



**SCHOOL OF THEOLOGY
UNDERGRADUATE PROGRAM
THE314: Biblical and Theological Research
August-September Trimester, 2021.
Marking Scheme**

Instruction: The students' responses should equate the weight of the questions to attain full marks.

1. Citing explanations, outline all the sections that are contained in a duly completed thesis document. **(20 marks).**

Sections/Chapters in a duly completed thesis document.

Scope of responses:

i. Title Page.

All texts on the title page are centered vertically and horizontally. It should not be numbered and is not listed on the table of contents. (Visit the library for more information).

ii. Preliminary pages.

The preliminary pages include:

- Signature page.
- Declaration page.
- Dedication page (this is usually optional).
- Acknowledgement page.
- Table of contents pages (list all numbered headings and subheadings: 2-4 pages, depending on the size of the research report).
- List of figures page.
- List of tables page.
- Abbreviation and acronyms page.

- Abstract page.

iii. **Introduction (Section/Chapter 1).**

1.0 Introduction

The primary goal of this section is to catch the attention and interest of the reader. It sets the stage for the study and puts the topic in perspective. It focuses on the following areas:

- 1.1. **Background of the study:** This tries to prove that there is a problem. Thus, go for statistics to justify the problem.
- 1.2. **Statement of the problem:** This summarizes the whole statement as an assertion. Most problem statements are usually put in question form.
- 1.3. **Purpose of the study:** This is paraphrasing your topic.
- 1.4. **Significance of the study:** This shows whom the findings of the study will benefit as well as the implication it will have on certain areas, people, things, etc.
- 1.5. **Limitations/ Delimitations of the study:** These involve what shall hinder or not hinder your study. E.g., few books in the area under study.
- 1.6. **Objectives of the study:** These are usually derived from the statement of the problem. They are usually a minimum of 3 and a maximum of 5.
- 1.7. **Research Question (Hypothesis):** These will always correspond to the objectives of the study.
- 1.8. **Assumptions of the study:** If your topic includes field research, you must make certain assumptions such as “all the respondents will be willing to give out sensitive information.”
- 1.9. **Definition of significant terms:** The researcher should explain certain the terms that assume unique meaning to the readers.
- 1.10. **Summary:** Summarize the main points discussed in the chapter.

iv. **Literature Review. (Section/Chapter 2).**

2.0. Literature Review

The purpose of literature review is to document what others have written about the area under study. It provides a foundation for your research. It must include evidence of an extensive search and awareness of relevant literature. Avoid saying that your area is so new that no sources exist for it. It is one of the key areas that a panel looks at when deciding whether to

approve or disapprove your proposal. This review should consist of at least a full page of listed sources for the proposal. This will then be expanded in your independent guided study, and developed further by the time you finish your thesis.

2.1. Body

You must structure your literature review into sections, each of which addresses a specific theme or aspect of your topic. The aim is to document the existing works that will form the basis for your research. Additionally, it should demonstrate that your topic has not been sufficiently explored, a gap that you intend to help fill or address through your research.

2.2 Conceptual/theoretical framework

This is usually in a diagrammatical format and serves the purpose of guiding the study from beginning to the end.

2.3 Summary

The literature review concludes with a brief summary of the literature and its implications.

v. Research Design and Methodology. (Section/Chapter 3).

3.0 Research Design and Methodology (For library research).

Most theses in theological studies are primarily based on library research rather than field research. For such theses, less is usually required in terms of stated methodology. The following are to be included in this section:

3.1 Presuppositions.

State and briefly describe your presuppositions as you go about your research. These are your assumptions that form the basis for your work. Although evidence may exist to justify your presuppositions, they cannot necessarily be proven. However, they must be acknowledged. For example, a foundational evangelical presupposition for all biblical and theological research is that scripture is divinely authored and is therefore without error, and authoritative for our faith and practice.

3.2 Hermeneutical Methods.

This should include a description of the procedure that you will employ as you conduct your research from beginning to end. Describe any hermeneutical method(s), theological approaches, and/or theological research methods that you will employ in the course of your research. Briefly justify these methods, supported by literature. (Visit the library for further reading on this area).

3.0 Research Methodology (For Field Research).

This is a detailed description of the overall plan that the researcher develops for collecting and analyzing data that are related to the research questions for topics that focus on field research. Research methodology for field research entails the following areas:

3.1 Research Design.

This should discuss your design which includes specifying the type of research, whether quantitative or qualitative, survey, longitudinal or cross-sectional, case study or historical, or experimental, etc.

3.2 Target Population.

This provides a description of the population that you wish to study. Indicate the characteristics and why it has been chosen.

3.3 Sample and Sampling Procedure.

This discusses the sample size of the population and how the sample is selected. Use a sampling matrix to show the population and selected sample.

3.4 Methods of data Description and Collection.

This discusses issues that are related to instruments of data collection with reasons why the instruments were chosen and procedures for administering them in the field.

3.5 Validity and Reliability.

Describe how you have established these two. Reliability indicates the stability and consistency with which the data collection instrument measures the concept. Validity test of a data collection instrument enables us to ascertain that we are measuring the correct concept and not something else. There are three types: Content, criterion, and construct validity. (Visit the library and read more of these).

3.6 Operational Definition of Variables

Operationalizing a concept to render it measurable is done by looking at the behavioral dimensions, indicators, facets or properties denoted by the concept. These are then translated into observable and measurable elements so as to develop an index of the concept. Measures can be objective or subjective. An example of objective measure is considering the income of various employees, e.g. those within the bracket of Ksh. 10,000- 50,000. A subjective measure is based on an opinion. E.g., customer satisfaction would be measured by the

perception of customers toward a service received. Note that it is not possible to construct a meaningful data collection instrument without first operationalizing all your variables.

3.7 Methods of Data Analysis.

This discusses issues that are related to qualitative and quantitative methods of data analysis and relating them to research questions.

3.8 Ethical Considerations.

Describe how you will obtain permission to conduct the research, either from the government, relevant institutions, and participants. The description should include how ethical issues of confidentiality, honesty, etc. will be kept.

3.9 Summary

Give a description of the main issues in the chapter.

vi. Data Analysis and Interpretation (Chapter 4).

This is the chapter that formally treats the research. Moreover, it contains the results of the data analysis. The results are usually presented in form of tables and figures. However, where the results can be presented easily in writing, then tables or figures are omitted. The purpose of tables and figures is to facilitate clarity in understanding of the results and should be explanatory of the respective contents. The results that are presented should be discussed. Discussion involves explanation, description, and interpretation. In the process of discussion, one should relate the results obtained to the literature reviewed. Relationships or confirmation of previous findings need to be shown. Where there are contradictions with previous findings, this should also be indicated, with any possible explanations. The last sub-heading under this should be a summary of the whole chapter.

vii. Conclusion and Recommendation (Chapter 5).

5.0. Conclusion and Recommendations

This chapter describes the implications of the study for the church, community, or society. It answers questions such as: Why should we care about the results of the study in chapter four? How is this thesis that has been argued relevant or significant for people today? How does this help the church or community solve a particular problem or answer a common question? How should this affect one's beliefs or practice? This part should briefly summarize the study, make note of the limitations of the study, and propose possibilities for further study.

viii. Appendices (For field research only).

Research appendices should include the following:

1. Letter of transmittal of data collection instruments, particularly questionnaires and interview. Provide information by answering the questions honestly and completely, and assuring them of confidential treatment of the information they provide.
 2. Full text of data collection instrument (ensure that questions asked will obtain data that will be analyzed using the methods selected to answer the research questions posed).
 3. Work plan and Time-frame: This outlines the tasks of the research and dates by which each task will be completed.
 4. Budget: The items that will be required to carry out the research and their proximate costs.
 5. Any other material that is relevant to the study such as maps, pictures or statistics. (Visit the library for more information).
2. A theology student submitted a term paper but apparently, the lecturer realized that the paper was plagiarized! Give your response to this student based on **“plagiarism and the use of unfair means in essays.” (20 marks).**

Plagiarism and the Use of Unfair Means in Essays

Scope of responses:

Plagiarism means using someone’s words or thoughts and making them appear as your own. Simply put, it is an academic theft! There are different types of plagiarism but all of them involve copying. They include:

- i. Word for word plagiarism: This includes exact copying of material from textbooks or copying with substitution of a number of odd words.
- ii. Patchwork plagiarism: This includes the placing of material from the word textbooks into a framework of your own wording.
- iii. Clever plagiarism: In this case, the words of a textbook are used without quotation marks, while an endnote reference is given.

Plagiarism applies to copying from textbooks, journals, lecture notes, and other students’ work (whether in a hard or soft copy). You must be honest and acknowledge your authorities and sources. Use quotation marks or indentations to indicate when you are quoting authorities and supply details in your end notes or footnotes. All work done by students should be original since originality will be recognized in marking and grading. Moreover, there exists possible confusion about the extent to which material

drawn from other sources may be incorporated and the level at which this becomes plagiarism. It is important to note that:

- i. Submitted material must be the students' original work. Where other material is used, the student must state the source(s) from which the information is derived and the extent to which the student has made use of others' work.
- ii. Students may discuss the subject of an essay between themselves but it would clearly be unacceptable if a student were to get someone else to write up the whole or part of their work.
- iii. A student may not draw on the whole or part of another student's work with or without the latter's consent.
- iv. Two or more students may not work on a submission together, produce an agreed piece of work and then copy it for individual submission unless it is a group work.
- v. A submission that is constituted wholly or largely of other people's work that is acknowledged will fail. A submission that is constituted wholly or largely of other people's work that is acknowledged will receive only a relatively low mark, because it indicates a lack of critical engagement.
- vi. Selective quoting of material is permissible, but the material must always be attributed to its source by means of quotation marks and naming the author.
- vii. Students should not feel that acknowledging their sources will in anyway weaken their submitted work. On the contrary, proper acknowledgement of the sources consulted will ensure that those assessing the work will be fully aware of the background reading/research that has gone into the final submission and make them better able to assess the student's own contribution.
- viii. Quotation and references should be used as a contribution to the work to illustrate the point or support an argument, but should not be used so extensively so as to constitute the work itself. This leaves little room for the student's own thought or critical evaluation and would tend to undermine the requirement that a submission be a student's own work.

3. John has just finished his course work in the master of theology program. He is therefore in search of a good topic to begin writing his research proposal. Explain to him in details, the characteristics of a good research topic in Biblical and theological studies.
(20 marks)

Characteristics a good research topic.

Scope of responses:

When searching for a good research topic, consider the following questions:

1. Is there a topic that interests you and that you would like to explore further?
Perhaps a topic about which you already have some knowledge based on prior coursework and that you would like to pursue further?
2. What are your academic or personal strengths? Consider a topic that employs these.
3. What topics are relevant to your particular calling and ministry and would help you to serve the Lord more effectively in your vocation?
4. What questions, issues, or challenges are particularly relevant for your church and/or community that should be informed by Christian theology?

a. A good research topic in Biblical and theological studies could be one of the following (Note that this list is not exhaustive).

1. A careful analysis of a specific Christian doctrine and how this doctrine addresses a particular issue, question, or challenge in your church or community.
2. An analysis of how a specific issue, question, or problem has been addressed in the past by Christians, both in Africa and elsewhere, in order to learn from them and then address a similar issue, question, or problem that is present in the church or society today.
3. An analysis and evaluation of a particular theologian, theological movement, or written work, and how he/she/it should have an impact on the church or society today.
4. A study of a belief or practice of those in a church or community and how Christian theology (or a Christian theologian), should correct or address this belief or practice.
5. A comparison of a Christian practice or belief with that of a cult or another religion, or how Christian theology should respond to a particular challenge from a cult or another religion.
6. An evaluation of one aspect of a contemporary Christian movement in light of Biblical theology.
7. An evaluation and analysis of a specific aspect of theological method or contemporary hermeneutics, especially in light of the practice of African Christian Theology today.

*Note that some topics will focus almost solely on library research whereas others will incorporate field research as well.

b. Additional advice in selecting a topic.

- i. Once you have selected a general topic, begin to do some reading on that topic to narrow it down to a very specific issue, problem, or question that you will address as your topic. Most students begin with a topic that is too broad. However, the topic needs to be narrow enough for you to investigate the details of your topic at sufficient depth (yet not so narrow as to make your study trivial and irrelevant). Additionally, broad questions may lead to broad answers, which tend to be unhelpful.
 - ii. Initially, you will need to propose a tentative answer or hypothesis for which you will argue. This answer/hypothesis may change as you proceed with your research, which is to be expected.
 - iii. Your topic should address something debated or problematic. As such, it should not hypothesize something that is obvious or that most people know or would agree without even doing the research or reading your thesis.
 - iv. It is suggested that you draft a concept paper and submit to the school of theology for review prior to developing the full proposal. Thus, you will not waste time writing a full proposal only to discover that your topic is not viable!
 - v. It must hold your interest.
 - vi. It must be doable.
 - vii. It must be original and significant (the findings should be geared towards improving society).
 - viii. It must be obtainable.
 - ix. It must be a blessing to the church.
4. Explain your understanding of qualitative and quantitative research approaches, then summarize the differences between them.(20 marks).

Scope of responses:

- a. Qualitative Research: This includes designs, techniques, and measures that do not produce discreet numerical data. Usually, the data are in the form of words rather than numbers, and these words are often grouped into categories.
- b. Quantitative Research: This includes designs, techniques and measures that produce discreet numerical or quantifiable data. As such, random sampling is done to ensure representativeness of the sample.

A summary of differences between Qualitative and Quantitative research approaches:

Dimension	Qualitative Approach	Quantitative Approach
Purpose	Understanding- seeks to understand people's interpretations and perceptions.	Prediction and control- seeks the causes and effects of human behavior.
Reality	Dynamic- reality changes with changes in people's perceptions.	Stable- reality is made up of facts that do not change.
Viewpoint	Insider- reality is what people perceive it to be.	Outsider- reality is what quantifiable data indicates it to be.
Values	Value bound- values will have an impact and should be understood and taken into account when conducting and reporting research.	Value-free – values can be controlled with appropriate methodological procedures.
Focus	The holistic-complete picture is sought All aspects of the phenomenon are studied using multiple methods of data collection (triangulation).	Particularistic- selected, pre-defined variables are studied. A researcher is, therefore, able to study an aspect of a situation or behavior by picking relevant variables.
Orientation	Discovery- theories, and hypotheses evolve from data collected. A theory discovered from data collected is referred to as a "grounded theory."	Verification- pre-determined hypotheses are investigated and tested. A researcher starts with a theory and seeks to test it.
Data	Subjective- data is a perception of the people in the environment and takes the form of text, materials or photographs.	Objective - data is independent of people's perceptions and is empirical (numerical) in nature.
Instrumentation	Human- the human being is the primary data collection instrument. The items are unstructured and may be modified depending on the situation.	Non-human – preconstructed tests, observational records, questionnaires, and rating scales are employed. The tools are first pretested to enhance the validity and reliability of data.

Conditions	Naturalistic- investigations are conducted under natural conditions.	Controlled- investigations are under controlled conditions.
Data Coding	Data coding starts in the field and is done as data is collected. Codes or labels are assigned to emerging themes.	Data is coded after all the data has been collected. Measurements of variables are in the form of numbers that are entered in the computer and analyzed.
Data Analysis	Data is analyzed by coding and organizing it into themes and concepts. From these, theories and generalizations are formulated. As such, data collection and analysis are done almost simultaneously.	Data is analyzed using statistical packages, which yield descriptive and inferential statistics. Data analysis is done after data collection.
Results	Trustworthiness- the focus is on design and procedures to gain “real,” “rich,” and “deep” data.	Reliability and validity- the focus is on design and procedures to gain “hard” and replicable findings.
Research reports	The reports are normally narrative Rich descriptions of behavior and the context in which it occurs are given. Respondents “voices” are usually quoted.	A detailed description of the research problem, objectives, hypotheses and methods are given. Results are usually presented in tables with explanations.

5. Describe, giving examples, the relevance the following types of research to the community: **(20 marks)**.

- a. Basic research.
- b. Observational research.
- c. Evaluation research.
- d. Causal-comparative research.
- e. Action research.

Scope of responses:

- a. Basic research: It is also known as pure or fundamental research. Its primary concern is to add to the universe a scientific knowledge. Another focus is to generate new knowledge in order to refine or expand existing theories. An example is a research done by a university to improve the quality of learning.

- b. **Observational research:** Here, the current status of a phenomenon is determined by observing. As such, it serves to collect objective information. The information is objective because the researcher observes the behavior rather than relying on a self-report as the basic source of data. An example is observing the behavior of various voters during a poll.
- c. **Evaluation research:** This is the “systematic process of collecting and analyzing data in order to make decisions.” Thus, it is a process of determining whether the intended results were realized. The realized results could then be used to develop other areas deemed relevant. An example is a research done by a company to determine the suitability of a particular product in the market.
- d. **Causal-comparative research:** This is used to explore relationships between variables. Its main purpose is to determine reasons or causes for the current status of the phenomenon under study and the appropriate actions taken. An example is determining why the rate of electricity utility is high during a winter season.
- e. **Action research:** This is conducted with primary intention of solving a specific, immediate and concrete problem in a local setting. It is however, limited to its contribution to theory but useful because it provides answers to problems that cannot wait for theoretical solutions. An example is investigating ways of overcoming water shortage in a given geographical area.
- f. **Historical research:** This is the study of a problem that requires collecting information from the past. Thus, it involves studying, understanding and experiencing past events. It doesn't gather data by administering instruments to individuals. Rather, it seeks data that is already available. An example is laying down strategies to overcome politically instigated violence in a given country.