Teaching and Learning in the Humanities and Social Sciences: Perspectives of Competence

Teaching and Learning in the Humanities and Social Sciences: Perspectives of Competence

Edited by

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A Publication of
Adeyemi Federal University of Education
Ondo, Nigeria

Foreword

I feel privileged to be requested to write the foreword to this book entitled: *Teaching and Learning in the Humanities and Social Sciences: Perspectives of Competence,* a publication put together by the School of Arts and Social Sciences, Adeyemi Federal University of Education, Ondo, Nigeria. The contributors to this book are seasoned scholars in their various fields with solid academic standing. Each of them has unveiled the most salient points in the emerging issues in multi-dimensional pedagogical perspective.

The three-module book, has been broken down into units, which no doubt provides a clear discussion of each of the topics. Of great interest are the first five units of the first module which engaged critical areas of teaching profession. The second module centres on lesson planning and methodology of teaching courses in Arts and Social sciences. Module three focuses on instructional materials for teaching and learning. This ranges from improvisation to utilisation of materials that could be gainfully used in the teaching of courses in Economics, Theatre Arts, History, Geography and Political science in Nigeria school system.

I wish to commend and congratulate the Dean and her team for coming up with this noble idea and nurturing it to fruition. The quality, readability and language used to convey ideas in this book will appeal to students, educational practitioners and general readers.

I therefore, strongly recommend the book as a special and general text for students at all levels as well as practising teachers in tertiary educational institutions.

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UNIT 5

Teachers Competence in Research Writing: A Systematic Approach

Ismail K. ODENIYI

Introduction

Research methodology is not only one of the requirements for the award of a degree in the Nigerian tertiary institutions but also one of the tools for measuring teachers' competence. Oftentimes, students in the Nigeria tertiary institutions do face the problem of what constitute the fundamental principle of a research due to improper training on how a competent-based research is being carried out. This unit is set to educate the readers and students in the tertiary institutions on the requirements of a well-articulated research with a bid to reducing the acrimony that do exist between the supervisors and the supervisees while students are writing their long essays or project. Human beings on performing their daily activities encounter various forms of problems which necessitate solutions. The solutions to these problems will require research into the problems, which connotes investigation, finding out, again and again. This is the reason why the term "research" has been defined differently by different authors, writers and scholars. Ogunwale (2009) defined research as the process of discovery of new knowledge or invention of new objects, and correcting errors in the existing knowledge and invention. It can also be defined as an organized inquiring aimed at providing solutions to identified problems. Etymologically, research is an amalgamation of two morphemes, 're' and 'search'. "Re" means doing again while "search" means to find something. This implies to find again what is being found (Ayantayo 2015). Oladiti (2011) opined that human being is always in search of ways of overcoming the precarious situations on daily

basis, this of cause constitute research in one form or the other. He claimed further that human being, having achieved one goal is further confronted with yet another goal, hence human being is always in search with ways of coping with fluid of realities that require finding solutions to. Nworgu in Ekundayo (2004) ascribed that research in general, has to do with an enquiry into the unknown. It is described as the search for solution to problems or answer to questions. The aim of research is to discover answers to meaningful questions through the application of scientific procedures.

In other words, it is a process of arriving at dependable solutions to problems through the planned and systematic collection, analysis and interpretation of data in a particular field of study. Collaborating this, Asika (1991) conceptualised research as any organized enquiry that aims at providing information for solving identified problems. Adepoju (1999) also defined research as a process of arriving at dependable solutions to problems through well planned activities which involved systematic collection, analysis and interpretation of relevant data. Research can also be defined as a scientific investigation or systematic inquiry of finding out fact and proffering solution to a particular problem. It is equally, the systematic and objective analysis and reporting of controlled observations with a view to arriving at the development of generalizations, principles, theories or explanation of phenomena. Generally, research aims at discovering, correcting, and interpretation of new facts. It is also concerned with modifying, revising or verifying accepted theories or conclusions based on new information. This work intends to introduce the students and the readers to the rudiments of research for the attainment of teacher's competence as required by the teachers training curriculums. Specifically, students undergoing teachers training are expected to master the concept of research, its types and as well the characteristics of a good research. Also, they are to be acquainted with the problem of research in Nigeria and sources of research topic. Furthermore, steps in choosing a research topic, techniques of research writing, data analysis and discussion of findings is also part of training to be mastered. Lastly, styles of

writing reference are also explained, so as to help the supervisees to conduct a well-conceived research and avoid academics misconduct while writing project or long essay. All these are meant to attain teacher's competence as recommended by teacher's education curriculum.

Types of Research

Scholars have itemized many types of research which may not be exhausted in this write up. Uzoagolu in Adedibu (2009) classified research into three based on the nature of research. These include:
    1. Historical Research
    2. Descriptive or Survey Research
    3. Experimental or Empirical Research

1.   Historical Research

This research involves an objective examination judgment and interpretation of past trends, attitudes, events and fact (Adedibu, 2009). The purpose of an historical research is to obtain a better understanding of the present, through the evaluation of the past and intelligent prediction of the future. An historical research also aids in avoiding past errors and predicting the future and also refreshes ones memory on what is known and unfolds what is not known. Akinboye (1998) observed that there are two main sources of collecting historical data; they are primary and secondary sources. Primary sources are relics and other things that have direct physical relationship, such as observation and participation. A secondary source deals with bibliographies, references, and documents recorded by someone else. These are less reliable than primary sources. Example of historical studies includes; the development of Islamic Education in Nigeria. The impact of Colonial Government on the development of Islamic Education in Nigeria and so on.

2.   Descriptive Research

Descriptive research can also called a survey research. This involve an exercise whereby a group of people is studied by collecting,

organizing and analyzing data from only a group of them considered as representative of the entire group (Oladiti, 2011). This type of research is based on information gathered through questionnaires, interviews, inventories, rating scales, self-report and observation. It is used to find the meaning and obtain an understanding of the present condition. The result obtained through this procedure can be statistically analysed for instance: A survey of social needs of teachers of Islamic studies in Ondo State, Causes of poor performance of students in Islamic studies and so on.

3.   Experimental Research

This type of research involves conducting experiments for research process. According to Ezeani (1998), it is the type of research in which certain variables are carefully manipulated or controlled in order to find out the effect of such manipulations. Experimental research is a precise research technique designed to solve specific educational problems. It is perhaps the most reliable type of research that determines situation. This is because it studies the present through descriptive surveys and experimental or empirical observation. It also makes inference by verification, hypothesis testing and by statistical analysis (Akinboye 1998). In conducting experimental research, three types of variables are usually taking into consideration. They are dependent, independent and intervening variables.

Characteristics of a Good Research

A research must be capable of contributing to knowledge in a particular field of study. Hence, before any research could be considered a good research in any field of study. It must have the following characteristics among others:

1.   It must attempt to solve a problem.
2.   It must be relevant and original.
3.   It must be based upon observable experiences or empirical evidence.

4. It demands accurate observation.
5. It must attempts to find an objective unbiased solution to the problem.
6. Research must be logical, cumulative and empirical.
7. It must be theoretically based and verifiable.
8. Above all, it must be of interest to the researcher.

Sources of Research Topics

Research problems or topics can be sourced from any of the various sections of education as a discipline. Meanwhile, sourcing for research problems or topics could be done through the following means among others as observed by Oladiti (2011) and Adepoju (1999).

1. Personal experience of the researcher during the cause of his studies
2. Through a thorough review of relevant professional literature like Textbooks, Magazines, Newsletters, Thesis, Dissertations Encyclopedia, etc.
3. Previous research reports can be useful such as NCE Project, B.A (Ed) Long Essay, M.Ed. Dissertation, Ph.D thesis and other published research reports.
4. Project supervisor can be a source of research topic
5. Current societal problem can be a source of research topic. For instance, The issue of Boko Haram, Corruption and bribery in the society, Almajiri Educational System and so on can be a source of topic.

Problems of Research in Nigeria

There are many problems militating against educational research in Nigeria. Some of these as observed by Adepoju (1999) and Ezeani (1998) are as follows:
1. Lack of or insufficient fund to carry out research projects
2. Lack of necessary materials, equipment and facilities to conduct meaningful research.

3. Poor attitude of the various governments towards research.
4. Poor communication link in terms of telephone, and mailing system.
5. Lack of adequate and unreliable data
6. Poor or lack of record - keeping system. There is also poor management information system.
7. Poor attitude of private sector to finance research under-taking to bring about improvement in their operations. This is otherwise called the business factors.
8. Poor or lack of thorough or well-articulated research in research centers and educational institutions which are largely based on the number of publications.

Steps in Choosing a Research Topic

In choosing a research topic there are some steps to take, according to Akinboye and Akinboye (1998); Akinsola and Ogunleye (2004); Oladiti (2011) and Ogunwale (2009). The following are the steps:

1. Define the problem or set the goal. What is that needs improvement or that might be developed as a new skill or solution?
2. Review the literature to learn whether others have met similar problems or achieved related objectives.
3. Formulate testable hypotheses or strategies of approach, stating them in clear, specific, pragmatic language.
4. Arrange the research setting and spell out the procedure and conditions. What are the particular things you will do in an attempt to meet your objectives?
5. Establish evaluation criteria, measurement techniques, and other means of acquiring useful feedback.
6. Analyse the data and evaluate the outcomes.

Components of Research Report

A final research report comes after the investigation or study is carried out on particular phenomenon to solve a problem or to bring

about advancement or to contribute to existing body of knowledge in the area chosen. Most educational institutions and research institutes usually adopt this format in the process of conducting and writing research reports. According to Adepoju (1999) a research report can be divided into three main sections. They are:

1. The preliminary section
2. The main body section
3. The references bibliography and appendices section.

1. The Preliminary Section

The preliminary section of a research report contains the following logical order:

(i) Title page
(ii) Certification
(iii) Dedication
(iv) Acknowledgement
(v) Table of Contents
(vi) Abstract

2 The Main Body Section

Chapter One: Introduction
1.1 Background to the Study
1.2 Statement of the Problem
1.3 Objectives of the Study
1.4 Research Questions and Hypotheses
1.5 Significance of the Study
1.6 Scope and Limitations of the Study or Delimitation
1.7 Definition or Operational Definition of Terms

Chapter Two: Review of Literature or Literature Review
2.1 Theoretical Framework
2.2 Review of the Related Studies
2.3 Appraisal of the Literature Review
2.4 Summary of Literature Review

Chapter Three: Research Design and Methodology
3.1 Research Design
3.2 Population of the Study
3.3 Sample and Sampling Technique(s)
3.4 Instrument for Data Collection
3.5 Validation of Instrument
3.6 Reliability of Instrument
3.7 Method of Data Collection
3.8 Method of Data Analysis

Chapter Four: Data Presentation and Analysis or Results
4.1 Demographic Characteristic of the Respondents or Subjects
4.2 Presentation of Result on the Basis of Research Questions
4.3 Testing of Hypotheses
4.4 Discussion of Findings

Chapter Five: Summary, Conclusion and Recommendations
5.1 Summary of Findings
5.2 Conclusion
5.3 Recommendations
5.4 Suggestion for Further Studies

References
Appendices

Techniques of Data Collection

Data collection is one of the potent aspects of research that determines the success or otherwise of research or study. This is the more reason why Popoola, cited by Oladiti (2011), indicated that success or failure of an investigation (research) depends on the use of appropriate method of data collection and administration. Similarly, advocating the importance of data gathering in effective research activities, Olanipekun, cited by Oladiti (2011), remarks that a researcher embarking on a study must specify his or her data

requirements and ensure that the methods adopted for data collection are free from bias. The fact that collection of dependable data is always a Herculean task and faced with myriads of problems necessitate that a researcher must adopt a workable method. For instance, Ayeni (2009) has indicated that problems of data collection in Nigeria include public ignorance and apathy towards the supply of reliable information coupled with inadequate communication facilities capable of enhancing data collection. Based on the findings of the above cited researchers and many others, a number of formidable instruments for data collection have been developed which include the following: (a) The use of questionnaire (b) Observation techniques (c) Rating scale (d) Performance tests (e) Interview.

Questionnaire

This connotes a self-report tool wherein a respondent responds to questions asked in writing. It consists of set of questions relating to aims and objectives of the study to which respondents are required to provide answer. UBEP (2000) affirms that if questionnaire is carefully constructed, it can be used to get information on a respondent's feelings, attitudes, and interests. Questionnaire can take different forms such as:

(a) **Open-ended**: This allows the respondents to write or comment freely on an issue for instance:
    1. Do you think that the government should allow the use of Hijab in schools?
    2. Do you think that al-Majiri education should be included into school curriculum among others?

(b) **Closed ended**: This requires the respondents to choose from a list of options. In this method, a researcher is limited to a fixed set of responses.

(c) **Pictorial type**: This is usually in form of photographs or drawings from which the respondents choose. This form of questionnaire is adequate for children and adults with

limited reading ability. For a questionnaire to be adjudged of good standard, such must possess a number of characteristics such as relevance, consistency, useable, clear, legible, and quantifiable.

Interview Technique

This is a technique involving at least two people in either face-to-face, telephone as well as other electronic discussions for the purpose of gathering information. It is an activity that takes place between an interviewer and interviewee, the person posing questions is the interviewer while the respondent is the interviewee. It involves seeking information from the respondent through some verbal interactions usually between him and the researcher. Questions to be asked must be properly framed for proper understanding. The following should be noted whenever an interview technique is to be used:

1. Good rapport should be established. This is to say that the respondent should be made to feel free and relax.
2. Good rehearsal and preparation of questions should be done. Avoid the use of technical terms or jargons. Where they are to be used, they must be done sparingly.
3. Proper appointment should be made which should be to the convenience of the respondent.
4. Proper recording of the information should be made. For example, through tape recording, video-taping, written records, and so on.
5. Avoid as much as possible probing questions that make the respondents feel uncomfortable. Questions should not appear as a threat to the respondents.
6. Avoid misleading questions. For example: "Don't you think your salary should be paid as at when due?" Instead, the question may read: "What is your suggestion on the payment of salary?"

A number of advantages have been recognized in the use of interview. These include the fact that it allows for the collection of in-depth information from the respondents and clarification can easily be obtained on any related issue. Extra information can also be obtained. However, the shortcomings of this technique is that, it is time consuming, the validity of the verbal responses collected may be questionable and it requires a lot of skills.

Observation Technique

Observation is used to obtain direct information about the behavior of an individual. It involves watching people, events, situations and obtaining first-hand information relating to the particular aspect being investigated. The concept of observation according to Universal Basic Education Programme, UBEP (2003) is the act or process of examining or taking a critical look at certain specified and unspecified behaviours and happenings in beings and non-beings within and outside the human environment. Skills involved in observation technique include systematic observation wherein predetermined behaviours are observed and recorded in an organized manner. It is important to develop checklist and schedules for data recording. The observable factors (behaviours) are recorded as they occur.

Rating Scale

This is a measuring instrument in which the ratee (investigator) assigns the rated person or object into categories according to the rater's experience about the ratee. It indicates the degree to which each attribute is present in the object being rated. Rating scales are based on attributes. A child, for example, may be rated for 0-5 on such attributes like: punctuality, neatness, reading ability and so on. Rating scales may also involve asking the respondent to choose from a set of graduated response options where he is expected to indicate his degree of agreement or disagreement with the statement. The responses are assigned numerical value (weighted). This type of scale is referred to as the summated or likert-type rating scale.

The responses options are weighted with a higher value indicating a positive response than a lower value. They are: Strongly Agree, Agree, Disagree, and Strongly Disagree.

Performance Test

Performance tests are used to measure learners' abilities. Two main types are recognized, these are; Achievement test and Aptitude test. Achievement test aims at finding out how much learning the learner has acquired or achieved, while Aptitude Test aims at finding out how much the learner can learn in future, his thinking ability is equally considered. For instance, researcher can conduct his own performance test or use those already constructed.

Data Analysis and Discussion of Findings

Data analysis and discussion of findings are important section of research. They spell out how data collected on a study is to be organized for effective analysis and presentation vis-a-vis drawing of inferences or conclusion. Hence data are collected, organized, analyzed and presented in concrete terms.

Data Analysis

Ayantayo (2015), conceptualized data analysis as the process of breaking the raw data collected in the fieldwork into smaller parts to gain a better understanding of it in preparation for discussing them while writing the research report or findings. It entails subjecting data so collected for a study, to the appropriate statistical analysis which invariably help in answering research questions raised for the study as well as provision of basis for the testing of hypothesis raised for the study. It must be emphasized here that data analysis is very pertinent to the success or otherwise of a study. Data analysis may take different forms depending on the nature of the study, such as graphical illustration like: pie-chart, bar-chart, histogram, line graph, and so on. It can also take the form of classifications and tabulation of data or maps and pictures.

Discussion of Findings

The task here involves presentation of results or findings from each hypothesis tested or research question answered and provide justification for the way the result has gone. Then establish links between such findings and previous findings on the issue. This is done by considering the relevant aspects of the literature review. Here, references are made in line with what previous researchers on the issue obtained. This is done by pointing out similarities, differences and the current position of the researcher. It is advisable that the researcher read through the literature review and bears in mind all the hypotheses or research questions employed for the study to enrich the discussion of results generally.

3. The References, Bibliography and Appendices

1. References/Bibliography

This is a list of scholarly works made use of by researcher in carrying out their research which can be in form of references or bibliography. References contain all scholars materials cited in the body of the work while bibliography contains scholarly materials that are cited or consulted when carrying out research, whether cited not cited. That is, reference is an integral part of biography and not vice versa. Referencing, according to Ayantayo (2015), is a productive enterprise in research and scholarship, this is because it determines the goodness or otherwise of a research work. In fact it is a very dangerous act and an act of academic misconduct for a researcher to claim a piece of information that does not belong to them. This can happen if a researcher fails to reference or in case of poor referencing.

Hence, scholarly works and authors consulted must be properly and adequately cited by a researcher. Scholarly materials cited could come in form of direct quotation, that is, word for word and it could come in form of indirect quotation that is, paraphrasing or summarising form. There are so many references style and every institution has its acceptable manual of style to which researcher

subscribed. The most popular and acceptable citation style is APA (American Psychological Association). It is commonly used in psychology, education and other social sciences. Although we also have MLA (Modern Language Association), Turabian and Chicago Manual of Style. Element contain in APA style are Author (Surname and Initials), date, Title of the book or Journal (Publication outfit), place and name of the publishers, pages of Journal and Magazine. Hence, different types of referencing are available which depends on the nature of document in question, primary sources and secondary sources inclusive. The following are some of such sources:

i.   Books

When a reference is being made to a book, the last name of the author comes first followed by the initial(s), then the date in parenthesis, the title of the book is to be italicized, the town of publication and the publisher. For instance: Doi, A.R.I. (1984). *Islam in Nigeria*. Zaria: Gaskiya Corporation Ltd. If the book is written by more than one author, the rule above applies, however, comma are used to separate the names except in the last name where a comma as well as "and" is used. For example: Beckett, P.A.and Crawford, Y. (1997). *Dilemmas of Democracy in Nigeria* Rochester: University of Rochester Press.

ii.   Journals

Odeniyi, I.K. (2013). "The Problem of Dawah in Yorubaland" *Ondo Journal of Art and Social Sciences (OJASS)*. 10 (1), 102-116.

iii.   Chapters in a Book

Zubair, S.S (2011). 'Impact of Islam on Africa' in Adegboyega A. and Fabarebo, I. (Eds) *Western Civilization in Nigeria: The gains and pains*. Lagos: Alafas Publishing Nigeria Company.

iv.   Government Publications

FGN (2004). *National Policy on Education.* Lagos. Federal Ministry of Education, Printing Division.

v. Articles in Newspapers

Olukotun, A. (2015). 'Western Media and 2015 Election' in The Punch, No. 20, 853 P.6, February 6.

Referencing styles depends on the format adopted. Irrespective of the format, it is necessary for the researcher to be consistent.

2. The Appendices

This is the third and last section in research report. Appendix is made up of all materials employed in the whole study that could be referred to for details of the work but are trivial as to warrant inclusion in the main body of the work (Oladiti, 2011). Materials here include among others: the instruments e.g. questionnaire, performance tests, etc. table not directly related to data analysis; calculations, data on item-by-item analysis; raw data; scoring guide and procedures; letters of introduction, permission, etc. obtained in the course of carrying out a study.

Conclusion

The study averred that effective training on how a well-articulated research is being carried-out is very essential for the attainment of teacher's competence. Also, research which connotes investigation, finding out, again and again what is being found must contribute to knowledge in a particular field of study. Meanwhile, attempt has been made in this study to define research, its types, characteristics and sources of research topics. Problems of research in Nigeria, steps in choosing a research topics and components of research report were also looked into. We also examined the techniques of data collection, data analysis and discussion of findings. The paper then concluded by exposing the researcher and the reader to various acceptable referencing styles so as to produce a well-designed and competent based research and avoid poor referencing that may lead to academic misconduct.

Recommendations

For the attainment of teacher's competence and improvement in research and scholarship in Nigeria, the following recommendations were made:

1. Evil practice of someone else writing project for supervisees should be discouraged by the project supervisor and the management of tertiary institutions of learning.
2. Research methodology in each field or Department should be taught by seasoned researchers in the field who have the knowledge of research.
3. Project supervisor should effectively mentor the supervisees assigned to them for supervision.
4. Government and private sector should help in financing research, so as to bring about well-articulated research.
5. Researchers and supervisees should be educated on the evil effect of claiming a piece of information that does not belong to them.

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