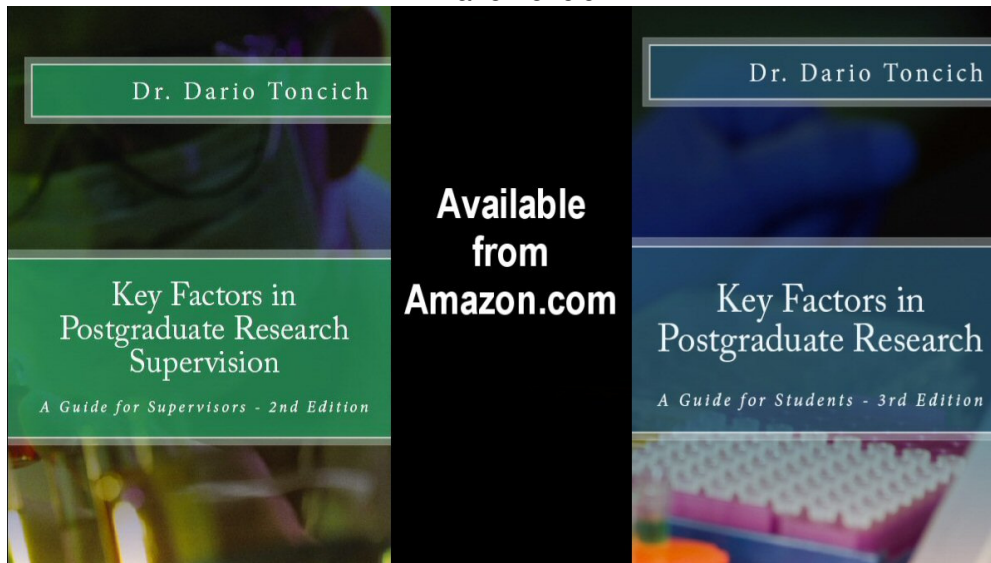


10 Fundamental Thesis Preparation Tips

Dr. Dario Toncich



Tip Number 2 – Context

Research students should never assume that a thesis examiner understands the context of the research that is being submitted for assessment. Context is critical to understanding the significance or otherwise of the research. The thesis writer's objective is to provide that context to the examiner.

The context of the research includes:

- The central research theme
- Why the research was conducted
- When the research was conducted
- Where the research was conducted
- How/if the research was funded.

Without these basic pieces of information being conveyed to the thesis reader early in the thesis, an examiner will have great difficulty in decoding the work that is presented.

Consider the following example:

"The research which forms the basis of this Doctoral dissertation was undertaken at the Jones Medical Research Institute in Chicago, between 2012 and 2015. The work was part of a collaboration with the Alpha-Max Pharmaceutical company, and the funds for this research were provided by this company. The objective of the research was to determine whether a link existed between the use of the company's appetite suppressants and stroke in regular users of the product."

A contextual statement such as this enables the examiner to appreciate the significance of the work in terms of when it was conducted (i.e., has new work been conducted elsewhere since that time); the reputation of the surrounding establishments and, where funding is provided, the possibility of any biases/influences that might be intrinsic to the research itself.