Chapter 1

Addressing Curriculum Gaps to Enhance Research Engagement Among Postgraduate Students in Low Resource Settings

Fredrick Ssempala
Kabale University, Uganda

ABSTRACT

For any country to develop, it should be able to conduct research to generate knowledge necessary to solve problems of humanity by producing necessary goods and services. Research is essential for any nation’s success. Most goods and services consumed today are products of research conducted in developed countries by post-graduate students. Unfortunately, most post-graduate students in developing countries face a lot of challenges that limit their ability to engage in original research that should be published in refereed journals and to acquire necessary patents accordingly. Curriculum gaps inhibit most graduate students in low-resource settings from engaging in productive research necessary to transform the developing country’s economy. Hence, the chapter discusses the importance of research engagement and strategies to fill curriculum gaps in the postgraduate programs to enhance research engagement among the post-graduate students in low-resource settings.
INTRODUCTION

The human race has succeeded in controlling and managing the rest of other animals on this planet mainly due to its ability to conceptualize and produce theories via the complex language. This is possible because human beings have the ability to think in an abstract way and then operate in concrete terms to change/improve their environment. Hence, the ability of human beings to think in an abstract way is the foundation of research and production of new knowledge.

Historically, human beings used to depend on revealed and authoritative knowledge. However, these types of knowledge were limited and unreliable to solve the real problems that faced the human race. This is one of the reasons why the Roman Empire collapsed. Therefore, training the adequate work force that can engage in quality research is essential for any country. However, many developing countries lack the necessary resources required to train the competitive post-graduate students that can engage in productive research solve the problems/challenges facing their society. This is due to the existing curriculum gaps in most of the post-graduate programs. Hence, this chapter discusses the curriculum gaps in low resource settings post-graduate programs and the strategies needed to address the gaps to enhance research engagement among post-graduate students in the low resource institutions.

The author strongly believes that the strategies discussed in this chapter, if successfully utilized, will go a long way to improve the quality of post-graduate students in developing countries. The postgraduate students will be able to think critically, read analytically and write clearly. This in turn will improve the quality of research engagement and knowledge generations in these countries and hence help to solve the problems/challenges facing these countries. Consequently, more goods and services will be produced so that the human race is able to live a happy and successful life on this mother planet earth.

BACKGROUND

What is a Curriculum?

There are several definitions of the word “Curriculum,” none of which seems to be universally acceptable. These definitions have been criticized as either too narrow or to broad, depending on the purpose which the definition is serving. The narrow definitions of the word Curriculum include reference to the following: syllabus, list of subjects, course of study, topics, items of knowledge to be covered, content, organization of teaching and learning methods, time tables, etc. All these are ingredients of a curriculum. However, a curriculum is much wider and transcends
Teacher’s Ontological and Epistemological Beliefs: Their Impact on Approaches to Teaching and Scholarship
Mary Kelly (2020). Emerging Methods and Paradigms in Scholarship and Education Research (pp. 135-163).
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