



Workshop on Doing Research for MA, Th.M , PhD in Religious Studies/Theology November 2022



Godwin Iornenge Akper

Professor of Systematic Theology



NOUN

gakper@noun.edu.ng



National Open
University of Nigeria

Presentation Outline

1

Give Reasons
for the Seminar

2

Define Research
and explain its
critical
components

3

Take you
through a typical
research
process

4

Present Layout
of Research
Dissertation and
Thesis

5

Recap the
presentation

Why this Seminar?

to guide students on research processes to avoid attrition cases

Postgraduate research is different from undergraduate research experience

Research Methodology Self Learning Material is under review

What is Research?

It is a process of critical analysis of a given problem with a view to solving that problem. Cf. Laetus O.K Letegan et: al, “Doing Research: Navigating the Process”, in: Laetus O.K, Lategan, Liezel Leus & Hesta Friedrich-Nel (eds.) *Doing Research* (revised Edition) Stellenbosch: African Sun Media, 2011), 2-3.

Guiding principles of Research

Knowledge enquiry

Discovery of new Knowledge

Implementation and application of new knowledge

Basic Questions to consider before starting Postgraduate research work

What do I intend to do? (Topic/area of research)

Why do it? (Justification)

How do I go about doing it? (Methodology)

Where do I intend to do it? (Design, type of the research, population etc)

To what extent will I do it? (Scope)

When do I intend to do it? (Work Plan/ Scheduling of time)

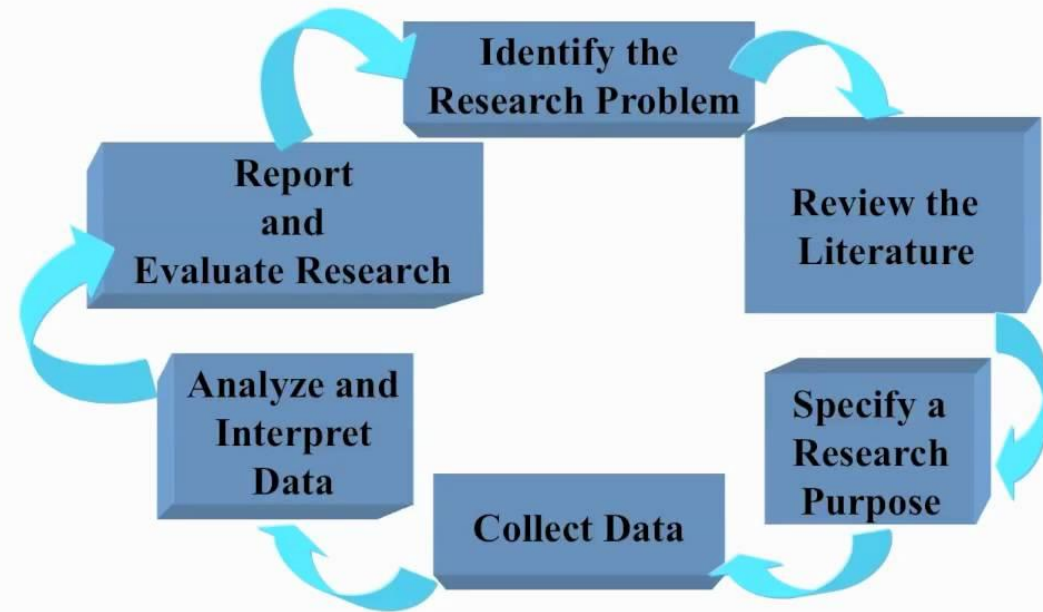
How much will it cost me to do it? (Budget)

To what end am I doing it? (Contribution to Knowledge)

What am I consulting? (References)

**Typical
steps to take
in doing
postgraduate
research**

The Process of Research



Thesis Layout : Preliminary Pages

• :



Cover Page: it contains the thesis title, author's surname and other names in full, matric number, and the degree.



Note: *Name and degree title must be written on the spine of the binded copies*



Colour: Postgraduate
Colour (HOD to emphasize)

Thesis Layout: Preliminary Pages...

- **Inside Cover Page:** As on the cover page at the upper level of the page, followed at the lower level of the page with a statement:

A Thesis submitted to ... National Open University of Nigeria in partial fulfillment of the award of the degree, Doctor of Philosophy (PhD) in

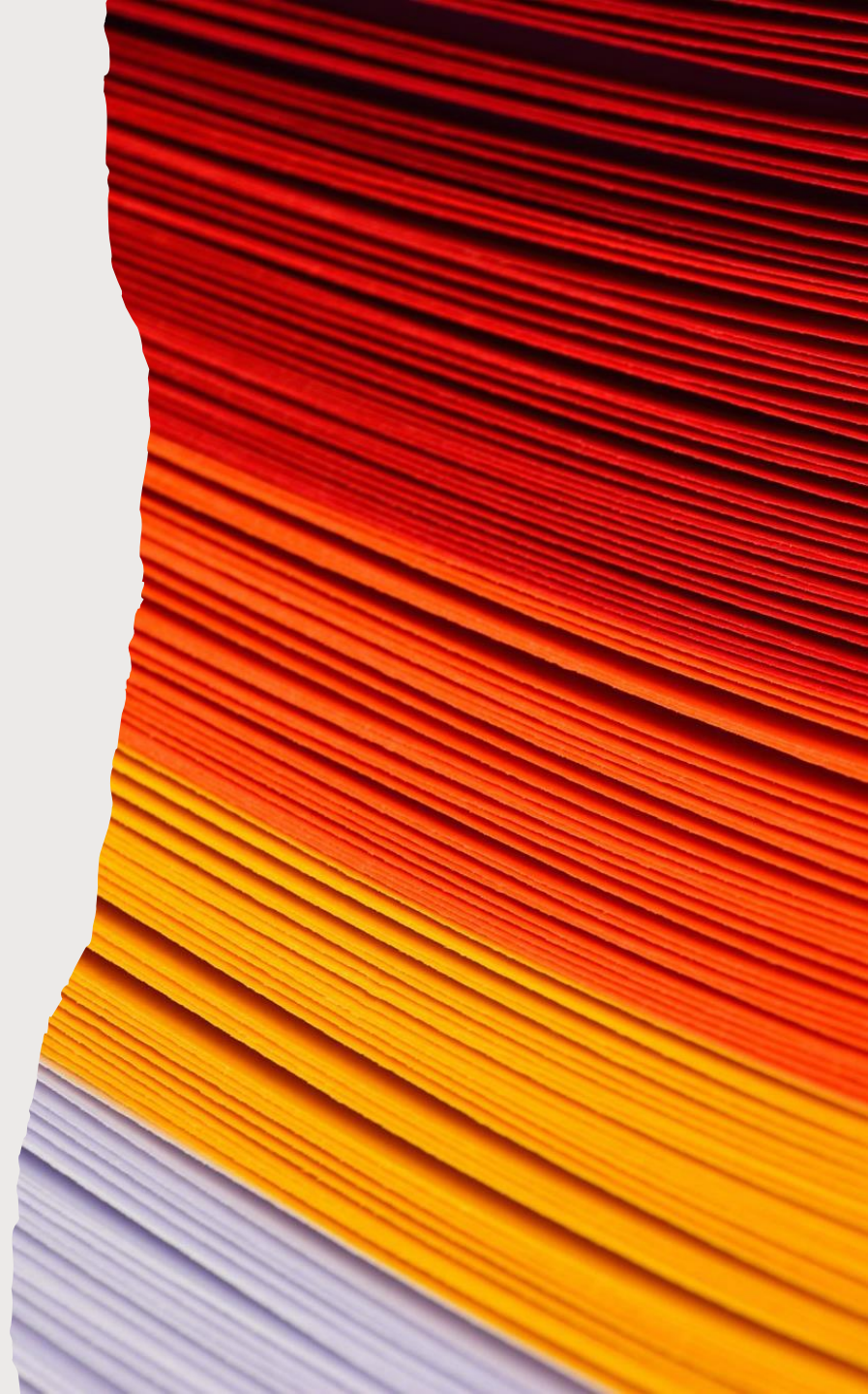
23rd March, 2022

Thesis Layout: Preliminary Pages...

- **Declaration Page:** Here the student declares the originality of the work.
- **Certification:** The supervisor endorses to certify the originality of the work
- **Dedication:** Here the author dedicates the work to whoever s/he wants. Keep it very short.
- **Acknowledgements:** The author acknowledges assistance received during the research. Keep this short as well.

Thesis Layout: Preliminary Pages...

- **Abstract:** a paragraph where the author states (briefly) the **problem** investigated, the **purpose** for doing so, the **methodology** used in investigating the problem, key **findings**, **recommendations** for implementation of the proposed solutions arrived at (based on the findings), and major **contribution(s)** the research has made to knowledge "economy" in the **field**.
- Note: an *abstract should not exceed 400 words. The shorter the better.*



Thesis Layout: Preliminary Pages...

I

List of Tables and Abbreviations (if applicable): where tables and abbreviations are used, they should be listed here.

Thesis Layout: Chapters

Chapter One:

1.1 Background to the Study – why the research

1.2 Statement of the problem – the exact issue the research intends to/or has addressed. This should be very precise/clear enough to guide the reader (including those not in the field). It must justify why a solution is needed to the problem so stated.

1.3 Research Question(s) – The specific questions the research will answer. Usually, the statement of the problem should flow smoothly (lead) to research questions. It should be obvious from the statement of the problem what the research questions would be.

Thesis Layout: Chapters...

1.4 **Objectives of the Research** – Here the author should answer the question: what do you want to achieve? The overall goal of the research work should be clearly stated here to guide the readers.

Remember, a good research should identify and find solution to an “authentic” problem (not an imaginary one).

Thesis Layout: Chapters...

1.6 **Significance of the study** – the author justifies in detail, why the study and gives an indication of the breakthrough the study has made, thereby, contributing a new solution to an existing problem that may or may not have been discovered and addressed in the past.

Thesis Layout: Chapters...

1.7 **Scope** of the Study – This is a statement delimiting the study. It answers the question: to what extent did you investigate the identified problem? It may be informed by the concepts/theoretical framework given in

1.8 under the definition of concepts/theoretical framework; or financial constraints, time allowed for the research say 3 years to complete doctoral work. It may also be as a result of the nature and source(s) of data available for the research.

Thesis Layout: Chapters...

1.8 **Conceptual Clarification/Theoretical Framework** – The meaning of language in the philosophy of Wittgenstein is its use. Therefore, an author should clearly define how s/he used the concepts in the research report.



Thesis Layout: Chapters

I

- **Literature Review** – The author reviews already existing literature that attempts to solve the problem and gives the reason(s) why a further enquiry is necessary.
- Also, the basis for approaching the research the way the author did is given in the framework. Note that not all research requires a theoretical framework but for most research in this field, a theoretical framework is usually established to justify the conclusions of the researcher.

- **Chapter Two**

Thesis Layout: Chapters...

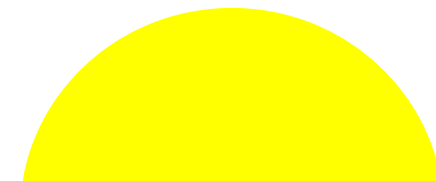


This depends on the nature of the Research. For empirical research, the title of this chapter will be **Methodology**. Whereas the research is library-based, the title of this chapter will be the main theme under consideration e.g. God's revelation in ATR ... This means that for library research, methodology is stated in a section of Chapter One, in most cases, right after statement of research questions.



For empirical study, the sections under Methodology may be *Research Design, Population of the Study, Sampling Techniques/ Sampling Size, Data Collection Instrument, and Validation.*

Chapter Three



Thesis Layout: Chapters...

Chapter Four

- The topic here depends on the nature of the research. For empirical study, it will be **Data Presentation and Analysis**.
- The author will present the data collected and do a detailed analysis of it. Also, the author **tests the hypothesis** (if given in Chapter One).
- Where the research is not empirical, the topic will flow from the outline of themes of the thesis topic.

Thesis Layout: Chapters...

Chapter Five

- Summary, Conclusion, and Recommendations
- Give a brief summary of each chapter, findings upon which conclusions are based, and recommendations for implementation of the findings of the research;
- Also, recommend further research (where applicable).

Thesis Layout: References or Bibliography

Chicago Style: Chicago Manual

- i. **F.N (a):** Albert Einstein, *The Meaning of Relativity* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1923), 44–45.
- ii. **F.N (b)** Einstein, *The Meaning of Relativity*, 89.
- iii. **Bib.:** Einstein, Albert. *The Meaning of Relativity*. Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1923.
- iv. **F.N. (a)** Morris Dickstein, “A Literature of One’s Own: The Question of Jewish Book Awards.” *Princeton University Library Chronicle* 63, no. 1–2 (Winter 2002): 71.
<https://doi.org/10.25290/prinunivlibrchro.63.1-2.0070>.
- v. **F.N (b)** Dickstein, “A Literature of Opne’s Own”, 71.
- vi. **Bibl.:** Dickstein, Morris. “A Literature of One’s Own: The Question of Jewish Book Awards.” *Princeton University Library Chronicle* 63, no. 1–2 (Winter 2002): 70–74.
<https://doi.org/10.25290/prinunivlibrchro.63.1-2.0070>.

RECAP

- Reasons for the seminar
- Defined research and explained its critical components
- Took you through a research process
- Presented to you a typical layout of thesis chapters



Thank you
