Customizing Research as a Vital Tool in Institutional and Organizational Social Capital Progress

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ABSTRACT

The application of research and related output in daily activities of many an organization is undoubtedly gaining traction in the contemporary societies and is indeed becoming a key component in decision making for success in real life. The absence of research in many instances has led to regrettable actions by organizational managers leading to financial losses and disappearance of some organizations together with its consequences. This article under themes guided by objectives sought to interrogate how research can be customized as a vital tool for institutional and organizational social capital progress. Aiding this, theresearcher through four objectives for this presentation; examined the categorization of types of research, established the overview of skills required for article/book reviewers, assessed quality-thought communication from an academic discipline, and find out the leveraging of ICT in research reviews. This article employed a qualitative literature desktop review where available written materials formed part of the final work. This necessitated use of descriptive design purposively by the author. Referencing has followed the Chicago Manual Style. Making a move from generalization in its conclusion as to do with customization, this study gears to specifics; in customization of research a need for nexus to core idea and content gap is paramount. In its final end it became evident that two major categories of research exist;Basic and Applied researches, that there are paramount skills for article reviewers, there is need for quality – thought communication as an output in research, and entrenching ICT for institutional and organizational social capital.

Keywords: Why Research/ Customizing Research/ Institutional Research/ Basic Research/ Applied Research/ Quality Research

INTRODUCTION

The divide between research and policy is substantial in many Low and Middle-Income Countries (LMIC). Both supply and demand factors are responsible for this. On the supply side, the limited local pool of human and financial resources has constrained the production of quality research. The result is that many LMICs are characterized by limited institutional capacity to generate research to aid policy making. On the other hand, avenues for research to influence policy are severely limited. One reason for this is the bureaucratization of policy making, in which, researchers and research institutions have only a minor role. The current international emphasis on evaluating performance has positioned health systems research as an important vehicle for promoting evidence-based policy making (Koon, Nambiar, and Rao, 2012[1]). The authors emphasize the need for research. Nonetheless, constraints to the same are evident in many environments much more the issue of quality which mirrors from the capacity of the social capital.

John Young (2005) similarly echoes almost a converging research related school of thought while suggesting that, “better utilization of research and evidence in development policy and practice can help

save lives, reduce poverty and improve the quality of life. However, there is limited systematic understanding of the links between research and policy in international development. Based on the findings of stakeholder workshops in developing countries around the world, he identifies four key issues identical to this as: (i) troubled political contexts; (ii) problems of research supply; (iii) external interference; and (iv) and others". Positively pointed is what research can help achieve is paramount to humanity well-being as a baseline[2]. In addition, the observation that research is underutilized seems to be implied due to their shortage in supply. Despite this insinuation, in this paper I may differ with the argument by suggesting that many researches exist (no shortage of supply) except quality and relevance. The reasons for this could be many too; many good researches are hardly utilized nor acknowledged by policy makers in dire need of changing dynamic circumstances of policy making.

Many are finding research useful indeed. Rhetorically asking what Evidence Based Policy (EBP) is finds an answer that it is (Sutcliffe and Court, 2005[3]) a discourse or set of methods which inform the policy process, rather than aiming to directly affect the eventual goals of the policy. It advocates a more rational, rigorous and systematic approach. Using evidence to inform policy is not a new idea. What is new and interesting however, is the increasing emphasis that has been placed on the concept in the UK over the last decade. The term EBP gained political currency under the Blair administrations since 1997. It was intended to signify the entry of a government with a modernising mandate, committed to replacing ideologically-driven politics with rational decision making. EBP has now become a focus for a range of policy communities, whether government departments, research organisations or think-tanks.

THE CATEGORIZATION OF TYPES OF RESEARCH

The main objective of research according to Neelam Pawar (2020) [4], is obtain new finding and validate existing data about phenomena studied through systematic, scientific, controlled, careful and rigorous investigation. Pawar in observing research in thebroadest sense categorizes it in many specific types. She points, the type of research classified as pure research, applied research, descriptive research, analytical research, fundamental research, conceptual research, empirical research, longitudinal research, laboratory research, exploratory research, and conclusion oriented research.

In Teddy Palys words (Given, 2008[5]), some concepts are more easily explained by contrasting them with their opposites, and that is certainly the case with "basic research," which is most commonly contrasted with "applied research." Towards this argument, "Basic research" refers to research that is undertaken for its own sake – to advance knowledge; to develop theory; to solve an interesting theoretical puzzle; to address a curiosity of the researcher – without any immediate concern for whether doing so will produce anything "useful" or "practical" or "generalizable." "Applied research," in contrast, specifically aims to do something "practical" about a relatively immediate problem.

In my thinking, basic research's concern is being a systematic study purposed to gaining deeper insights into phenomena without specific applications in researcher's mind. Fitting the threshold of basic research include; Case Studies, Correlational Studies, Longitudinal Studies, Experimental Studies, and Clinical Trial Studies. Getting basic research done involves the cardinal procedures of research such as; identifying atopic, carrying a preliminary search for information, identifying materials and methods, writing your script, and concluding with recommendations. The characteristics of this research surround an anti '*cul de sac*' attribute (done with no practical end in mind) and again it results in general knowledge. Most scientifically undertaken researches are basic in nature.

Applied research main aim according to Gitlin and DePoy (2013[6]) is to discover solution, to provide knowledge and to applied social research data into decisions to solve problems associated with serious risks. With help of employing experimental research, accepted known theories, principles, case studies and interdisciplinary research one can solve certain problems. Its characteristics include; solving problematic

facts, without generalize objective studies individual or specific cases, represent how things can be changed, and tries to correct problematic facts.

With this description, some examples of applied research can be; i. *Improvement of workplace commitment through/and worker-motivation strategies in Swan Industries Nakuru, ii. Investigating treatment and management options for anxiety and panic attacks among patients at FortHall Health Centre in Langas*, and *iii. Investigating Dominant factors improving worker's productivity in Unga Limited, Kenya*. These are hypothetical examples (both for applied and basic research) which may be unsearched or researched already. It is the onus of a researcher impressed by them to acknowledge where one finds them useful.

On the other hand some of these examples could fit into the basic research; i. *Assessing Gender Stereotypes and Depression*, and ii. *Drug Consumption Impacts on Brain*. The context for these investigations would change if the first one was to be written as "*Assessing Gender Stereotypes and Depression among National Police Service Employees in Kenya*" and the second one as "*Assessment of Drug Consumption Impacts on Brain of College Students in National Polytechnics of Kenya*". The change would lead into application which is the emphasis in the case of applied research.

THE OVERVIEW OF SKILLS REQUIRED FOR ARTICLE/BOOK REVIEWERS

An article reviewer/book reviewer are synonymous to the article contributor in a journal or for a chapter in a book. The reason being you cannot review what you do not know. The effective review work therefore lies in being grounded in ones discipline and research, these being twin minimums for this kind of work. An article or book reviewer does both the descriptive and evaluative work for a piece of scholarly material. Inthe process checking the over-all purpose of the written material, its structure, style of narration in relationto the prescribed, and attempting to compare the work output with other similar ones in the academic circles/and within the discipline.

A book review tells not only what is in a book but also what a book attempts to achieve and how it can be used. To discuss the uses of a book, you must explore your own reactions, for these reactions reveal how you have responded to the book. Thus, in writing a review, you combine the skills of describing what is on the page, analyzing how the book tries to achieve its purpose, and expressing your own reactions. Thenature and length of the review depend on the book, the purpose of the review, and the anticipated audience. The shorter the review, the more succinctly you must present your judgments. By writing reviews, you will develop your critical skills as a reader and researcher, and you will be mastering evaluative writing, which you will find useful in many situations beyond the book review itself (www.writing.colostate.edu[7]).

The necessary skills for an Article Reviewer shall not be limited to these; *excellent reading and comprehension skills, strong writing abilities, time management skills, communication skills, and critical thinking skills*. These are very pertinent to reviewers and the discipline since it allows knowledge development. Reviews are important because they act as a reflection for the author to have a sense of how the society is reacting and embracing their work.

From the onset, a research article, paper, proposal/thesis is a frame of ideas scientifically generated from data and information collected by a conscious writer under a discipline sensitive environment for various purposes; effecting policy change, causing social change, improving existing laws, achieving academic mileage, addition to existing theoretical discourse, creating a discourse for innovation and invention, and many numerous reasons. While framing these ideas, the imperative of a clear nexus between the core idea and content gapping ought to be observed. This means, the connection between the Statement of the Problem (S), Objectives (O), Theoretical Foundations (T), Methodological issues (M), Discussions (D), and Recommendations (R) shortened as SOTMDR are key visibilities expected to be tightly compatible to each other and to existing body of knowledge.

QUALITY-THOUGHT COMMUNICATION FROM AN ACADEMIC DISCIPLINE

The concept of quality thinking is outcome based. It is not so much about the thinker though the thinker may be a beneficiary, it is more about others and the ecology of the thinker. The normal human life is concerned with quality, a realm of superiority. It is easy to deduce beforehand then that quality – thought communication should enhance this in ones academic discipline.

Quality thinking (Sunkepally and Raju, 2020[8]) has been there as a human endeavor ever since humans started thinking of ways and means of satisfying their (primordial) needs. The search for better things and better ways of accomplishing tasks has always been on their agenda and probably this 'quality thinking' propelled human civilization to progress. The authors attempt to trace this evolutionary history of quality thinking to unravel the layers underlying this phenomenon. In the area of managerial thinking, the thinking domain spans over profit thinking, product thinking, process thinking, employee thinking, and customer thinking. The thinking process meanders over scale thinking, scope thinking, pace thinking, and leanthinking in respect of enterprise parameter thinking. Understanding the aforementioned typology of quality thinking enables us to delve deep into diverse aspects of quality thinking.

According to David Easton's system theory model, in my understanding, quality-thought communication is a derivative of the system processes comprising input, processor, and output (consequences). At the input stage the normal occurrence for author or reviewer, one would expect grasping knowledge through reading relevant materials which are later transformed at the processor stage into a desired collection of knowledge which ultimately is shared as an output. The reviewer undertaking his/her work is concerned with this flow since it has a way of marketing a particular journal as to maintenance of standards while for the author it is a placement among peers in the same discipline.

In an argument by Scolnicov (2006[9]), though philosophical, arguments and counter arguments "Plato has two models of language and of knowledge (or, more generally, of cognition) expressed in language. There is a word, which, by itself, signifies an object. If the speaker succeeds in naming the object (and naming it correctly is equivalent to knowing it), he obviously names it by its name. If he does not name it by its name, he does not succeed in naming it (and, ipso facto, he fails to know it). One cannot signify falsely, just as one cannot know falsely. Saying a falsehood is to speak of an object, but not as it is. Men sometimes call 'learning' the acquisition of knowledge and sometimes its possession. The introduction of the knower (or speaker) severs the supposed direct link between cognition and object, or between name and reference, thus making possible non-void doxa and error. Only now can error be defined. For Socrates, the possibility of contradiction is of paramount importance in all the dialogues. Plato insists on a logic of utterances. In asense, meaning is use.

Summarily, therefore, it can be deduced that Plato means 'to know is to do' (the abundance of the mind is what is spoken), and otherwise said for activity related tasks it leads to doing.

There is need to dissect and interrogate whether quality-thought communication has any connection to quality teaching and learning. Stensaker inquires what quality teaching and learning is, and observes it from a substantial discussion around the meaning of quality which took place around 20 years ago within the field of higher education, and views still differ about what quality is and how it should be obtained (Stensaker, 2007[10]).

It is probable that the question of what quality in education is never has had a clear, unambiguous answer, although a pragmatic consensus seems to have been reached in practice that *quality means "fitness for purpose" as well as "fitness of purpose"* (Wittek & Kvernbekk, 2011, p. 672[11]). Nevertheless, the notion of quality is widely used in all educational contexts and increasingly so in the field of higher education.

Whereas Stensaker imagines quality teaching and learning to contribute to quality-thought communication, Wittek and Kvembekk implies that quality in education itself has no clear meaning. Without denying the connection it has to teaching and learning, there are attributes that form part of quality-thought communication such as; i. understanding ones discipline ii. learned articulation, iii. and mastery of communication skills. In all this, again, understanding a discipline entails; theoretical foundations in the discipline, possessing good epistemological leaning, and grounded philosophical underpinnings.

Theorizing, then, is the process of systematically developing and organizing ideas to explain phenomena, and a theory is the total set of empirically testable, interconnected ideas formulated to explain those phenomena1 (White & Klein, 2002[12]). It is extremely important (Anonymous, 2004[13]) to be clear that if one deals only with the conceptual, or idea, level without testing those ideas against independent empirical information. The arguments raised by these scholars sum up theories as a system of ideas implicitly implying their connectivity in thought generation and communication.

Ahmed (2008[14]) posits that epistemology is 'a way of understanding and explaining how we know what we know'. Epistemology is also 'concerned with providing a philosophical grounding for deciding what kinds of knowledge are possible and how we can ensure that they are both adequate and legitimate.' The Epistemological stance used in the first study is constructionism. It is defined as "the view of that all knowledge and therefore all meaningful reality as such is contingent upon human practices, being constructed in and out of interaction between human beings and their world and developed and transmitted within an essentially social context." Thus, meaning is not discovered, but constructed. Additionally, in all these ontological assumptions ought to be included. This is defined as "the study of being". It is concerned with "what kind of world we are investigating, with the nature of existence, with the structure of reality as such". Underlying this is the question 'what is there that can be known?' or 'what is the nature of reality?'

In the process of review which is equally of importance to authors, the reviewers should be cognizant with the constructivism process throughout an article beforehand so that there is an order and appealing presentation in a given article.

THE LEVERAGING OF ICT IN RESEARCH REVIEWS

Economists have long talked of complimentary goods in explanations on how they behave towards needs and wants. As erstwhile, research as a vital tool may be enhanced by Information Communications Technology (ICT) tool in the contemporary. ICTs need and application is here to stay unforeseeably. ICTs is variously used today several segments of higher education for learning and research. Extensively it is a source of acquiring study material, delivering study content, and sharing content where multitasking is required while at the same time reaching remotely located students despite its many challenges. As it were, the applications of ICT is a major factor for researchers because of many of its abilities one being to ease the knowledge-gathering process and to enhance resource development. Starting with the very basic, ICTprovides; the typing interface, manipulation of stylistic tools in improving work layout, easy methods for article referencing, fast methods to article review and corrections.

Moreover, information and communication technology (ICT) are technologies that facilitate by electronic means the processing, transmission, and display of information. Ever faster and cheaper, ICT allows people to seek, acquire, and share expertise, ideas, services, and technologies locally, nationally, regionally, and around the world; boosts efficiency and productivity; reduces transaction costs and barriers to entry; provides the means for sweeping reorganization of business; and generally makes markets work better (Serrat, 2016[15]). Along these merits come the overemphasized advantages of ICT towards job creation in Africa and developing world. It may look very appealing at site but should be questioned on the basis of

market promotion premium interest – job creation premium. Without a doubt, ICT is credible tool in enhancing research.

Apart from the employment of ICT in research there are essentials that a reviewer should be equipped with in undertaking this noble task of improving research output. According to Dalhousie University (Undated [16]), the reviewer should first have a grasp of both descriptive and critical reviews; *Descriptive reviews* give the essential information about a book. This is done with description and exposition, by stating the perceived aims and purposes of the author, and by quoting striking passages from the text while *critical reviews* describe and evaluate the book, in terms of accepted literary and historical standards, and supports this evaluation with evidence from the text. The following pointers are meant to be suggestions for writing a critical review. Secondly, the knowledge of the work under review; thirdly, the description of the book. Fourthly the reviewer should appraise the book by being judgmental to include; understanding of theauthor's purpose, having balanced feeling on how the author's purpose has been achieved, and evidence to support the reviewer's judgment of the author' achievement.

In present circumstances, quality education ties with quality research which triggers the question of the medium(s) used in achieving these hence the centrality use of ICT. Anonymous (2019[17]) in an excerpt titled "*Leveraging ICT tools to create a high-quality research and teaching environment*" asserts thatachieving Quality Education is dependent on Leveraging ICT tools to create a high-quality research andteaching environment. The application of ICT can create teaching and research environments that are in linewith international standards. Dr Dimitris Noukakis, the Director, MOOCs for Africa at Ecole Polytechnique Fédérale de Lausanne / Swiss Federal Institute of Technology Lausanne – (EPFL), made an inspiring presentation on the use of ICT in teaching, adopting new pedagogies, accessing online journals, using digital networking platforms; etc. He also reinforced the importance of reliable internet and power. Despite the many highlights on ICT in quality education, the most interesting areas for this article in relation to its theme are what is suggested that ICT can do; accessing online journals and use of digital network platforms.

RESEARCH CUSTOMIZATION AS A VITAL TOOL FOR INSTITUTIONAL AND ORGANIZATIONAL SOCIAL CAPITAL PROGRESS

At the end of a research process, customizing research as a vital tool ought to tailor it to meet fundamental rigor of what research is and its requisite methods. These can be deduced from Creswell (2003[18]) thus, the research is related to systematic investigation on the basis of the methodology of research and knowledge on a particular topic or subject, the user group, the research problem it investigates etc. The need to focus on three methods like quantitative, qualitative and mixed method approaches is quintessential. Quantitative research methods deal with numbers and amounts for describing an event that support the hypotheses and predication modal. On the other hand, qualitative research method enable researcher to use texts for findings, quality of subject and kind of providing picture from researcher view. Mixed method includes the mixing of both qualitative and quantitative data.

A thin line exists, all the same sometimes between what is qualitative and quantitative research which I have observed over time with social science researches which even though frequencies may be used in a study but they are descriptively geared to an explanation of a variable or a concept, this may well be termed qualitative. Where disagreements emerge among researchers then safely they fall to the mixed research paradigm.

Other scholars in perspectivizing the customization of research as a vital tool to institutional and organizational social capital progress have taken the trajectory research and development (R & D). Research and development are typically seen as a single organizational function (department). Severalstudies have related R&D integration with marketing or with production. However, **Chiesa** points out that in terms of culture, organizational arrangements and behaviors, and characteristics of people, research is quitedifferent from development (**Chiesa, 1996**[19]). Little is known about the complex integration between

research and development when these functions are separated inside an organization (**Iansiti, 1995a**[20]). Some studies have characterized and differentiated R from D, including identifying more sub-divisions, for example, the Frascati Manual (**OECD, 2015**[21]) and the classification made by the U.S. Department of Defense (**Amsden & Tschang, 2003**[22]). This study adopts a simpler division:Research responsible for the development of new technologies, and Development responsible for materializing this technology in the form of new products (**Boutellier, Gassmann, & Von Zedtwitz, 2000**[23]).

The final conclusion is that as the institutions and organizations progress positively due to employment of or effect of research, the social capital therein will also realize progress.

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FOOT NOTES

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