

UNIT 8: Research Project

1

WEEK EIGHT
LECTURER: N. QUARRIE

Learning Outcome three (3)

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- LO3 Be able to evaluate the research outcomes

Objective of Lesson

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- By the end of this lesson you should be able to:
- 3.1 use appropriate research evaluation techniques



Overview

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- It is very important to evaluate the outcome of each step or action that you took during and after the research process.
- This week we will focus on: Evaluation of outcomes- an overview of the success or failure of the research project planning, aims and objectives, evidence and findings, validity, reliability, benefits, difficulties, conclusion(s)

An overview of the success or failure of the research project planning

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- Recall the action plan that you completed in LO1? Well at this stage of the research process it is very important to review this said plan to see whether or not you followed what you had planned. Some important questions to ask yourself as you review your plan are as follow:
- Were all the deadlines met?
- Did you discuss all details that you said you would discuss?
- Were all the resources that you mentioned needed/used?
- etc

Aims and objectives

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You wrote some aims and objectives based on your topic. Now at this stage what you need to do is to review those objectives to see if you met those objectives:

1. Did your discussion/findings provide answers to your objectives?
2. Did you collect the relevant data to help you to answer the objectives?

If these objectives aren't met/answered then your research is quite incomplete.

Evidence and Findings

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- More often than not students have a discussion about what they think the answer to their research question is. This results in a findings section that is just opinionated. As a researcher you should try to avoid this.
- There are some students who also make up “facts” and thus are not able to include the in-text citation. If you did not use/issue a questionnaire, how is it that you are writing about data collected from a questionnaire?

Evidence and findings

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- There are also some persons who use questionnaires etc but there is no evidence of the questionnaire in the appendix.
- You must show evidence of all facts etc that you include in your research

Reliability

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- This was previously discussed but just a reminder:
- “Reliability refers to the repeatability of findings. If the study were to be done a second time, would it yield the same results? If so, the data are reliable (Psc.dss.ucdavis.edu, n.d.)”
- During your review of your final research, reread what you have, especially the result and check to see if these are valid. That is, if you were to use the same data would they give you the same result?

Validity

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- “**Validity** refers to the credibility or believability of the research (Psc.dss.ucdavis.edu, n.d.)”
- To ensure that your research is credible try to ensure that all your claims are supported by your research findings.

Benefits of doing your research

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- This is where you evaluate the benefits of the research process:
- It provided information on a problem
- It enhanced your researching skills
- It provided avenues for solution to your research problem.

Lets discuss!

Challenges of doing your research

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- There are undeniably challenges when doing a research:
- Information not being readily available.
- The cost of doing the research.
- The time it takes to do the research.

Lets discuss!

Review Questions

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1. Assume that you are now through with your project. Discuss whether or not you successfully used your research specification/action plan. Did you do exactly what you planned?
2. After completing your research, how would you be able to tell whether or not you answered your research questions/objectives? Explain.
3. How would you be able to tell whether or not your research is valid or reliable? Explain thoroughly
4. Discuss four of the difficulties that you encountered while completing your paper. What could you have done to reduce/eliminate these difficulties.

References/Additional Readings

- Psc.dss.ucdavis.edu. (n.d.). *Introduction: Reliability and validity*. [online] Available at: <http://psc.dss.ucdavis.edu/sommerb/sommerdemo/intro/validity.htm> [Accessed 22 Jun. 2016].