. The fundamental merit of this task is the statement of a need to know about some object of study, the search, selection, analysis, evaluation, and systematization of the information about such object in question. This is the most common monograph in the different courses since its nature is to investigate the existing literature on any topic for the researcher to achieve new knowledge. For example:

Subject:

Prejudices and prototypes as social vices...

Research question:

What are prejudices and prototypes and what is their impact on the development of a society?

Research monograph: The purpose of this monograph is to explore unknown or little-studied aspects of some topic, of any field. In this case, the knowledge on this topic will be achieved, not by the information that exists but rather by the information that has to be produced. For this, it will be necessary to design several relevant information-gathering instruments. However, this does not mean that the work is empty of existing theoretical foundations: it is necessary to develop some concepts to support the information collected in the field. Some examples of this type of monograph would be:

Subject:

Leadership and management quality...

Research question:

What is the perception that the employees from a particular institution have on the leadership and management quality of their hierarchical personnel...?

Subject:

Pavement anomalies and failures...

Research question:

What are the anomalies and failures of rigid pavements that occur frequently in urban road infrastructure in the city of Jaen...?

Experience analysis monograph: This type of monograph is used in courses that involve the development of professional practices and experiences, for example, in the fields of electrical mechanics, medicine, civil engineering, pedagogy, etc. The information is about practices or experiences where results are analyzed, conclusions are issued, and compared with other analogous studies.

Subject:

Incidence of poor hygiene practices of pregnant women during the pregnancy period...

Research question:

What are the poor hygiene practices evidenced by pregnant women during pregnancy...?

It is important to point out that the monographic work does not usually include novel results by the author, unless some previous studies have been published, such as scientific articles in peer-reviewed journals. In the same way, the monograph may have different points of view on the problem in question, since it may be linked

to the sociocultural principles of the author. However, it is necessary to support the author's own opinions with texts and published works. These aspects are transcendental to take into consideration when writing a monograph. Consequently, they may constitute methodological limitations for the realization of the monograph [6]. Monographs can serve as a basis for undertaking further work such as the development of an experimental thesis or theoretical contributions only.

3. Methodology and resources

The purpose of this article is to present methodological criteria to elaborate monographs or other similar research works. The suggested criteria are developed with analysis of common difficulties in each phase and cases are presented for their illustration. It covers the topics of educational research methodologies and formative research (descriptive, documentary, explanatory, and case study). In its development, a descriptive methodology was used, with a qualitative documentary approach; that is, reviewing available sources, whose content is current, the most adjusted to the purpose of the topic, with timely and relevant content from the scientific point of view to support both the concepts and the methodological analysis proposed in each phase of elaboration. The substance of the article is that it emphasizes the development of both cognitive and metacognitive skills.

To this end, it presents an analytical vision of the topic, starting with the statement of the problem and, a description of the fundamental concepts, then the proposal is presented and concludes with an integral vision of the entire research work. The analytical development of the whole process is linked at all times to curricular purposes. The article seeks to provide teachers and students with a methodological reference to carry out monographs and other academic works that strengthen the development of research skills.

4. Results

4.1. Analysis of the criteria and processes for the preparation of a monograph

Any research process needs a clear awareness of the criteria, processes, and objectives that should guide such activity, and this is a curricular purpose that should be well guided by the teacher. "The search for and acquisition of new or existing knowledge in an organized body that administers science require a path that allows achieving such purposes" [7]. This task is not simple and needs some awareness and mastery of the scientific method, its foundations, and procedures. On this point, Tamayo [8] points out that "the search for knowledge is a slow process", and despite the existence of the scientific method, there is no "perfect method to obtain an answer to his question, so, inductive and deductive reasoning present certain limitations as research instrument" (p.28).

Uriarte, cited in [7], states that when conducting documentary research with the purpose of acquiring new knowledge, it is necessary to follow a methodological route summarized in the following steps:

1. Mapping of sources: This step consists of locating documents useful for the investigation of the central theme or object of study.

2. Review: Decision to retain or discard useful documents that add value to the research.

3. Collation: This consists of reviewing the content of the documents, expressing them in textual quotations, and contrasting them with the researcher's objectives, interpretations, and theories.

4. Interpretation: Derived from the collated material, a proposal of critical reading, opinion, or deduction of the researcher is elaborated, which is called interpretation.

5. Conclusions: To generate a framework of possible causes and consequences.

Consequently, in order to develop a monograph or other similar academic work, it is necessary to fulfill the different phases of a relevant methodology, in order to achieve not only the completion of the research work but also the development of capacities to continue learning autonomously. The following is a series of criteria and steps for developing these research tasks.

4.1.1. Selection and choice of topic

To choose a research topic with a monographic purpose, a researcher must show concern and passion for acquiring new knowledge about various problems and phenomena that arouse interest or concern in his or her daily and experience. Therefore, the starting point will be a problem or concern that is interesting and meaningful to the student, that is, useful for some purpose. It is important to point out here that beyond an immediate objective, the ultimate value of an investigation is the generation of new knowledge and the development of basic cognitive skills for personal and cultural development.

An important aspect is to determine whether the purpose of the research is to acquire and understand a fact, or to generate knowledge with some aspect of novelty, which in this case is the generation of new theory. For this second purpose, the criterion of scientificity must be taken into account. According to [9], research is scientific when it meets the following four basic criteria.

The research concerns an object that is recognizable and defined in such a way that it is also recognizable by others. The term object does not necessarily have a physical meaning. Defining the object then means defining the conditions under which the object can be recognized.

Research has to say about this object things that have not yet been said or else review with a different optic the things that have already been said.

Research must be useful to others. A work is scientific (once the requirements of points 1 and 2 have been met) if it adds something to what the community already knows and if it is to be taken into account, at least in theory, by all future work on the subject. Naturally, scientific importance is proportional to the degree of indispensability of the contribution.

The research must provide elements for the verification and refutation of the hypotheses it presents and therefore must provide the necessary elements for its public follow-up.

Analysis. At this point, one of the first difficulties that discourage this research activity arises: the student does not know what topic to choose and what field

to research, how to establish his starting point, what it will be useful for him to develop it, what strategies and methodology he should use. The teacher, who is unaware of an adequate methodology and, in many cases, far from guiding, makes the mistake of assigning any topic arbitrarily. Consequently, the student will most likely choose to download any monographic work from the web and present it; or resort to a book, review the table of contents and choose a list of subtopics, copy them verbatim, and present them. The evaluation of these academic works, if a development methodology has not been followed, is a mere formality where the teacher and student are aware that such activity did not produce new learning.

To help overcome this obstacle, i.e., to ensure an appropriate choice of topic, it is suggested to develop the questionnaire presented in Figure 1 to ensure this first step.

Figure 1. Questionnaire for the choice of a topic.

4.2. Research problem statement

This is one of the first steps that will ultimately determine the success of the research undertaken. The problem statement allows for a rational and logical structure of the idea to be investigated, hence the importance of posing it as a question, expressing the relationship between variables, and avoiding ambiguity [10].

The beginning of the scientific method lies in the reality of its objective interpretation, which helps to plan research questions with a specific character and precise delimitation, in order to give them an adequate treatment [8].

Analysis: In this part, it is important to underline that research problems are only a methodology for experimental thesis works. In this sense, monographs are research works with different levels of academic rigor, according to the researcher's

expectations, therefore, an adequate problem statement is the guarantee of their success. It is important to apply the rule commonly referred to in research: a good problem statement ensures 80% success in the research.

In this sense, once the previous activities have been carried out, the student will be able to have more clarity to make a good choice of topic and, therefore, more clarity about the purposes that will guide his research. The next step is to specify the research questions that will guide the purposes of the academic assignment. In the following, two topics related to two fields of science, each with different purposes, are presented as examples to guide this activity. It is necessary to specify the research topic very well; that is, to go from the general topic to the more specific one. Here are two examples of topics from different fields.

Table 1. Examples to orient with topics from science fields.

Topic selection and specification	Topic selection and specification
Field: Education	**Field: Civil Engineering**
Psychopedagogy Intelligence Socio-affective intelligences	Urban road infrastructure Structural anomalies Main failures of rigid pavement structures
Research questions	**Research questions**
Main problem What are the socio-affective intelligences and what is their influence on the personal-social and professional success of the individual?	**Main problem** How to comprehensively describe the main structural failures of rigid pavements of urban road infrastructure?
Secondary problems • How are socio-affective intelligences conceived and characterized? • What are the main socio-emotional intelligences? • Who are the theorists who have postulated socio-affective intelligences? • What is the influence of socio-affective intelligence on people's success? • What studies have been conducted on the influence of socio-affective intelligences?	**Secondary problems** • What are rigid pavements and how are they classified? • What are the main anomalies and failures of rigid pavements? • How to classify or how to classify the anomalies and failures of rigid pavements? • What are the main causes of anomalies and failures in rigid pavements? • What are the consequences of the main failures and anomalies of rigid pavements?

- What strategies are suggested for the development of socio-affective intelligences?

- How are socio-emotional intelligences being developed in higher education?

- Which competencies are associated with the development of socio-affective intelligence, and why?

- What technologies have been applied in recent years to avoid some failures in rigid pavements?

- What are the basic technical criteria being applied for a pavement work profile?

The research questions must imply an analytical and systemic approach to the research to be carried out. Analytical, because it must show the way from generalities to specific aspects, and systemic, because they imply interrelated aspects governed by a global concern. The initial (unresearched) vague and confusing answers to each question will lead to in-depth research to obtain more precise answers from researchers who have disseminated such knowledge. Once the research is completed, the answers will be the new meridian knowledge achieved by the researcher and can be shared through various means. Therefore, the conclusions of the monograph will be the succinct answers to each research question, but each of them will be developed throughout the research.

4.3. Research objectives

Another important criterion in the development process of a monograph or other research work is the statement of objectives. These are the meridian north of the research because they specify the purpose of what is intended to be achieved with the research. "Depending on what is to be investigated, these objectives can be expressed as direct and explicit formulations, metonymic, of purpose, interest or intention, indirect, or as the space where research activities are carried out" [11] (pp. 422-423).

The following question may be useful for the precision of the objective: Once research problems are stated, they become research objectives. Look at this general question, stated below:

How to comprehensively describe the main structural failures of rigid pavements of an urban road infrastructure?

Now, contrast this same problem statement written as an objective in the following sentence:

To comprehensively describe the main structural failures of rigid pavements of an urban road infrastructure.

The objectives must begin with an infinitive verb and evaluate what each word implies. Note the difference between describe, analyze, explain, and compare, which are categories that have greater semantic breadth and encompass other capabilities, implying greater complexity in the development of the research or academic activity. Each category has a semantic implication; therefore, the most appropriate verb should be chosen according to the research goals.

Figure 2 presents points that show the relevance of the objectives: congruence between research questions and objectives, they guide what is to be achieved with the research, and the statements are coherently written and show the purpose of the research [12].

Analysis:

It is quite common to find erroneous points of view regarding the nature of an objective; consequently, its approach and wording are often incorrect from a pedagogical and didactic point of view.

Note the following case:

Problem:

- How to comprehensively describe the main structural failures of rigid pavements of an urban road infrastructure...?

Objective:

- Correct the anomalies and structural failures of rigid pavements of the urban road infrastructure...

Or this one, which may be more serious:

- Improve construction conditions of rigid pavement structures in road infrastructure...

The approach to objectives should be guided by the following criteria: they should be feasible, measurable, precise and directly related to the research problem. Note now, whether each of the verbs in infinitives that head the above objectives meets these criteria. In fact, it does not. The researcher, as a product of his work, cannot improve the conditions of construction, nor can he correct anomalies and failures. Depending on the purpose of his research, he will only manage to accumulate critical information on a given subject that will increase his cultural background and can be shared with other interested parties.

Now see if this other approach and wording meets the criteria described above and is directly linked to the research problems:

- To comprehensively describe the main structural failures of rigid pavements of an urban road infrastructure...

This objective is feasible, measurable, accurate and follows naturally from the problem.

Figure 2. Case to state and describe the objectives.

Table 2 and 3 present the objectives according to model cases, allowing to see how the research questions or concerns become objectives. It should also be noted that the general and specific objectives should follow naturally and logically from the research problems. In these examples, the procedure is presented simply.

Table 2. Case 01. Objectives according to model cases.

Field: Education	
Psychopedagogy Intelligence Socio-affective intelligences	
Research questions	**Research objectives**
Main problem What are the socio-affective intelligences and what is their influence on the personal-social and professional success of the individual?	**Main objective** Define the socio-affective intelligences and describe their influence on the personal-social and professional success of the individual.

Secondary problems • How are socio-affective intelligences conceived and characterized? • What are the main socio-affective intelligences? • Who are the theorists who have postulated socio-affective intelligences? • What is the influence of socio-affective intelligence on people's success? • What studies have been conducted on the influence of socio-affective intelligences? • What strategies are suggested for the development of socio-emotional intelligence? • How are socio-emotional intelligences being developed in higher education? • Which competencies are associated with the development of socio-emotional intelligence, and why?	**Secondary objectives** • Define and characterize the socio-affective intelligences. • Describe the main socio-affective intelligences. • Describe the theorists who have postulated the socio-affective intelligences, and analyze their main contributions. • Explain the influence of the socio-affective intelligences on the success of individuals. • Describe what studies have been conducted on the influence of socio-affective intelligences. • Describe the strategies suggested for the development of socio-affective intelligences. • To analyze how socio-affective intelligences are being developed in higher education. • Describe which competencies are associated with the development of socio-affective intelligences.

Table 3. Case 02. Objectives according to model cases

Field: Civil Engineering	
Urban road infrastructure **Structural anomalies** **Main failures of rigid pavement structures**	
Research questions	**Research objectives**
Main problem	**Main objective**

How to comprehensively describe the main structural failures of rigid pavements of an urban road infrastructure? **Secondary problems** • What are rigid pavements and how are they classified? • What are the main anomalies and failures of rigid pavements? • How to classify or how to classify the anomalies and failures of rigid pavements? • What are the main causes of anomalies and failures in rigid pavements? • What are the consequences of the main failures and anomalies of rigid pavements? • What technologies have been applied in recent years to avoid some failures in rigid pavements?	Describe and comprehensively analyze the main structural failures of rigid pavements of an urban road infrastructure. **Secondary objectives** • Define what rigid pavements are and how they are classified. • Describe the main anomalies and failures of rigid pavements. • Detail and classify the anomalies and failures of rigid pavements. • Describe the main causes of anomalies and failures in rigid pavements. • Describe the consequences caused by the main failures and anomalies of rigid pavements. • Describe the technologies that have been applied in recent years to avoid some failures in rigid pavements.

4.4. Selection and systematization of information

Search for information sources

This is a central stage in monographic research that involves a process of selection, collection, analysis, and coherent systematization of all the information and must be guided by the focus of the research and specified in the objectives [13].

With a list of problems and objectives as a starting point, it is time to make a brief, tentative index of the various subtopics involved. On this basis, the search for sources of information will proceed. It is necessary to select well-known sources and bibliographies, to know how to recognize the useless information offered on the net, and to give priority to reliable sources that offer transcendental concepts to generate new knowledge.

This heuristic stage has two moments: the search and compilation of the sources of information and the hermeneutic phase in which each of the sources investigated will be read, analyzed, interpreted, and classified according to their importance within the research. In these processes, the object of study, its concepts, and a methodological line of organization must be evidenced [12].

In this sense, a tentative index (Figure 3) is proposed with the contents to be developed, taking as an example the research on socio-affective intelligence, which may be readjusted according to the information to be analyzed. It is possible that, as the research develops, some subtopics will be omitted or others that had not been considered will be added.

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Figure 3. Tentative index with the contents in an investigation.

Each topic that appears in the table of contents called the Index in Figure 3 is the one that is involved in the problems and objectives that had been set out above. Once the provisional index has been arranged, it is now time to search for and select sources of information, without losing sight of the academic purpose. Given this, it is pertinent to point out that today, the vertiginousness of technology has massified information, in abundance and access; despite this, there are fewer possibilities for this information to be converted into knowledge. This is because the development of information processing skills (a task that goes from the search and selection of information, through analysis and systematization, to knowledge subjected to evaluation and criticism) is less stimulated.

The entire theoretical framework should involve a conceptual analysis of the object of study; in other words, it is a theoretical model that supports the entire investigation. Therefore, its structure must be coherent with the problem, the objectives, the methodology, and the analysis of the results [14].

In this sense, the didactic and methodological strategies used by both teachers and students to develop or strengthen rational information management skills

are important. In this sense, it is suggested to consider the criteria presented in the following points.

- Perform the selection and analysis of the information according to the provisional index that has been proposed.
- Organize this tentative table of contents into chapters or sections, each headed by a title, which should imply sub-themes or aspects of the general topic or object of research.
- This organization should lead to the analysis and selection of essential information to solve the research questions.
- Search for information according to this provisional index, preferably making sure that the sources are primary and provide clear information to meet the objectives.
- Expand or modify the contents of the table of contents according to the novelties that the researcher may find and that he/she considers important to answer the research questions. However, care must be taken not to deviate from the main purpose of the research.
- Analyze and select the most relevant information for each subtopic, including bibliographic data and other notes to be used in the writing of the monograph.
- Write the first draft considering the sequence of the provisional table of contents, making comments and analysis of each topic, and supporting ideas with as many quotations as possible, which should be used according to the rules of the corresponding quotations.

For citations, which constitute another of the great difficulties in a monographic work, below are some scopes of the APA citation rules.

4.5. Some notes on APA standards

At this point, it is pertinent to point out the mistakes that are usually made in the handling of the theoretical framework: using information without stating the authorship (which typifies the crime of plagiarism); collecting and superimposing information related to the work, but without any analysis or commentary of the information; incorrect use of reference styles: APA, Vancouver, ISO, etc. are the main ones.

There are intellectual virtues such as confidence in rationality, freedom of inquiry, and intellectual honesty that must be preserved, the latter being related to the objectivity of research results and to the recognition of those who produced them. Therefore, learning to cite correctly is an essential academic quality that must be cultivated.

There are several styles and standards for citing sources: for example, ISO 690, APA, MLA, VANCOUVER, and Chicago style, among others. They all have the same value: In some universities or professional schools, for example, they adopt a certain style for certain careers, not because the chosen typology raises hierarchy among the others, much less, better quality of work, but because it is necessary to have consensus for entrepreneurs and reviewers of research work. It is necessary to learn the respective rules of the style chosen. This research deals with the APA style, for which some terms are defined below.

4.5.1. What is a Citation?

It is the partial information of ideas included in a discourse or text that the researcher develops, with precise reference to its origin or source and the corresponding indication of the norm or style used.

4.5.2. Types of citation.

Textual quotation: It is a quotation in which literal fragments or ideas are extracted from a text, the quoted fragment is written as it appears in the source, and for this, the respective rule of the style used must be consigned. For example, in the APA style, the first and last name of the author, year of publication, and the page must be indicated according to the type of textual quotation. It should be noted that the textual citation in the APA model offers variants, and the justification for using any of them depends on the needs; these variants can be seen in the example shown in Tables 4 and 5.

Table 4. Types of textual citation.

TEXTUAL OR DIRECT QUOTATION	**Quote with less than 40 words**	*Author-focused*	The social and cultural structure has been modified since the mid-twentieth century, surprisingly; there is a phenomenon of massification that moves the behaviors and relationships of individuals, the middle-class man has begun to impose himself in a disconcerting scenario. ***In this respect, Ortega y Gasset, (1927) maintains: "The empire of the masses and the rise in level, the altitude of time that it announces, are, in turn, nothing more than symptoms of a more complete and general fact (...) It is, simply, that the world, suddenly, has grown, and with it and in it life" (p. 32).***
TEXTUAL OR DIRECT QUOTATION	**Quote with less than 40 words**	*Centered on the text*	The social and cultural structure has changed since the mid-twentieth century, surprisingly, there is a phenomenon of massification that moves the behaviors and relationships of individuals, the middle-class man has begun to impose himself in a disconcerting scenario. ***"The empire of the masses and the level rise, the altitude of time that he announces, are, in turn, nothing more than symptoms of a more complete and general fact (...) It is, simply, that the world, suddenly, has grown, and with it and in its life" (Ortega y Gasset, 1927, p. 32).***

Textual quotation with more than 40 words		*Author-focused*	The social and cultural structure has been modified since the mid-twentieth century, surprisingly; there is a phenomenon of massification that moves the behaviors and relationships of individuals, the middle-class man has begun to impose himself in a disconcerting scenario. **In this regard, Ortega y Gasset, (1927) states:** *The empire of the masses and the level rise, the altitude of time that he announces, are, in turn, nothing more than symptoms of a more complete and general fact. (...) It is, quite simply, that the world has suddenly grown, and with it and in it, life. For one thing, it has become effectively globalized; I mean that the content of life in the average man is today the whole planet; that each individual habitually lives the whole world (p.32).*
		Centered on the text	The social and cultural structure has been modified since the mid-twentieth century, surprisingly; there is a phenomenon of massification that moves the behaviors and relationships of individuals, the middle-class man has begun to impose itself in a disconcerting scenario. *The empire of the masses and the level rise, the altitude of time that he announces, are, in turn, nothing more than symptoms of a more complete and general fact. (...) It is, quite simply, that the world has suddenly grown, and with it and in it, life. For one thing, it has effectively globalized; I mean that the content of life in the average man is today the whole planet; that each individual habitually lives the whole world (Ortega y Gasset, 1927, p.32).*

Source*:* Own elaboration.

Paraphrased quotation: In a paraphrased quotation, only the author's ideas are used, but these are developed with the language or words of the researcher, for which the respective rule of the style must also be indicated. For example, in the APA style, the first surname of the author, the year of publication, and the page must be indicated according to the type of paraphrased quotation.

Look at the example and contrast the differences between the types of verbatim and paraphrased quotations.

Table 5. Types of paraphrased quotations.

CITATION	**PARAPHRASED OR INDIRECT QUOTATION**	*Author-focused*	The social and cultural structure has been modified since the mid-twentieth century surprisingly; there is a phenomenon of massification that moves the behaviors and relationships of individuals, and the middle-class man has begun to impose himself in a disconcerting scenario. **In this respect, Ortega y Gasset, (1927) maintains that the government of the majorities and the change in their standard of living are manifestations that the world has grown and with it and in its life, the benefits that the world offers today have become accessible to the majorities and therefore the individual participates openly in the whole world** *(p.32).*
		Centered on the text	The social and cultural structure has changed since the mid-twentieth century, surprisingly; there is a phenomenon of massification that moves the behaviors and relationships of individuals, and the middle-class man has begun to impose himself in a disconcerting scenario. **(...) The government of the majorities and the change in their standard of living are manifestations that the world has grown and with it and in its life, the goodness that the world offers today has become accessible to the majorities and therefore the individual participates openly in the whole world** *(Ortega y Gasset, 1927, p.32)*

Source: Own elaboration.

4.6. Writing the first draft

Once the selection and analysis of the information has been developed and the techniques for citing the sources have been learned, the first draft must now be written, for which the following steps can be followed:

- Develop each topic according to the order of the provisional table of contents.
- The information should be recorded in paragraphs of no more than nine to twelve lines.
- Avoid sentences and paragraphs that are too long, which can lead to language mistakes.
- Each paragraph should begin with appreciation or comments of the author and then insert the corresponding quotation.
- Each subtopic must keep the hierarchy and relationship with the general topics.
- It is possible to insert subtopics that have not been considered in the provisional table of contents.

- Constantly ask research questions and set objectives.

4.7. Systematization of information

Once the first draft has been completed, the whole document must now be systematized with the monographic outline shown in Figure 4, following the line of development of the example.

Title (main cover)

Acknowledgement or Dedication (Optional)

Table of Contents (index)

Index of Tables, Graphs and Figures (if applicable)

INTRODUCTION

1 **RESEARCH PROBLEMS**

1.1 Main problem...

1.2 Specific problems..

2 OBJECTIVES...

2.1 General objective...

2.2 Specific objective...

3 **THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK**

3.1 Definition of intelligence ....

3.2 Definition of socio-affective intelligences........................

3.3 Characteristics and dimensions ....

3.4 Description of the main socio-affective intelligences ....

3.5 Who postulated the socio-affective intelligences?...........

3.6 Influence of socio-affective intelligences on personal success ....

3.7 Strategies to develop socio-affective intelligences ....

3.8 Competencies associated with socio-affective intelligences ....

3.9 Socio-affective intelligences at school.............................

4. **CONCLUSIONS**

5. **SOURCES OF CONSULTATION**

Figure 4. Proposed monographic outline.

4.8. Final review and presentation of the report

Once the first draft is completed and having followed the suggested methodology and the comments and clarifications developed in this modest article, the student will finally have a panoramic view of the whole process followed to reach this point, being aware of the new knowledge achieved in a specific topic, but will also have developed a series of cognitive and metacognitive skills that will allow him/her to strengthen the research activity and interest.

A complete review of the document will now be carried out in order to correct grammatical aspects of the text, as well as to evaluate its internal coherence and cohesion.

5. Conclusions

The research activities of a monographic nature are deficient, and in many cases unfruitful due to a lack of knowledge of the pedagogical, curricular, and didactic aspects on the part of teachers and students who develop these activities.

First of all, the nature and typology of a monograph should be reviewed; its academic and research purposes should be analyzed. Then, it is necessary to become aware of the criteria and methodological processes to guide this type of research activity.

From the analysis made in this paper, it is clear that the difficulties appear from the moment of choosing the topic, setting the research problems, establishing the purposes or objectives, to the management of the information.

For this reason, relevant analysis and methodological processes are provided for the resolution of such difficulties at each moment of the development of the monograph. In this aspect, cases and concrete examples are presented to demonstrate the methodology and didactic resources involved so that students and trainers become aware of their significance.

Likewise, the macrostructure and superstructure of this type of academic text can be seen in the suggested writing scheme and the analytical development of the contents and knowledge to be developed, as a result of the researcher's initial concerns and aspirations.

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