LECTURE TOPIC: RESEARCH, BIBLIOGRAPHIC CITATION/REFERENCE

PRESENTED BY

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THE MEANING OF RESEARCH

We cannot talk about quality research writing, without delving into the very meaning of research or what research stands for. The word research means to search out or to search for something very closely or repeatedly. Research can be seen as the corner stone or the engine house of scholarship. The development of any nation depends largely on her level of research awareness. By implication, no nation can be said to attract international recognition without research. The economic, political, scientific and epistemic status of a nation is vehemently tide up on research. African countries and other Third World nations are backward or considered underdeveloped generally because there are no sound, comprehensive or holistic and aggressive research programmes (Effiong and Elija 2014). We must as a matter of fact, engage in quality research to address the aforementioned problems. Hence, national advancement is simply a product of passionate research.

RESEARCH WRITING AND DOCUMENTATION

This is an important stage or a rudimentary phase in the history of scholarship. Many scholars at this level are found frustrated, and can go to any length to gather people's works without giving any acknowledgement (s) to the authors or the primary sources of the consulted works. This is called academic falsehood, dishonesty or plagiarism, as the researcher in question failed to properly cite the initiator of the idea (s) he is working with. Short cut in partial fulfillment of any degree or research is tantamount to stealing and is punishable by law. A good researcher must be:

a. Honest
b. Imaginative
c. Logical
d. Accurate
e. Discipline

Honest:

A good researcher must accept the fact that research work is not one person's show. It entails also reading others and citing them where necessary. Today everyone wants to be prolific and would prefer to die than giving honor to whom honor is due. We often claim that we know it all and do not need to be guided by any other person. Research wise, it is better to assume to have known nothing than to claim to have known all. There is always room to learn more, know more, and clear some assumptions and presuppositions in the mind, where there is honesty and team work.

Imaginative:

A good work must be written in such manner that the reader will not get tired till he gets to the end. Any writer, who is not imaginative, will attract less readers and scholarly comments from the audience. If a work is captivating, precise and eventful, scholars will buy, read and recommend for friends and well-wishers. When one is imaginative in research writing, his work can be easily published without serious corrections or rejection by the publisher.

Logical:

A work that is not logical is not worth reading. There is always high level of optimism when a given argument in research work is chronological or inconformity with the reality out there. When empirical evidence (s) is provided, and the conclusion follows from the premise (s), we say that the argument is both rational and logical. There must be a connection or nexus between the topic under discussion, abstract, introduction, body, hypothesis, data analyses with the conclusion of the work.

Accurate:

One must be dogged in writing, as this will help in avoidance of mistakes, being truthful, meticulous and correct in data collection and analyses. Guess work injures ingenuity and serves as a dilution to the meaning and the fulcrum of any given project. It is an indication that the researcher is not grounded or has not mastered the very topic under review.

Discipline:

This, indeed, is an important cored or element of project or research writing. When academic discipline is lacking in a writer, the implications are bound. It is capable of making one to quote or cite unused materials, plagiarize or engage in what is today called copy and paste, unoriginal and unproductive academically. It is difficult for one to be a good person if he is not a good writer or an empathetic writer, who cares for others in writing.

10 POINTS ON HOW TO WRITE A GOOD/PUBLISHABLE PAPER

To write a good/ publishable paper, one is expected to follow these research guides:

- ❖ You must read others, as it makes one to be upgraded or conversant with the arguments of others and propose where necessary and establish what is lacking in the work of the author he consulted.
- ❖ Do not cite any one when you are using general knowledge/common knowledge.
- ❖ The topic can be straight or be framed in form of question.

- ❖ The abstract should not contain more than 200 words. It is expected to be between 100-200 words. Unless otherwise based on the rules and regulations of the particular journal in question. Hence, it is the synopsis that defines the objective and rationale of any work or idea. There should not be paragraph here but can be written in either past tense or present tense depending on the journal's specification. A good abstract, though, usually on demand, should not contain more than five keywords. In writing of abstract, there is no need of telling story. Go straight to the point by establishing the thesis statement, statement of the problem, objective/purpose of the study, significance, scope and the method you would want to use in the work.

- ❖ In the introductory part of the work, one is expected to begin with question that refers to the thesis statement. You can also begin by giving a background. You must not repeat your abstract here. The conceptual and theoretical framework must be made known to the reader.

- ❖ Body of work: This can contains only three sub heading, it can also be more depending on the title of the work. The first thing to be considered here is the background of the study. Second is the rebuttal of the point you depart from and the third is your purpose, that is, your contribution to knowledge.

- ❖ Conclusion: Highlight your proposal and the reason for it and tell us why it is better than proposals of other authors that have delved into the topic under discussion.

- ❖ Language: You must not use authoritative language to describe a concept or theory you wish to depart from. You have to be gentle with words and language. For example; believe it or leave it, whether you like it or not and I am the best or he is the best.

- ❖ Style: You must not create your own style of writing overnight; you can learn and use another author's style. If you insist on using your own style, you must have built your vocabulary and diction, read so many books and have understood how to play with words. You can be rigorous without being bombastic. It is all about construction.

❖ Beware of Plagiarism: Do not quote an author directly on a paper more than 400 words. Too many direct quotations of different authors are no longer fashionable. Use paraphrasing and cite the author (s) accordingly.

Bibliographic Citation/Reference

In a scholarly engagement, research and writing, we document information through bibliographies and reference notes to acknowledge sources. In the course of writing a research project, we make use of ideas borrowed from other sources of information or works. Intellectual honesty in scholarship demands that a writer acknowledges words and ideas borrowed from other writers. This is done by providing proper citation or documentation to such works which we have made reference to and from where we have obtained useful information from. The bibliography or reference contains the following information. Namely, name of the author, date of publication, title of the work, publication information which include place of publication and publishers, and collation where necessary.

Citation Styles or Formats

i.   American Psychological Association (A.P.A)
ii.   Modern Language Association of America (M.L.A)
iii. National Educational Association of the United States (N.E.A)
iv.   Classic Style

Under the bibliography, all the sources consulted in the course of the study are listed. Bibliography is more embracing than the reference, which refers to only those sources actually made use of in the course of the study. For Journal articles and conference papers; reference is preferable, while in a project report (project, dissertation, theses), bibliography is preferred.