

Methods of research essay sample



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Perhaps one of the basic ways to define a word is by looking into its etymology: Research is derived from the French word *recherché*, from *recherché* where *chercher* means “to search” while its literal meaning is “to investigate thoroughly”. Another way is from the component of the word itself:

Research is composed of two syllables: *re*, a prefix meaning again, repeat, or over again and *search*, a verb which means to examine closely and carefully, a quest for something, that is research may mean a continuous and recurring studies. Further, the dictionary classifies research as a noun that involved studying something or trying to find out facts about it through scholarly or scientific investigation. Research is also synonymous to a quest for knowledge, data or truth. Below are more several technical definitions for the term research:

- A process of scientific thinking that leads to the discovery of establishment of new knowledge or truth. It is not subjective expression of ideas or opinions (Isidro and Malolos, 1979).

- The careful, unbiased investigation of a problem, based in so far as possible, upon demonstrable facts and involving refined distinctions, interpretations, and usually some generalizations (Good, 1956).

- The systematic and objective analysis and recording of controlled observations that may lead to the development of generalizations, principles, or theories, resulting in the prediction and possibly the ultimate control of events (Best, 1981).

- A systematic, controlled, empirical and critical investigation of hypothetical propositions about the presumed relations among natural phenomena

(Kerlinger, 1973). These may explain why the said term when used in any discussion, whether formal or informal in nature, readily connotes and suggests that a lot of books would be opened, websites searched, libraries unlocked and tons of questions would have arise one after every answer found, not to mention sleepless nights and meals skipped just to remain focused on the given research work. Also from the given definitions cited, key words have been found to be common which can serve as reference and key points to consider to come up with a research in respect to its nature and pre-determined characteristics. Some of these characteristics are defined below with aim to serve as guide:

1. Process – consists of several essential phases or steps or actions intended to achieve a particular result
2. Scientific – done in a systematic way, using experiments or tests
3. Systematic – follows a fixed plan and done in an efficient way, follows a logical sequence
4. Objective – not influenced by personal feelings or prejudices, based on all available established facts
5. Controlled – exact and precise procedures, uses set up in the study to minimize the effects of other factors affecting the variables under examination
6. Thorough – or rigorous, ensures that procedures followed to determine outcome are pertinent, correct and necessary

7. Empirical – means that any conclusions drawn are based upon hard evidence gathered from information collected, including real life experiences or observations

8. Critical – critical analysis of the procedures and methods used, must be foolproof, free from any downside and would be able to withstand analytical examination

The stages or steps involved in conducting research may have been provided and quantified by different researchers like Best (1959), Borg and Gall (1979), Van Dalen (1979) and Bailey (1987) among others, but the common steps found in their works are as follows:

1. Formulation / Identification / Recognition of a Problem – therefore no research happens without this first step of having a research problem. More about the problem shall be discussed in the succeeding pages of this paper.
2. Formulating / Stating the hypothesis – an explanation or theory which has not yet been proven to be correct
3. Collection of Data – involves construction of research tools such as observation forms, interview schedules, questionnaires, and interview guides, which are used to collect information necessary for the study.
4. Analysis of Data –

5. Synthesis of Data –

DEFINITION OF THESIS

The dictionary defines thesis as a long piece of writing, based on research, which is done as part of a university degree. One good definition of a thesis is provided by Cole and Bigelow (1935) as follows: A thesis may be defined as the report of a scholar upon some piece of research which he has

completed. It is the culmination of a devious process extending from the initial insight into the opportunity for investigation to the insertion of the final footnote. Many elements are involved, and each offers the possibility of raising or lowering the quality of the product. Most important of all in determining the character of the result, however, is the fundamental aims of the writer which should be an undeviating search for truth, and original in substance.

SOURCES OF PROBLEMS

As research emanates from having a point or item to verify or prove about, whether said point or argument was part of already existing literature or just brought by plain curiosity, it can be basically said that all in life can be a source of a research problem. According to McGuigan (1978), the following situations may manifest a problem: 1. When there is an absence of information resulting in a gap in knowledge. 2. When there are contradictory results.

3. When a fact exists and you intend to make your study explain it. Most research problem revolves on 4 Ps: people, problems encountered, programs – its effect or effectiveness, and phenomena. The table below can serve as a quick guide to further describe the 4 Ps. Aspect of a StudyAboutStudy of

Study populationPeopleIndividuals, organizations, groups, communities

Subject AreaProblemIssues, situations, associations, needs, population composition, profiles etc.

ProgramContents, structure, outcomes, attributes, satisfaction, consumers, service providers etc.

Phenomenon Cause and effect relationships, the study of a phenomenon itself etc.