

5th World Conference on Educational Sciences - WCES 2013

The use of field research in the educational process

Ionuț Șerban *, Cristina Ilie

University of Craiova, Str. A. I. Cuza, no. 13, Craiova, 200585, Romania

Abstract

The use of field research should represent one of the main concerns for all researchers. In our days, the use of Internet became one of the most used sources for all basic research, original/primary sources being left aside having as result poor quality of researches and the lack of original contributions in the scientific publications. The use of field research should represent one of the main tools in the educational process, for researchers and for students, in order to give a basic ground for future researchers. Field research versus Internet: where are we going?

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Selection and/or peer-review under responsibility of Academic World Education and Research Center.

Keywords: Original sources, primary sources, basic research, internet

The use of field research should represent one of the main concerns for all researchers. In our days, the use of Internet became one of the most used sources for all basic research, original/primary sources being left aside having as result poor quality of researches and the lack of original contributions in the scientific publications.

As researchers we always tried to put the main accent on the original/primary sources in all our work, because none of the others sources can give you such an accurate and reliable information as the original sources.

It is truth that printed books, even ones that can be accessed on the Internet are a valuable source and can be used in scientific work if proper quoted. There are also so many Internet sources that are not so ever reliable such as Wikipedia (regarding some subjects) and other sites. They can give you an amount of information, but you have to take it with scepticism and discernment because they contain often mistakes and do not have a solid background, they do not rely on original/primary sources.

The original/primary sources reveal inedited facts that only by making a thorough field research you can get. Depending on the domain of the research, you can study archives documents, diplomatic documents, historical inscriptions or you can apply interviews, questionnaires, polls, focus groups, field measurements and so on. It is truth that some of them may be already published, but it is very important to make your own investigations because some of the factors such as the time in which the research is done or the interpretations of the documents may vary and so they can have an important influence on the outcome of the research.

* Corresponding name: Ionuț Șerban. Tel.: +4-0740-484-193

E-mail address: johnutzserban@yahoo.com

For instance, a volume of documents might be published and can contain a series of diplomatic or archives documents without any interpretation. In this case the volume might be considered, as a primary source even though the selected documents are not of high interest for your own research.

The field research it is not important only because gives you the most important informational source and many times the most accurate one, but it is important also because allows the author to introduce in the scientific circuit new documents that have never been published before and that gives to interested researchers original and priceless information on a subject.

In the case of diplomatic documents, for instance, scholars from interested domains can observe, among all the above, how were redacted diplomatic telegrams that can be in code or in the clear, a diplomatic report or letters and other *Personalia* documents. They can also observe different addressing and closing formulas that were used in the diplomatic dialogue in different times and places.

When we talk about the field of sociology for example, it is very important to do a field research for a scientific paper, Ph.D. thesis or any other scientific work, even if we can find many statistics or theories on the Internet. Although this statistics are accurate and they present us the reality, the time frame it is very important in this domain because all the data become overpassed in very short notice. The paper we are working to has to have fresh data collected in a field research very close to the moment we are about to release that paper or else the conclusions will not be accurate for the present, but for the past.

In our experience, using the original/primary sources has never failed, all works published after a thorough research have become an important instrument for further works like Ph. D thesis, articles or books.

There are indeed some fields that field research does not apply very much, fields such law or foreign languages that you can study from woks and existing bibliography and do not have to do much of primary research.

The others fields such history, international relations, diplomacy, engineering, chemistry, physics, sociology, earth sciences, educational sciences and so on must rely on basic research, only in this manner it is possible the progress and finding out the truth about many unknown issues or only so you can learn from mistakes made in the past.

When we talk about history, for example, what would have happened if we be in the phase of reading only the ancient classics, Romans or Greeks, without going further and find more information with present tools and means, means that provide you with the advantage that our forefathers didn't have and that can lead you to deep more for secrets and actions that could not be understood at that time.

There are many events that could not be very well understood at the time being because nobody took the time to explain them properly; they only resumed at telling what happened without adding any valuable comment. For example why did Napoleon the 3rd finished the war against the Hapsburgs in 1859 by encountering Franz Joseph in Villafranca before completing his part of the deal with the Italian counterpart in Plombières where he had promised the conquest of Venice for the Italians? The answer to this question, one of which the Italian writers didn't find appropriate to answer at that time being very subjective to the matter and being to occupied to denigrate the emperor for his choice accusing him of betrayal, it is given to us by a manuscript discovered in a research in the archives, a manuscript written by a V. d'Équevilley and that represents a history lesson and an explanations on the actions and facts that happened in the Franco-Austrian-Italian war. Even if he is French and might be normal to have a dose of subjectivism, he explains all very thorough and let us know that further actions in continuing the war by the emperor Napoleon would have very negative repercussions upon France that would have had to face a bigger war because other European powers like Prussia were about to intervene. He ends his expose by telling to the Italians that they should be content with the outcome because they have progressed from the "geographical expression" that Italy was considered by Prince Metternich in Wien in 1815 into a reign called Italy and that they should show the entire world what they have showed on the battle field: that they are capable to regenerate their country.

For diplomacy and international relations, there are also many examples that can demonstrate the use of research in understanding of actions, decisions and policy making. How can we understand the cold war without see the documents from that period, how can the fall of communism in Easter Europe could be understood without a thorough research, how can we understand Perestroika and Gorbachev decisions on the USSR policy and so on. The

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