


Chapter 16

Basics of Research Report Writing for Behavioural Science Students and Emerging Scholars

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ABSTRACT

This chapter is written with behavioural science students and emerging scholars in mind. Behavioural science in this context includes but is not limited to management sciences, social sciences, psychology, education, and any discipline that deals with human actions. The chapter is written to sharpen the knowledge and skills of students in these areas in writing a good quality research report (at advanced undergraduate level), thesis, or dissertation (at postgraduate level). The chapter has valuable hints that will guide behavioural science students and emerging scholars in writing good quality research reports, theses, or dissertations. The hints will also be helpful for supervisors and mentors in guiding and assessing their student's work. A research project, thesis, or dissertation is essential for graduation from tertiary institutions. The need, therefore, to write good quality research reports requires that students possess the necessary knowledge and skills in writing.

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CHAPTER SUMMARY

This chapter was written primarily to guide emerging scholars, students, and early career researchers on the basic constituents of a research report for a thesis, projects, dissertation and other related documents. The chapter was organised to capture the basic elements in the preliminary pages of a research report, the sub-components of chapters 1, 2, 3, 4 and 5, as well as supplementary pages. The preliminary pages comprised the title page, declaration, certification, acknowledgement, abstract, tables of contents, list of tables and list of figures. Chapter one provides the basic idea or problem underlying the research, including a justification of its needs based on existing studies in the literature. Crucial research questions and/or hypotheses (for quantitative studies) underlying the study are posed in this chapter. In chapter two, an extensive and detailed review of relevant and related literature is reviewed. It is also in chapter two that all relevant gaps in methodology, evidence, theory, knowledge, and population are identified to enable the researcher to find a base for his/her study. In chapter three, the methods, materials, and procedures are presented to achieve the goals (broad and specific) earlier stated in chapter 1. Chapter four is concerned with the presentation and interpretation of results as well as the discussion of key findings. Chapter five presents the summary of the entire research process from chapters one to four. Conclusions reached based on the results in chapter four are mentioned in chapter five, including the study's theoretical, practical and research implications. Finally, suggestions for further research are made in chapter five based on the study's limitations.

INTRODUCTION

The theme of this chapter is twofold; hints that will guide behavioural science students in writing good-quality research projects, theses and dissertations. The hints will also be helpful for supervisors and mentors in guiding and assessing their students' work. Behavioural science in this paper includes but is not limited to management sciences (e.g., management, marketing, etc.), social sciences, education and any discipline that deals with human actions. The need to adopt best practices in research reports and supervise students' theses motivated the writing of this chapter.

Problems exist in every sphere of life, and knowledge is incomplete in every discipline. Many questions require answers to solve numerous problems in the world. Gaps in our knowledge and unresolved problems can be addressed by asking relevant questions and seeking answers through research (Swales & Feak, 2014). Research is a fundamental tool for decision-making in most fields of endeavours (Kerlinger, 2000). Therefore, researchers, including tertiary-level students, emerging scholars,

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