



**SCHOOL OF THEOLOGY
UNDERGRADUATE PROGRAM**
THE314: Biblical and Theological Research (3Hrs).
September - December Semester, 2021.
Marking Scheme
Lecturer: Richard Owuor, MTh.

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

1. a. Give the 2 definitions of research and highlight what research is not **(5 mks)**.

Scope of Responses:

- **Definitions of research**

- Research is a universal scientific process through which data is systematically collected to provide solutions of challenges or problems.
- Research is a method of study that, through careful investigation of all evidence bearing on definable problem, arrives at a solution. It must involve collection, organization and presentation of data. Thus, research is:
 - A systematic search.
 - Given to adequate information.
 - Objective knowledge.
 - About a specific topic.

- **What research is not.**

- Research is not simply a compilation of quotations.
- Research is not simply rewriting other people's words and ideas into a neat description.
- Research is not a defense or an apology of one's convictions.
- Research is not polemical (launching an attack against another scholar).
- Research is not the presentation of one's opinions.

- vi. Research, especially for theology students is not a sermon.

b. State and explain the purposes of research (5 mks).

Scope of Responses:

- i. To discover new knowledge: This involves the discovery of new facts, their correct interpretation and practical application.
- ii. To describe a phenomenon: Accurate identification of any event involves thorough description, e.g. of size, shape, age, weight, color, height, all change over time.
- iii. To enable prediction: Prediction is the ability to estimate phenomenon A, given phenomenon B. For example, the government can use its population to predict its budget.
- iv. To enable control: In scientific research, control is concerned with the ability to regulate the phenomenon under study. Thus, it should be noted that the control and predictive functions of science are closely related.
- v. To enable explanation of a phenomenon: Explanation involves accurate observation and measurement of a given phenomenon. In order to explain a phenomenon, one should be able to describe it, predict its occurrence, and observe factors that cause occurrence with certainty and accuracy.
- vi. To enable theory development: Theory development involves formulating concepts, laws, and generalizations about a given phenomenon.

2. a. Describe five characteristics of research and five characteristics of a researcher. (5 mks).

Scope of Responses:

- **Characteristics of a research.**

- i. Research entails solving a specific problem: A research must be very specific in scope and must seek to solve a particular problem.
- ii. Research is systematic: Research follows a set of procedures in order to get accurate results. These procedures have to be identified, tested, and approved to be reliable and accurate.
- iii. Research is specific in terms of measurable methods and areas under study: The more specific the study is, the better. The more you limit yourself to a specific area of study, the more reliable the results are likely to be.
- iv. Research is organized: There is a structure that is followed in doing research. This organization is focused and limited to a specific scope.
- v. Research is about finding answers: This is the end of research. Research is focused to relevant and useful questions. Without a question, research has no focus, drive or purpose.

- vi. Research involves new information: Research involves collecting new information for a new purpose.
 - vii. Research must be empirically verifiable: This has to do with scientific precision, i.e., no error is accepted or permissible in research. Verifying a study is doing the same study by another researcher and getting similar results. In social science, if one gets 95% that is verifiable. However, for natural science, the findings must be from 99.8% to 100%.
 - viii. Research entails recording and reporting the information. The research findings have to be recorded and information reported appropriately.
 - ix. Research is general: It can be generalized in the sense that the researcher talks to a sample population and then to a generalized one.
- **Characteristics of a researcher.**
 - i. Diligence: Must exhibit hard work while being very keen and careful.
 - ii. Humility: You should be willing to learn to get facts which override your opinions.
 - iii. Respectful: Should be respectful to the community and among other researchers.
 - iv. Patience: Should be patient when waiting for their respondents or participants. Do not dismiss your respondents or participants.
 - v. Honest: They should be honest to themselves and to the research. Your honesty will make you win the confidence of your respondents or participants.
 - vi. Ethical: Stick to your business as a researcher and do not exhibit sexual connotations if you are dealing with the opposite sex.

b. Biblical and theological research is a very painful process that tests stamina and emotional confidence/resilience. As such, the researcher has to self-organize. Discuss four areas around which a researcher can organize himself/herself. **(5 mks).**

Scope of Responses:

1. Time: Most importantly, you have to organize yourself in terms of time. The biblical exhortation to “Make the most of the time” (Eph. 5:16- RSV) is very applicable to Christian college students. Time management skills should give the Christian the satisfaction of being able to say at the end of any period that they have achieved something.
2. Personal diet and hygiene: Take care of your body, take long walks and eat well to put frequent illnesses at bay.

3. Divide and conquer every bit or stage of writing: For this to be achieved, you need focus and much determination.
 4. Finances: It is important to trust God for finances all through, otherwise, lack of it may paralyze your studies.
3. a. Outline 5 reasons why Biblical and theological foundations for research are valuable today. **(5 mks).**

Scope of Responses:

- i. It enlarges our knowledge base. As we encounter new information, our mental capacities never remain the same but get enlarged.
- ii. It enables students to organize their thinking and come up with their own view points.
- iii. It helps students to learn more about the subject matter being handled.
- iv. It is useful in helping us to predict the future based on what we see now.
- v. It is helpful in solving problems in the society. By understanding the situations that we face, our findings can inform the actions that we take to deal with them.
- vi. It enables the students and the lecturer to recognize the strengths that they must build on and the weaknesses they must work on.
- vii. It has the capacity for developing both critical and creative thinking skills by way of challenging the learners not to reproduce what is written in class but to critic certain facts to determine whether they are true or not.
- viii. It helps us to reflect on what was taught in the lecture room. Thus, it forms the platform for further exploration of the subject.
- ix. It helps us to discover new knowledge. This involves discovery of new facts, their correct interpretation and application.
- x. At higher levels of learning, research is used to develop new theories and to critic or refute existing theories.

- b. State and explain five considerations that must be made by somebody who wants to get the most out of Biblical and theological studies. **(5 mks).**

Scope of Responses:

- i. Our hearts must be right with God: Studying smart is not enough to get the full benefit of learning God's word at SCU. If our hearts are not right before God, we will never be able to come to a knowledge of the truth. In Jn. 5:38-42, we note that the Jews of Jesus' day studied the scriptures, but it did not benefit them. This was because they were not willing to receive the truth that Jesus was the Messiah. If we are unwilling for the scriptures to change us, we shall not benefit!

- ii. Obedience to what we already know is important before God reveals more of himself to us (2 Tim 3:7): The Psalmist declares that if we are going to learn from God, we need humility, obedience, forgiveness, and the fear of the Lord. (Psa. 25:8-14).
 - iii. Constant dependence upon the Holy Spirit: According to John 16:12-13, the Holy Spirit, in the final analysis is the teacher and he works through human teachers. We should therefore depend on him in order to get a fuller understanding of God's word.
 - iv. Respect the Bible as God's word: Even as we encounter other books, the Bible remains the most authoritative, infallible, and inspired word of God that is designed to guide faith and practice for all believers, (Jn. 17:17; 2 Tim 3:16; 2 Pet. 1:20-21).
 - v. Do not anticipate to find all answers. The Bible is a very deep book that reveals God to us. Since God is beyond our understanding, there are certain issues that we will never get to full knowledge here on earth. (Rom. 11:33; Isa. 55:8-9; Deut. 29:29).
 - vi. Continuous learning is required: You cannot exhaust all the matters relating to the subject areas being taught within the time allocated for a given course. As such, we should cultivate a culture of study that makes us students of God's word for the rest of our lives.
 - vii. Cultivate an attitude of humility: Since knowledge many times puffs up, it must be integrated with love (1 Cor. 8:1), faith (Heb. 4:2), action (Lk. 6:4-49; Phil. 4:9), wisdom and understanding (Pro. 4:7: 18:2).
 - viii. Guard against familiarity and complacency: Constant study of the scriptures and Christian doctrine can lead to familiarity and complacency. Hence, you need to keep a check on your spiritual blood pressure. Learn to appreciate the word and worship Christ in your lectures (Col. 3:17).
4. a. Discuss 5 ethical considerations that you should make before carrying out a research (5 mks).

Scope of Responses:

- i. Avoid plagiarism and make quotes 'intelligibly' - either contradict or agree with other writers.
- ii. Ask for permission and explain the purpose of use and storage.
- iii. Use codes instead of names of the respondents.
- iv. Analyze data carefully so as not to misrepresent and hence mislead people.
- v. Be careful to report data exactly as they are.
- vi. Avoid any biasness towards the final outcome.
- vii. You must be fair and objective in your conclusion.

- viii. Stick to your work plan and time-frame of the research as this will curb potential time wastage.
- ix. Organize your work place.
- x. Try and own a computer, printer, and internet if possible. Without these, there will be some struggles and inconveniences.

b. Explain 3 methods that are usually used to collect qualitative data. **(5 mks).**

Scope of Responses:

- i. Direct observation: This is where the required behavior is observed in a particular setting.
- ii. Participant observation: This is where data are collected by an observer who is a regular participant in the activities being observed.
- iii. Interview method: This is face-to-face interaction between the researcher and the subjects. The researcher uses an interview schedule.

c. Discuss 5 traits that point out to a good research topic in Biblical and theological studies. **(5 mks).**

Scope of Responses:

- 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.

5. a. Briefly summarize what each of the 5 chapters entail in a completed thesis document. (10 mks).

Scope of Responses:

a. Sections/Chapters for the completed research/proposal/thesis.

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).

- b. State and explain 5 reasons why students should cite sources in Biblical and theological research. **(5 mks).**

Scope of Responses:

- i. To give credit: Research is a hard work. Some who do it well receive rewards, but no less important is recognition- the pride and prestige of seeing one's name associated with knowledge that others value and use.
- ii. To assure readers about the accuracy of your facts: Researchers cite sources to be fair to other researchers, but also to earn their readers' trust. It is not enough to get the facts right. You must also tell readers the source of the facts so that they can judge their reliability.
- iii. To show readers the research tradition that informs your work: Researchers cite sources whose data they use, but they also cite work that they extend, support, contradict, or correct. These citations help readers to not only understand your specific project but connect it to other research in your field.
- iv. To help readers follow or extend your research. Many readers use sources cited in a research paper not to check its reliability but to pursue their own work. Thus, your citations help others not only to follow your footsteps, but to strike out in new directions.
- v. To prove their academic capability and resilience: Students who cite their sources generally exhibit how they are academically capable and resilient in their research work.