

# ACADEMIC WRITING AND PUBLICATION SKILLS



DR. THOMAS GISEMBA ONSARIGO  
DR. ROBERT ONYANGO OCHIENG'  
DR. GLADYS NYAIBURI OGARO

# **ACADEMIC WRITING AND PUBLICATION SKILLS**

**DR. THOMAS GISEMBA ONSARIGO  
DR. ROBERT ONYANGO OCHIENG'  
DR. GLADYS NYAIBURI OGARO**

**Copyright © 2025 Dr. Thomas Gisemba Onsarigo, Dr. Robert Onyango Ochieng' & Dr. Gladys Nyaiburi Ogaro**

**All rights reserved.**

No part of this book may be reproduced, stored in a retrieval system, or transmitted in any form or by any means, electronic, mechanical, photocopying, recording, or otherwise, without the prior written permission of the publisher, except as permitted by copyright law.

**Disclaimer:** The information provided in this book is for educational and informational purposes only. The authors and publisher are not responsible for any actions taken based on the information contained within this book

**ISBN : 978-9914-780-03-1**

# Dedication

To our families—you are our greatest blessings and daily inspiration. Above all, we thank **God Almighty** for His unfailing grace and guidance that has brought us this far.

*“The Lord has done great things for us, and we are filled with joy.” —  
Psalm 126:3*

# Acknowledgement

Our sincere gratitude goes to **God**, whose wisdom and mercy made this work possible.

To our families for their love, patience, and encouragement. To our students both current and past whom we had the privilege to teach and supervise

# Preface

This book is designed to equip both undergraduate and postgraduate students with the essential knowledge and practical skills required for advanced academic writing and scholarly publication. It offers a comprehensive guide to the writing and publishing process for academic works such as research papers, theses, books, and project reports. The book covers critical elements of academic writing, including topic selection, outline development, drafting, reviewing, and editing. It also explores key writing approaches and referencing systems, such as logical argumentation, descriptive and narrative styles, citation and referencing techniques, and the effective presentation of statistical information.

The purpose of this book is to help students transform their research into high-quality, publishable academic outputs. It aims to guide learners through the processes of drafting, editing, and revising their work by incorporating instructor and peer feedback. Additionally, the book prepares both undergraduate and postgraduate candidates to write their project reports and dissertations in a clear, organized, and professional manner.

# Table of Contents

Dedication ..... iv

Acknowledgement..... v

Preface..... vi

Introduction..... 2

What is academic writing .....8

Scholarly definitions ..... 16

Basic Structure of Academic Writing..... 23

RESEARCH CONCEPT..... 25

Tips for academic writing ..... 38

Guidelines for Journal Publication ..... 47

Developing a Research Topic..... 51

Manuscript ..... 54

Coherence ..... 97



# Introduction

Scholarly writing is also known as academic writing. Academic writing is a unique form of writing that requires a set of skills and abilities that not every writer possesses. From research and critical thinking to writing, editing, and communication, an academic writer must be proficient in various areas to produce quality academic work. Academic writing is a style of writing used in the academic field and adopted by academic institutions or scholarly publications that academicians and students use to convey complex ideas and theories to their readers. Therefore, as a student, especially for the ones getting higher education, it is needed for you to learn this way of writing and adopt it. You might encounter academic writing in peer-review journals, books, articles, and you are expected to write your manuscripts, dissertations, essays, or thesis in the academic style.

## **Types of Research Methods**

Research is a careful and detailed study of a particular problem or a topic using scientific methods. Research is also defined as the creation of new knowledge and/or the use of existing knowledge in a new and creative way so as to generate new concepts, methodologies and understandings. There are basically two research methods involved in the research. These are;



## **I. Inductive method**

In the inductive method, the researcher collects data through observation, interviews, surveys, or other methods. He then uses that data to develop a theory or hypothesis. This hypothesis is then tested through additional data collection and analysis. This method is often used in qualitative research, where the focus is on understanding the perspectives of individuals or groups.

## **2. Deductive method**

**In the deductive method**, the researcher starts with a theory or hypothesis and then uses data to test and validate that theory. This approach is often used in quantitative research, where numerical data is collected and analyzed using statistical methods.

## **Types of Research**

There are different types of research conducted on different subjects and for different purposes. Every topic takes a specific research type. The common types of research are:

### **Applied Research**

Applied research is the type of research that researches the facts and finds the opportunity for further investigation. This is research based on experiments and applies different concepts and theories to prove and validate the answer offered by fundamental research. E.g. applied research aims to study a specific research problem or case with an objective.

## **Quantitative Research**

Quantitative research is a study that is based on numbers, figures, and statistics. In this research type, the quantitative data collected and gathered is in the form of numbers, graphs, and tables. The collected data is then studied to come up with results. The data collected for this research is from: Questionnaires, Surveys and Polls.

## **Qualitative Research**

Qualitative research is a research type that is based on theories and the quality of the data. This research deals with the descriptions, and the chosen issue is referred to as the previous studies and research. The basic purpose of this research is to investigate and explain a specific question. Qualitative research includes the following qualitative methods to gather data: Case Studies, Interviews, Ethnographic research and Focused groups

## **Mixed Research**

This research is a blend of both techniques; qualitative and quantitative. Each qualitative and quantitative research has limitations. But by bringing the best of both the researches', more targeted results are achieved. In this research type, the analysis is made using mixed methods on both the numerical data and the theoretical concepts.

## **Action Research**

Action research is a research type that analyzes, evaluates, and investigates institutional and organizational methods. This is done to examine if the existing methods of data collection need any betterment and improvement.

### **Descriptive Research**

Descriptive research is similar to a descriptive essay. Just as the essay describes an event, the research describes an event and phenomenon as well. The main research questions this research is studied and the causes and reasons behind it.

### **Exploratory Research**

This is the research type in which a problem or a topic is researched because there were no clear studies present before regarding the issue. This research demands priorities creates an operational definition, and provides a better research model than the existing one.

### **Policy-Oriented Research**

Policy-oriented research is a type of research that studies the issues faced by the public and aims to solve these issues using different methods. This research informs and understands the prevailing public issues that will help in decision-making. The useful policies and implementation of the changes can be done through this research type. It is social-scientific research.

### **Correlational Research**

This type of research examines the relationship between two or more variables. It seeks to determine if they are related and to what extent. Correlational research can be used to identify patterns and to make predictions about future behavior.

### **Ethnographic Research**

This type of research involves observing and interacting with a specific culture or group of people. It is done to gain insight into their beliefs, customs, and practices. Ethnographic research often involves extended periods of fieldwork and can provide in-depth information about the culture being studied.

### **Experimental Research**

This type of research involves manipulating one or more variables in order to observe the effects on another variable. This type of research is often used to establish cause-and-effect relationships between variables and is commonly used in the natural and social sciences.

### **Historical Research**

This type of research involves examining past events, people, and cultures in order to gain insight into the present. Historical research often involves analyzing primary sources, such as letters, diaries, and government documents.

### **Phenomenological Research**

This type of research involves exploring individuals' subjective experiences of a particular phenomenon, such as a medical condition or a life event. Phenomenological research seeks to understand the

meaning individuals attribute to their experiences and is often used in psychology and healthcare research.

## **Conclusive Research**

This type of research is used to provide conclusive evidence on a research question or hypothesis.

Conclusive research is often conducted through experiments, surveys, or observations to provide clear and conclusive findings. This type of research is used to make informed decisions about marketing, product development, or business strategy.

## **Chapter two**



# What is academic writing

Academic writing also known as scholarly writing is a formal style of writing that researchers and educators use in scholarly publications. It focuses on evidence-based arguments and logical reasoning to guide a reader's understanding of a subject. For example, scientists use this type of writing to explain their research and support their findings, while literary critics use scholarly writing to make a convincing argument through fact-based research.

## Characteristics of academic writing

Common characteristics of scholarly writing often include:

### Formal tone and style

Scholarly writing uses a formal style that shows the writer's knowledge and expertise in the subject area. Writers typically use the third-person point of view throughout scholarly writing to show objectivity.

### Objective argument

Academic writing aims to make an objective argument using evidence. Writers support their statements and key points using facts and evidence-based research. They use data and analysis to present an argument objectively, without stating their own beliefs or assumptions.

### Use of resources

Writers use scholarly writing to show their knowledge of the subject. They support their conclusions with evidence and cite those resources, often including a bibliography with their work. A bibliography lists all the scholarly articles, books or other resources a writer references throughout the text. It's important to cite sources in scholarly writing because it gives credit to others for their research and helps to support the major points of the text.

### **Logical structure**

Scholarly writing's clear and logical structure can help readers follow the text and make connections between related concepts. It has an introduction and a conclusion and a well-defined thesis statement. A thesis statement is a summary, typically in the introductory paragraph, that defines the key point or argument of the text. The body of the text supports the thesis statement, and the conclusion summarizes the idea and explains its significance.

### **Free of errors**

It's important for scholarly writing to be clean, consistent and free of errors so that readers view the text as a credible source. Scholarly writing uses specific language to convey key points. It also follows grammatical rules and remains consistent with stylistic conventions, such as spelling, punctuation and verb tense.

### **Categories of academic writing**

The categories of academic or scholarly writing include;

## **1. Chapters**

Scholarly writers may submit chapters for an edited volume or collection, which features submissions from different authors. These edited publications can offer different viewpoints on a single topic or idea. These chapters follow other styles of academic writing but may provide less background because readers are likely to have some knowledge of the subject already. Often, the writers of these chapters have already published scholarly documents on the topic, and they may submit shorter versions or similar pieces of writing for the collection.

## **2. Essays**

An essay is a short piece of writing, usually between 1,500 to 2,000 words, that presents an idea or argument. Typically, an essay aims to convince the reader of an idea using research and analysis. The writer provides context on the subject to help support their argument. Academic writers often publish their essays in scholarly journals.



### **3. Research articles**

A research article provides an in-depth analysis of the author's independent research. It clearly explains the researcher's processes and methods to show how they arrived at a conclusion. It usually references other data and resources to reinforce the findings of the research. Writers often submit these articles to academic journals or similar publications. Many times, peers in the industry review these articles before their publication.

### **4. Technical reports**

A technical report explains the progress or results of technical research. Often, researchers write these reports to submit to the sponsor or organization funding the research project. It may include recommendations based on the results of the research. These documents rarely go through a peer-review process. For this reason, researchers often use these reports as a primary draft that they can later refine before submitting their work to scholarly publications.

### **5. Annotated bibliographies**

An annotated bibliography is a comprehensive list of sources on a topic that includes brief descriptions or evaluations of each source. It summarizes these sources, usually in a paragraph format, so that a reader can understand the general context of each one. For example, the writer may include the source's principal argument, conclusion and reliability. These bibliographies are independent documents that can

give the reader an overview of the research and findings on a specific topic.

## **6. Theses**

A thesis, sometimes known as a dissertation, is a document that summarizes the author's research on a specific topic. Typically, those pursuing an advanced degree, such as a master's degree or doctorate, submit a thesis at the end of their program as a requirement for graduation. It usually builds on existing research to contribute new knowledge or theories on the topic. These are typically lengthy documents between 6,000 and 20,000 words. Often, writers choose to structure a thesis using chapters to break up their key points.

## **7. Literary analyses**

A literary analysis evaluates a literary work, such as a book or collection of poetry. Authors of a literary analysis persuasively communicate their interpretation of an idea or concept in the literature. This analysis often provides enough background and context of the work to support the author's argument. It usually focuses on one specific part of the literary work, such as a character or theme.

## **How academic writing differs from other types writings**

There are various factors that can help in distinguishing it from other writing forms.

## **1. Based on the language**

Academic work can only be written in formal language, without using common terms, slang, colloquialisms, and so on. On that note, scholarly writing barely uses first-person pronouns. Although there is no universal rule against the use of the first person in academic writing, researchers and students are mostly discouraged from using the first-person pronouns *I* and *we* in their writing. One of the common reasons is that your target group may regard such writing as being subjective, whereas science is all about objectivity.

## **2. Based on the structure**

While the conventional writing style does not follow any typical format and structuring, there are strict rules and regulations for academic work. There are even different sets and style guides for academic writing.

## **3. Based on reader**

Academic writing differs from the rest based on the readers. In fact, readers and audiences are one of the prime determinants of the tone, formality, or language that is to be used in a work. The way you talk to your parents and friends will differ vastly from how you address your teachers or the principal. Similarly, when your audience consists of people of high authority or fellow peers, you need to use academic writing.

## **Characteristics of academic writing**

### **1. Unbiased and formal tone**

As mentioned above, academic work is strictly formal. There should not be any traces of informal tone or casual words. If any slang or casual phrases are used, it will only be for the sake of reference or emphasis.

Also, your tone should be neutral and unbiased. Even when presenting your viewpoint, you should present them matter-of-factly instead of being biased. Therefore, there should be explanations and evidence behind your reasoning, but your writing should not directly deem your opposition's opinion wrong.

In academic writing, writers should strive to avoid discriminatory references or sexism in language. Therefore, while it may not be incorrect to make reference to one gender on behalf of all, for example, "*his*", or "*her*", this is normally avoided by the use of the "*plural*" pronoun "*their*".

### **2. Factual and based on evidence**

Academic writing is not based on emotions or philosophy. Instead, it is highly focused on logical and factual-driven reasoning. Facts and evidence should support your main motive of the writing. The main motive of scholarly writing is to discuss, evaluate, investigate, or prove a point.

### **3. Cited and formatted**

Academic writing is all about citations and references. When working on an academic piece, your work should have all the relevant sources and citations, proving that your evidence and reasoning are taken from valid places. This helps your work gain more authenticity while allowing your readers to trace your findings back to their origin. Also, depending on the citation style you are using, your work may have different styles and formatting. Most Common Citation Styles: APA, | Chicago | MLA

# Scholarly definitions

**Research:** Research is a systematic investigation to discover, interpret, or develop knowledge, typically conducted in a structured manner with the aim of contributing new insights or solving existing problems within a field.

**Scholarly activity:** Scholarly activity encompasses a range of intellectual pursuits undertaken by scholars, including conducting research, writing academic papers, presenting findings at conferences, and contributing to the advancement of knowledge within their discipline.

**Publishing:** Publishing involves the dissemination of research findings or scholarly works through various channels such as academic journals, books, conference proceedings, or online platforms. It allows researchers to share their discoveries with the academic community and the wider public.

### Types of articles and papers:

1. **Research articles:** Present original research findings, typically following a standardized structure including introduction, methods, results, and discussion sections.

2. **Review articles:** Synthesize existing literature on a particular topic, providing a comprehensive overview, analysis, and interpretation of current research trends and developments.
3. **Case studies:** Describe specific instances or examples to illustrate principles, theories, or phenomena within a particular context.
4. **Opinion or commentary pieces:** Offer personal perspectives, insights, or critiques on relevant issues or debates in the field.

### **The journal submission process:**

1. Selecting a suitable journal based on scope, audience, impact factor, and publication policies.
2. Preparing a manuscript according to the journal's guidelines, including formatting, word count, and referencing style.
3. Submitting the manuscript online through the journal's submission portal, along with any required supplementary materials such as cover letter, author disclosures, or conflict of interest statements.
4. Tracking the submission status and responding to editor's inquiries or requests for revisions.

### **What the journal will look for in your submission:**

1. Originality and significance of the research question or problem addressed.
2. Rigor and validity of the research methodology, including appropriate data collection, analysis, and interpretation techniques.

3. Clarity and coherence of the writing style, organization, and presentation of results.
4. Adherence to ethical standards and guidelines for research conduct and reporting.

**Peer-review criteria:**

1. Validity and reliability of the research methods and results.
2. Contribution to advancing knowledge or understanding within the field.
3. Relevance and significance of the research findings to the journal's audience.
4. Clarity, coherence, and quality of the writing style and presentation.

**Success rates from submissions:**

1. Success rates vary widely depending on factors such as the journal's prestige, impact factor, submission volume, and the quality of submissions.
2. Rejection rates for top-tier journals can be high, often exceeding 80%.
3. Persistence, resilience, and continuous improvement are essential for achieving publication success.

**How to maximize your chances of publication by writing a good abstract:**

1. Clearly state the research question, objectives, methods, results, and conclusions.



2. Provide sufficient context and background information to engage readers and convey the significance of the study.
3. Use concise and precise language, avoiding unnecessary jargon or technical terms.
4. Highlight key findings, implications, or contributions to the field.

### **Selecting keywords**

1. Choose relevant keywords that accurately reflect the main topics, concepts, or themes addressed in the manuscript.
2. Use terms that are commonly used in the field and likely to be searched by potential readers or researchers.
3. Consider including variations or synonyms of keywords to enhance visibility and accessibility.

### **Structuring the journal article:**

1. Introduction: Provide background information, articulate the research question or objective, and outline the scope and significance of the study.
2. Methods: Describe the research design, participants, data collection procedures, and analytical techniques employed.
3. Results: Present the main findings of the study, using tables, figures, or graphs to enhance clarity and interpretation.
4. Discussion: Interpret the results in relation to the research question, compare findings with previous literature, and discuss implications, limitations, and future directions.

### **What you might do wrong in your first article:**

1. Lack of clarity or coherence in writing.
2. Failure to adhere to journal guidelines or formatting requirements.
3. Insufficient attention to detail in data analysis or interpretation.
4. Inadequate literature review or theoretical framework.
5. Overestimation of the significance or generalizability of findings.

### **Who might give you good feedback before you submit your article?**

1. Colleagues or peers familiar with the topic or methodology.
2. Mentors, supervisors, or advisors with expertise in the field.
3. Writing groups, workshops offered by academic institutions or professional associations.
4. Editorial services or professional editors specializing in academic writing.

### **Responding to reviewers' feedback:**

1. Read and understand the reviewers' comments carefully, addressing each point methodically.
2. Provide clear, concise responses to each comment, explaining any revisions or clarifications made in the manuscript.
3. Acknowledge constructive criticism and suggestions for improvement, even if you may disagree with some points.
4. Revise the manuscript accordingly and resubmit it within the specified timeframe.

### **About reacting to feedback and peer reviews:**

1. Maintain a professional and constructive attitude towards feedback, viewing it as an opportunity for growth and improvement.
2. Seek clarification or additional guidance if needed to address reviewers' comments effectively.
3. Use feedback to enhance the quality and impact of your research and writing, rather than as a validation of your work.

### **What journal editors dislike from authors:**

1. Failure to follow submission guidelines or formatting requirements.
2. Lack of originality or significance in the research question or findings.
3. Poor writing quality, including grammar, spelling, or punctuation errors.
4. Incomplete or inconsistent reporting of methods, results, or conclusions.
5. Disregard for ethical standards or conflicts of interest.

### **What journal editors like:**

1. Well-written manuscripts that are clear, concise, and coherent.
2. Original research with significant implications or contributions to the field.

3. Rigorous and transparent research methods, with appropriate data analysis and interpretation.
4. Adherence to ethical standards and guidelines for research conduct and reporting.
5. Timely responses to editor's inquiries or requests for revisions.

**Peer review of conference papers:**

1. Conference papers undergo a similar peer review process as journal articles, although the criteria and standards may vary.
2. Reviewers evaluate the relevance, quality, and originality of the research presented in conference papers, as well as the clarity and coherence of the writing.
3. Accepted conference papers may be presented orally or as posters at the conference, providing opportunities for discussion, feedback, and networking with other researchers in the field.

Mastering publication skills involves understanding the research and scholarly activity landscape, navigating the journal submission process effectively, responding to peer reviews constructively, and continuously improving the quality and impact of your writing and research contributions.

# Basic Structure of Academic Writing

Academic writing is usually expository or argumentative and is structured similarly to the five-paragraph theme learned in high school: introduction, body, and conclusion. Below is a brief description of expository and argumentative writings:

## **Expository/Explanatory writing**

This is advanced description and focuses on explaining, defining and expounding on an idea. Such writing explains and analyses:

- (a) a process
- (b) an opinion or point of view
- (c) event(s) and phenomena
- (d) instructions and directions

## **Argumentative Essays**

Argumentative writing is an academic writing which is also called persuasive writing. It is a rational effort to defend or refute a claim and does not have place for emotions, or anger. Most academic writing falls under this category. Argumentative writing is done

argumentatively. The writer collects all his/her points and presents them logically and constructively. The aim of an argumentative writing is to persuade the audience and convince them to accept the writers point of view. Argumentative essays are expected to be clear and coherent. The writer must be clear about his/her argument.

### **Characteristics of an argumentative essay**

1. Clarity
2. Complete
3. Accurate
4. Based on sound premises
5. Logical Avoid arguing in circles
6. Reasonable
7. Be based on evidence
8. Must acknowledge opposition
9. Avoid fallacies i.e. unqualified generalizations



# RESEARCH CONCEPT

The concept must be between three (3) to five (5) pages including the cover page.

## **Chronology**

1. Cover page: full name, registration number, study programme, semester and year of study, and academic qualifications.
2. Body: introduction, background (historical perspective, conceptual perspective, contextual perspective, theoretical perspective) statement of the problem, aim of the study, specific objectives (at least 3), study scope (time, place, and content), research methods, study population, and data analysis.
3. Budget and timelines.
4. At least two article titles that may accrue from the research to be conducted.
5. At least five (5) to ten (10) key references written in APA format.
6. Format: Times new romans, size 12, black, justified, and 1.5 line spacing.

# **Guidelines for Writing Research Proposal/ Dissertation at Graduate Level**

## **Instructions**

**The first/title page** of the proposal should have a title of not more than 20 words, written in Bold, font size 14, Times New Roman, justified, with 1.5 line spacing, capitalized and without abbreviations. At the bottom of the page indicate the month and year of submission. The proposal should be 17 to 27 pages and spiral-bound. It should be written in font size 12, Times New Roman, justified, with 1.5 line spacing.

## **Chronology**

**1. Preliminary pages:** should be numbered in Arabic numerals (i, ii, iii, iv,...) and should include Title page, Declaration page, Table of Content, List of Figures and List of Tables. Each should start on a new page.

**2. The body of the proposal** should have the following:

**Chapter One:** Introduction (2-5 pages), a brief introduction with a background to the study with, Historical Perspective, Theoretical Perspective, Conceptual Perspective, Contextual Perspective, Statement of the Problem, Purpose of the Study, Objectives of the study, Research questions/Hypothesis, Scope of the Study, Geographical Scope, Content Scope, Time Scope, Significance of the Study and Operational definitions



## **Chapter Two: Literature Review (4-7 pages)**

This chapter reviews literature related to the topic of study. It is not a collection of stand-alone paragraphs and (sub-) sections, but rather a story that flows from one paragraph to the next. The student has the duty to ensure that the different sections flow from one to the next. This chapter should detail scholarly evidence of what has been done as far as the proposed work is concerned at the same time pointing out the gaps therein. Where applicable, there a theoretical and/or conceptual framework should be included. The student must ensure that all the previous work done is properly cited and included in the reference section.

## **Chapter Three: Research Methodology (5-8 pages)**

This chapter shows the methods (research design) to be employed in collecting the required data for the study and the way it will be processed and analyzed to give the necessary and meaningful information. The way the respondents or research participants will be selected (sampling) should be discussed. Methods of data processing and data analysis should also be discussed. The student must include a statement on ethical issues to be addressed and exactly how this will be done, citing ethical review boards that will give the approval.

## **References**

All cited studies should be captured in the list of references. The referencing format is APA 7<sup>th</sup> edition.

## **Appendices**

This section could incorporate data collection tools, standard operating procedures, maps, tables, and any other documents that may have been used in the study.

## **Budget**

The student should provide a detailed itemized budget clearly tagged to activities

## **Guidelines for writing research thesis/work in progress**

The guide is sampled as universities have their adopted format. In SS&DS at CUEA the format is as shown below

## **Preliminary Pages**

- ☐ Title page
- ☐ Declaration Page
- ☐ Dedication
- ☐ Acknowledgements
- ☐ Table of Contents
- ☐ List of Tables
- ☐ List of Figures
- ☐ Abbreviations and Acronyms
- ☐ Abstract

NOTE:(use roman numbers for pagination)

## **CHAPTER ONE**

### **1.0.INTRODUCTION**

- ☐ 1.1 Background to the study
- ☐ 1.2 Statement of the problem
- ☐ 1.3 Purpose of the study(General objective of the study)
- ☐ 1.4 Objectives of the study(Specific Objectives of the study)
- ☐ 1.5 Research questions
- ☐ 1.6 Research hypothesis(Optional if you have research questions)
- ☐ 1.7 Justification of the Study
- ☐ 1.8 Significant of the study
- ☐ 1.9 Scope and Delimitation of the Study
- ☐ 1.10 Limitations of the study
- ☐ 1.11 Conceptual framework, Explanation of relationships of variables in the Conceptual Framework
- ☐ 1.12 Operational Definition of Terms (Definitions of Significant Terms Used in your Study)

NOTE:(Use Arabic numbers from introduction for pagination)

## **CHAPTER TWO**

### **LITERATURE REVIEW**

- ☐ 2.1 Introduction
- ☐ 2.2 Theoretical framework (Relevant theories used in your study, and conceptual framework)
- ☐ 2.3 Theme-Dependent variable

- 2.4 Theme on first objective
- 2.5 Theme on second objective
- 2.6 Theme on third objective
- 2.7 Theme on fourth objective
- 2.8 Gaps in literature reviewed (a table with authors, gaps and how your study will fill the Literature Review guided by the research objectives/questions/thematic area Starting with Dependent variables, then 1st IV vs DV etc. as they follow in research objectives gaps)
- 2.9 Summary of Literature Review

## **CHAPTER THREE**

### **RESEARCH METHODOLOGY**

- 3.1 Introduction
- 3.2 Research design
- 3.3 Study Area
- 3.3 Target population
- 3.4 Sample size and sampling procedures
- 3.4.1 Sampling Procedure
- 3.5 Data collection instruments
- 3.5.1 Pilot testing of the instruments
- 3.5.2 Validity of the instrument
- 3.5.3 Reliability of the instrument
- 3.6 Data collection procedure
- 3.7 Data analysis techniques

- 3.8 Ethical considerations
- 3.9 Operationalization of variables (Specifies exactly how the concept will be measured and specifies procedures and operations necessary to measure a concept)

## **CHAPTER FOUR**

### **Data Analysis, Presentations and Interpretations**

- 4.1 Introduction
- 4.2 Questionnaire return rate
- 4.3 Demographic characteristics of the respondents
- 4.4 First objective or research question theme for data presentation
- 4.5 Second objective or research question theme for data presentation
- 4.6 Third objective or research question theme for data presentation
- 4.7 Fourth objective or research question theme for data presentation (and their sub-themes

if any and hypotheses testing should be presented after quantitative and qualitative data is

done under each objective or research question )

- Discuss the findings by comparing and contrasting your own finding with other empirical

findings reviewed in Chapter two. The purpose is to show how your findings agree or disagree with the existing body of knowledge.

## **CHAPTER FIVE**

### **SUMMARY OF THE FINDINGS, DISCUSSIONS, CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS**

- ☐ 5.1 Introduction
- ☐ 5.2 Summary of findings (Based on Research questions or objective)
  - ☐ 5.2.1. (sub-title drawn from 1st Research Question in Chapter 1)
  - ☐ 5.2.2. (sub-title drawn from 2nd Research Question in Chapter 1)
  - ☐ 5.2.3. (sub-title drawn from 3rd Research Question in Chapter 1)
  - ☐ 5.2.4. (sub-title drawn from 4th Research Question in Chapter 1)
- ☐ 5.3 Theoretical Implications of the Study
- ☐ 5.4 Implication of the Study findings to the Programme pursued by the Researcher
- ☐ 5.5 Conclusions
- ☐ 5.6 Recommendations –Action/ Policy Change and by who or which agencies?
- ☐ 5.7 Suggestions for further studies
- ☐ 5.8 Contribution to the body of knowledge
- ☐ References –APA7 Edition- (Order of the references: Books, Journal, Online Resources)

## APPENDICES

- ☐ Letter of Transmittal
- ☐ Instruments
- ☐ Other appendices e.g., photography, maps etc.
- ☐ Field entry permissions
- ☐ Research Authorization letter
- ☐ Permit
- ☐ Time Schedule
- ☐ Budget

In Kampala international university (KIU) the format is as shown below

1. **Cover page:** full name, registration number, e.g

# **SOCIAL MEANING OF BRIBERY AND ITS INFLUENCE ON TAXI OPERATORS IN KISII COUNTY, KENYA**

**BY**

**NAME.....**

**REG.....2023-01-.....**

**A RESEARCH PROPOSAL SUBMITTED IN PARTIAL FULFILMENT OF THE REQUIREMENTS FOR THE AWARD OF THE DEGREE OF MASTER OF ARTS IN SOCIOLOGY IN THE FACULTY OF ARTS AND SOCIAL SCIENCES AT THE CATHOLIC UNIVERSITY OF EASTERN AFRICA (CUEA)**

**2. Preliminary pages:** should be numbered in roman numerals (i, ii, iii, iv,...) and should include Declaration page, Table of Content, List of Figures and List of Tables. Each should start on a new page.

**3. Abstract:** an abstract should not be more than three hundred fifty (350) words. It should be a summary of the whole thesis

**4. Chapter One:** A brief introduction with a background to the study that captures Historical Perspective, Theoretical Perspective, Conceptual Perspective, Contextual Perspective, Statement of the Problem( 3 paragraphs indicating the ideal situation, what are the gaps and what your study will do if the gaps are not filled), Purpose of the



Study, Objectives of the study, Research questions/Hypothesis, Scope of the Study, Geographical Scope, Content Scope, Time Scope, Significance of the Study and Operational definitions

## **5. Chapter Two: Literature review**

This chapter reviews literature related to the topic of study. It is not a collection of stand-alone paragraphs and (sub-) sections, but rather a story that flows from one paragraph to the next. The student has the duty to ensure that the different sections flow from one to the next. This chapter should detail scholarly evidence of what has been done as far as the proposed work is concerned at the same time pointing out the gaps therein. Where applicable, there is an Introduction, Theoretical Review, Empirical Review (based on the objectives), Summary of Empirical Research Gap (table showing, the author, purpose (title of the study), methodology, findings and gap (what your study will do) and Conceptual Framework

## **6. Chapter three: Methodology**

This chapter describes Approaches (Qualitative and Quantitative) and the methods (research design) to be employed in collecting the required data for the study and the way it will be processed and analyzed to give the necessary and meaningful information. The way the respondents or research participants will be selected (sampling) should be discussed. Methods of data processing and data analysis should also be discussed. The student must include a statement on ethical issues to be addressed and exactly how this will be done, citing

ethical review boards that will give the approval. the format should have; an Introduction, Research Design, Research Approach, Target Population of the study, Sample Size, Sampling Techniques, Data Collection Instruments, Data collection procedure, Data Quality Control, Validity of the instruments, Reliability of the instruments, Data Processing and Analysis, Qualitative/ Quantitative Data, Ethical Considerations, The Study Limitations and Delimitations

## **7. Chapter Four: Data Presentation, Analysis and Interpretation of Results**

This chapter includes the following: a. Alignment with Objectives, b. Relevancy of Data Presented c. Analysis of the Data, d. Interpretation. This chapter presents the data collected and findings from analyses of the data. The results should be presented and analyzed logically following the stated study objectives. Results and discussions may be combined or presented separately. The goal is to present the findings and discuss the significance of the research in relation to existing literature on the subject of interest.

## **8. Chapter Five: Discussion of Findings, Conclusions, and Recommendations**

This chapter includes the following: a. Discussion, b. Conclusions, c. Recommendations. Chapter Four: Data Presentation, Interpretation, and Discussion. This chapter should provide a summary of the major findings, specific policy recommendations based on the findings, and outline areas for further inquiry.

## **9. References**

All cited studies should be captured in the list of references. The referencing format, including in text citations, is APA 7<sup>th</sup> edition.

## **10. Appendices**

This section could incorporate data collection tools, standard operating procedures, maps, tables, and any other documents that may have been used in the study.

## **Tips for academic writing**

The tips to get better at academic work:

1. Always focus on the structuring of your work. A good piece of academic writing will be well structured and well-constructed.
2. Be concise and precise while you are writing. Scholarly writing prefers clear, to-the-point writing. Therefore, whatever you are stating should be clear, with relevant evidence and reasoning backing it up.
3. Refer to style guides while you are writing. Ask the responsible authority about the style guide they prefer and stick to it.
4. Lastly, always edit and proofread your work before you submit your work or publish them. Editing and proofreading are crucial steps in the process of writing and should not be overlooked. If you cannot do it yourself, you can always rely on editing and proofreading services.

### **How to Write an Academic Paper- Step by Step**

Crafting an academic paper demands a strong understanding of your topic and active engagement with sources. It requires the ability to

contribute an original perspective to the ongoing scholarly discourse.  
the different steps in writing a research paper are:

## **Step 1: Understanding Your Research Paper Requirements**

The first step is to analyze the research paper requirements. This may include;

- **Scope Check:** Define the boundaries of your paper. What specific aspects should you cover? Understanding this sets the stage for focused research.
- **Formatting Guidelines:** Take note of any specific formatting requirements. Are there rules on fonts, margins, or page numbers? Clarity in these details enhances your paper's presentation.
- **Structural Insights:** Explore if your assignment outlines a preferred structure. Does it require specific sections like introduction, methods, results, and conclusion? Following these guidelines ensures a well-organized paper.
- **Citation Styles:** Identify the preferred citation style. Whether it's APA, MLA, or another format, adhering to these rules adds credibility to your research.

- **Timeframe and Word Limit Consideration:** Carefully evaluate your timeframe and word limit. Be realistic and allocate sufficient time for researching, writing, and editing.

## **Step 2: Choosing a Relevant Topic**

Selecting a research paper topic may seem like a straightforward task, but it holds critical value in the success of your research paper.

- **Balance Interest and Academic Relevance:** Choose a topic that merges your interest with academic relevance. This balance keeps you motivated and engages your audience.
- **Sustained Motivation:** A well-chosen topic sustains your motivation during the writing process.
- **Contributing to Knowledge:** Opt for a subject that contributes meaningfully to existing knowledge.

**Example: "Impact of Social Media on Mental Health in Adolescents: A Comprehensive Study"** This topic merges personal interest in social media and addresses a critical academic concern about mental health in a specific demographic.

- **"My Favorite Social Media Platforms"** This topic focuses solely on personal preferences, lacking the depth and academic significance needed for a research paper.

### Step 3: Conducting In-Depth Research

With a clear understanding of your assignment and a compelling topic in hand, the next step is a detailed literature search.

- **Comprehensive Source Gathering:** Utilize academic databases, libraries, and online resources to compile a diverse range of sources.
- **Critical Evaluation:** Assess the reliability and relevance of each source.
- **Contradictory Exploration:** Verify and seek sources that challenge your viewpoint, ensuring a well-rounded understanding.
- **Overlooked Aspects and Recent Developments:** Look for: Overlooked aspects in existing research or heated debates you can address.
- **Formulating Research Questions:** Develop research questions. This helps in framing the purpose and direction of your research.

### Step 4: Developing a Strong Statement

A statement encapsulates the primary argument or central claim you're presenting in your research paper. It should be concise, specific, and focused on the main idea or purpose of your paper.

## Step 5: Creating a Detailed Outline

A research paper outline is a structured plan that organizes the main points and details you'll include in your paper. It serves as a blueprint, guiding you through the writing process. Organize your thoughts and research findings by constructing a comprehensive outline. A well-structured outline can make the writing process much easier.

## Step 6: Writing the Introduction

The research paper introduction serves as a vital entry point, answering three crucial questions: What, why, and how?

- **What:** Start by being specific about your paper's topic, write the problem statement, provide the background, state the hypothesis and define key terms or concepts.
- **Why:** This is the crux of your introduction. Briefly answer questions like: What new insights does your paper offer? What important issues does it address?
- **How:** Provide a roadmap for your readers. Preview the key elements of your paper in chronological order to guide them through your arguments.

Remember, the introduction is your paper's first impression, setting the stage for an engaging and informative journey ahead.

## Step 7: Elaborating on the Body



In the body of your research paper, dive into your thesis, supporting it with evidence, analysis, and interpretation.

### **Step 8: Crafting a Cohesive Conclusion**

As you approach the conclusion of your research paper, aim for a powerful and memorable finale. Summarize your key findings, reiterate the significance of your research, and, if relevant, hint at potential avenues for further exploration.

Remember, a conclusion is not about introducing new information but reinforcing the impact of your work, leaving a lasting impression.

### **Step 9: Citing Sources Properly**

In the world of research papers, accurate and consistent citation is a must. It's more than a formality; it's a link to the greater scientific community and a validation of your data. Citations follow precise formatting rules dictated by the citation style specified in your assignment guidelines (APA, MLA, Chicago, etc.).

### **Step 10: Proofreading and Editing**

Before presenting your research paper to the world, dedicate time to thorough proofreading and editing. This final step ensures a polished presentation, free of grammatical errors and possessing a cohesive structure.

The proofreading and editing phase guarantee your research paper stands as a refined and polished piece of scholarly work.

## **How to Write an Introduction of an Academic Paper - A Step-by-Step Guide**

### **Step 1: Start with Introducing your Topic**

The opening line of your research paper is known as a topic sentence. A topical paragraph is basically a paragraph made up of a group of sentences arranged around one main idea, or one topic. This is the type of paragraph you are most familiar with. Topical paragraphs are probably the only type most student think of as a paragraph. They are also called developmental paragraphs or body paragraphs. They are usually found after the introductory paragraph and before the concluding paragraph. Topical paragraphs consist of a statement of a main idea and specific, logical support for that main idea. A topical paragraph must have a topic sentence which should appear early in the first few lines of the paragraph preferably the 1st, 2nd or 3rd line. The topic sentence tells you what the paragraph is about. Because there's only one topic developed in each paragraph, there should only ever be one topic sentence. The topic sentence of a paragraph is developed, or built on, by the addition of supporting information and details.

## Step 2: Provide the Background Information

Once your audience is intrigued by the topic, the next logical step is to provide background information. This contextualizes your research and helps readers understand the broader concept in which your study exists. Mention the historical, contextual, conceptual, social, or scientific details that set the stage for your research. The goal is to ensure that readers have the necessary foundation to comprehend the significance of your study.

## Step 3: Establish your Research Problem

With the backdrop set, it's time to describe the focal point of your research article the research problem. Clearly articulate the problem or question your study aims to address. This step is critical for laying the groundwork and helping your audience understand the purpose and significance of your study.

In an **argumentative paper**, the research problem can be straightforwardly stated, emphasizing its importance and what makes your argument unique. E.g the alarming levels of plastic pollution in our oceans demand urgent attention and action. Despite ongoing efforts, policymakers seem hesitant to acknowledge the magnitude of the issue. This paper proposes a radical approach, commensurate with the scale of the problem, to prompt a paradigm shift in addressing ocean pollution

In an empirical paper, the establishment of the specific research problem is linked to the existing literature. It involves:

- Identifying the research gap your work aims to fill
- Addressing limitations in previous research studies
- Outline the contribution your research makes to the existing body of knowledge

#### **Step 4: Outline your Research Objectives**

Having established the problem, it's time to outline your research objectives. Clearly define the goals your study aims to achieve, offering a roadmap for the reader. These objectives provide direction to your research and shape the narrative of your paper.

Clarity in stating your objectives ensures that readers understand the purpose and focus of your study.

#### **Step 5: Outline the Paper's Structure**

The final step in crafting a good introduction is to outline the structure of your research paper. Provide a brief overview of the main sections, signaling to your readers how the paper will unfold.

This roadmap ensures that your audience knows what to expect, enhancing the overall readability and comprehension of your research.



# Guidelines for Journal Publication

## Definition of a Journal

A journal article is a piece of research published in a peer-reviewed academic journal. Usually reviewed by other professionals in the same field before publication (vetted by other experts to ensure it meets publication standard). Journal articles are considered one of the highest quality sources of information on a given topic. Journal articles can be found in academic journals and scholarly magazines. Academic journals publish quality and reliable research papers/journal articles i.e., journal articles are found in academic journals. Examples of Academic Journal: KIU Journal of Health Sciences, IDOSR, JPP, AJP, IAA, JOURNALS etc.

## The importance of academic journal writing

- i. Means of communicating research innovations, dissemination of research outcome.
- ii. Better preparation for postgraduate study and other career paths.
- iii. Increase in number of publications and citations for individuals and institution.

## **Components of a journal paper**

- i. Title
- ii. Abstract
- iii. Keywords
- iv. Introduction
- v. Methods
- vi. Results
- vii. Discussion
- viii. Conclusion
- ix. Recommendation
- x. References

### **Title**

This is the part that is read first and the mostly read. A good title should have the fewest words

but sufficiently describe the contents of the paper. The title is one of the first indicators readers

will get of your research and concepts. It should be concise, accurate, and informative. Include

most relevant keywords in title, but avoid including abbreviations and formulae.

### **Abstract**

Summarizes the content of the paper. All relevant information must be in place. Abstract facilitates the potential readers to understand what the paper is all about. It comprises of: What your research is

about (Background), Aim, methods, main findings (results) and conclusion.

## **Keywords**

When writing a journal article, you must select keywords that you will like your article to rank for. Keywords help potential readers to discover your article when conducting research using search engines. Keywords can be used by other researchers to find papers similar to your article.

## **Introduction**

The introduction leads the reader from a general subject to a specific area of research. Provides information on the latest development in the field. It comprises of background, statement of problem, justification (state what is lacking in the current knowledge), aim, specific objectives, research questions. The key attributes of research questions are: (i) specificity; (ii) originality or novelty; and (iii) general relevance to a broad scientific community.

## **Methods**

This provide the readers with sufficient details about the study methods to be able to reproduce the study if so desired. Describe the context and setting of the study. Specify the study design, describe data collection instruments, procedures and outline analytical methods.

## **Results**

Present key findings with respect to the central research question. Tools for presenting results are: Tables, Figures, charts, etc. Interpretation/explanation of the tools are very necessary.

## **Discussion**

State the main findings of the study. Discuss the main results with reference to previous researches in the same field ie (comparison). Practical implications of the results. Conclusion/interpretation of results (summary).

## **References**

Key assertions should be referenced, as well as the methods and instruments used. References and citations should be well balanced with current and relevant References. Aim to cite references that are not more than 10 years old if possible. The studies you cite should be strongly related to your research question. All references cited in the body of the work must reflect at the reference section of the paper.



# Developing a Research Topic

Every good research project has a well-defined topic. Selecting and developing a topic is an ongoing process by which you define and refine your ideas. You can then focus your research strategies to find relevant and appropriate information. Before you begin the research process, be sure that you understand the assignment, the purpose, and the requirements. Plan for sufficient research, thinking, and writing time for the project. Developing a research topic is an important initial step in the research process, as it lays the foundation for the entire study. The step-by-step guide on how to develop a research topic:

### **1. Identify Your Interests and Passions:**

Start by reflecting on your interests, passions, and areas of expertise. Consider what topics or issues you find intriguing or meaningful, as conducting research on a subject you are genuinely interested in can make the process more enjoyable and motivating.

### **2. Conduct Preliminary Research:**

Once you have identified potential areas of interest, conduct preliminary research to explore existing literature, theories, and research gaps within those areas. Review academic journals, books, conference proceedings, and online databases to gain a deeper

understanding of the current state of knowledge and identify areas where further research is needed.

### **3. Brainstorm and Narrow Down Ideas:**

Brainstorm a list of potential research topics based on your interests and the gaps you have identified in the literature. Consider different angles, perspectives, and approaches that you could take within each topic area. Narrow down your list by evaluating the feasibility, relevance, and significance of each potential topic.

### **4. Define Your Research Questions:**

Once you have selected a potential topic, refine it into specific research questions or objectives that you aim to address through your study. Your research questions should be clear, focused, and researchable, guiding the direction of your research and helping you to stay on track throughout the process.

### **5. Consider Practical and Ethical Considerations:**

Before finalizing your research topic, consider practical and ethical considerations that may impact your ability to conduct the study. Think about factors such as access to data or participants, time constraints, budgetary limitations, and ethical considerations related to research design, data collection, and participant welfare.

### **6. Seek Feedback and Input:**

Discuss your research topic ideas with colleagues, mentors, advisors, or peers to get feedback and input. They can offer valuable insights, suggestions, and critiques that may help you refine and improve your

research topic. Be open to constructive feedback and willing to revise your ideas based on the input you receive.

### **7. Refine and Finalize Your Topic:**

Based on the feedback you receive and further reflection, refine and finalize your research topic. Ensure that your topic is specific enough to be manageable within the scope of your study but broad enough to be meaningful and relevant to your field of study. Write a clear and concise research proposal or statement that outlines your research topic, objectives, and rationale.

### **8. Review and Revise as Needed:**

Review your research topic periodically throughout the research process and be open to revising it as needed based on new insights, developments, or challenges that arise. Research is an iterative process, and your topic may evolve as you delve deeper into the literature and data.

By following these steps, you can develop a research topic that is well-defined, relevant, and meaningful, setting the stage for a successful research study.



# Manuscript

A manuscript is a handwritten or typed document, especially a writer's first version of a book before it is published. A manuscript is also the original copy of a book or article before it is printed: It is thought that the manuscript is the work of a monk and dates from the twelfth century. A manuscript is the written form of a document or text before it is published. In the context of journal writing, a manuscript typically refers to a document prepared for submission to an academic journal for peer review and potential publication. It's the primary means by which researchers communicate their findings, theories, or ideas to the broader academic community.

Here's why manuscripts are important in journal writing:

1. **Communication:** Manuscripts allow researchers to communicate their work, findings, and conclusions to other researchers in their field and to the wider academic community.
2. **Peer Review:** Manuscripts undergo peer review, where experts in the field evaluate the quality, validity, and significance of the research. This process helps ensure the integrity and reliability of the research being published.
3. **Publication:** Successful manuscripts are published in academic journals, making the research publicly available for others to read, cite, and build upon. Publication in reputable journals

enhances the visibility and credibility of the research and the researchers themselves.

4. **Advancement of Knowledge:** Manuscripts contribute to the advancement of knowledge within a particular field by adding to the existing body of research, proposing new theories or hypotheses, or providing solutions to existing problems.

Steps for writing a manuscript typically include:

1. **Literature Review:** Review existing literature relevant to your research topic to understand the current state of knowledge and identify gaps or areas for further investigation.
2. **Research Design:** Plan and conduct your research, including selecting appropriate methodologies, data collection techniques, and analysis methods.
3. **Results:** Analyze the data collected and present your findings in a clear and organized manner, using tables, figures, and descriptive text as necessary.
4. **Discussion:** Interpret your results in the context of existing literature, discussing their implications, limitations, and potential future research directions.
5. **Introduction:** Introduce the research topic, provide background information, and clearly state the research question or hypothesis.

6. **Abstract:** Write a concise summary of the entire manuscript, including the research question, methods, results, and conclusions.
7. **Title and Keywords:** Choose a clear, descriptive title and select keywords that accurately reflect the content of your manuscript.
8. **Formatting:** Follow the specific formatting guidelines provided by the target journal, including font, spacing, margins, citation style, and any other requirements.
9. **Revision:** Revise your manuscript based on feedback from colleagues, mentors, or pre-submission peer review, ensuring clarity, coherence, and adherence to journal guidelines.
10. **Submission:** Submit your manuscript to the selected journal through their online submission system, along with any required supplementary materials such as figures, tables, or supporting data.
11. **Peer Review:** Await feedback from peer reviewers and address any comments or concerns raised by revising your manuscript as necessary.
12. **Acceptance or Rejection:** Receive a decision from the journal editor based on the peer reviewers' feedback, accepting the manuscript for publication, requesting revisions, or rejecting it.

By following these steps carefully and adhering to the conventions of academic writing and publishing, researchers can effectively

communicate their findings and contribute to the advancement of knowledge in their respective fields.

### **Common Reasons for Rejection of Manuscript by Journals**

1. Insufficient novelty and originality.
2. A misleading title. iii. Incomplete introduction.
3. Flaws in methodology.
4. Poor analysis of the data.
5. An incomplete data set/flaws in study design.
6. Inaccurate conclusions that are not supported by the data.
7. Insufficient originality.
8. Out of scope for the journal
9. Non-compliance with research ethics
10. Nonadherence to journal guidelines
11. Poor writing.
12. Violation of publication ethics – plagiarism
13. A lack of up-to-date references.
14. Failure to answer reviewer's comments.
15. Currently under review at another journal.

### **Manuscript preparation**

Manuscript preparation requires organization of data, references, collaboration with co-authors and an understanding of copyright and access to manuscripts. Manuscripts should be written in clear concise

and good English. Each journal however has its own rules and guidelines. However, most journals have the following;

1. Paper title: (16 bold)
2. Authors list: (First Author<sup>1</sup>, Second Author<sup>2</sup> and Third Author<sup>3</sup> (14 bold)
3. Abstract: The abstract should summarize the contents of the paper. It should not be more than 400 words. (11 bold)
4. Keywords: About six keywords separated by comma in alphabetical order (12 bold)
5. Introduction: (12 bold ) Headings (12 bold)
6. Figures and Tables: Must be clear and numbered consecutively (12 bold)
7. Conclusion (12 bold)
8. References : Bibliographic references in the text should appear like [1,2,3,4,.....]using square brace. References should be numbered consecutively in the text. References should be in APA Style or MLA Style in accordance with the author's discipline, but there should be consistency. E.g. Journal Articles; Jerry, J., Peters, A. and Thompson, B. (2016). Health implication of smoking. Journal of Health, 11(3): 16 -25.

**Book chapters;** Peterson, B. (2016). The health implication of alcohol intoxication in developing countries. In J. Houston (Ed), Handbook of toxicology, (New York : Springer verlag, pp: 460-470.



**Thesis;** Charles, B.M. (2016). The effects of *Moringa oleifera* on the lipid profile of malaria parasitized mice. M.Sc thesis, University of Cambridge England.

**Case report;** Peterson, J.M., Brown, B.O. and Paul, M.E. (2016). The causes of diarrhea in developing countries. A case study of water scarcity in the Northern part of Africa 2000-2015. US-AID Report, Chicago, IL. EPA 712-R-65-010.

## **Revision**

Seldom is a paper ready for submission after the first draft. To ensure their works say what they want them to say clearly, correctly, and succinctly, authors engage in revision and editing. Revision is primarily examining a work to see that it accomplishes its purpose in the most effective way possible.

Authors may go through several rounds of revision before their works are ready for submission. Rule of the thumb is knowing when that point is reached. A perfect work is the aim but seldom the achievement. Therefore, the goal is to get as close to perfection as possible within the time available prior to submission deadlines.

Before revising, authors should set their works aside for a few days. Doing so allows authors to approach their works with fresh perspectives. They may see their works more clearly, noticing problems with organization and clarity. Authors may also benefit from having someone else read (Readers) their papers for content,

organization, and clarity. Trusted colleagues who know the content fairly well and whose opinions are respected are valuable assets. Such professional friends should advise authors about gaps in information, organizational problems that interfere with the flow of information, possible lapses in the logic of the arguments, and the overall impression of the piece.

In working with revision and editing, authors should also rely on their publisher's preferred style and formatting guide to ensure their finished works conform to publication requirements. Commonly used style or publication guides include the following:

- Modern Language Association Manual and Guide to Scholarly Publishing (MLA)
- American Psychological Association (APA)
- Chicago Manual of Style (CMS)

Some professions, journals, and publishing houses have their own style guides. Authors may find these in the publication or submission guidelines. These style sheets have been tailored to fit the publishers' requirements. Authors should follow such guides explicitly.

Graduate students may also be given adapted style guides. Not only universities and colleges but also departments and individual professors may have tailored guidelines for students to use in their classes. Graduate students, especially doctoral candidates, must be especially careful to know and follow the specific style and format guides for their schools and departments.

## **Components of a Proposal**

### **Title of concept/proposal/work in progress/thesis/journal**

The title/topic of the proposal should accurately reflect the scope and content of the study in not more than 20 words. It should be concise and clear. From it, the reader should be able to predict fairly accurately what the report/dissertation/thesis will be addressing.

### **Background to the Study**

This section provides evidence and conditions of the existing situation highlighting the gap(s) to make the reader feel the urgency of the problem, the need to study it in order to solve the problem or contribute to its solution. The section should provide a broad perspective and later narrow perspective on the existing problem so as to justify what would be contained within the statement of the problem. In addition to that, background of the study is an extensive explanation of the background to the problem, which includes sufficient information about the problem. The background to the problem also establishes the social significance of researcher's study; demonstrates how the problem is worthy expenditure in effort, time and other/financial resources. It shows precisely what the problem is, what the social concerns are, and how widespread it is. It includes current information surrounding the issue, and relevant history on the issue.

## **Statement of the Problem**

It is a section that introduces the problem of which the research has to be conducted. The section refers to the research problem that has been detected and which needs a better understanding and/or solution in the practical/theoretical world. The problem and its magnitude have to be stated clearly. It should include relevant data to justify the existing problematic situations to be researched.

## **Research Objectives**

This section shall be composed of the statements of general and specific purposes of the research. The general objective should tell what the research is intended to accomplish. Specific objectives are specific aims arising directly from the general objective/purpose/ aim of the study. For each specific objective there must be a method to achieve it. The objectives should be Specific, Measurable, Achievable, Realizable and Time bound (SMART) and should reflect the issues to be resolved from the problem which has been stipulated. The specific objectives should conform to research methodology.

## **Hypotheses/Research Questions**

### **Hypotheses**

Hypotheses are specific statements of prediction. They describe in concrete terms what is expected to happen in a study. They should be testable. Hypothesis is usually stated positively or negatively. They should tally with the research objectives. They should also state the

expected relationship between variables and should be tested within a reasonable time.

A hypothesis is also a tentative explanation or prediction that can be tested through scientific investigation. It is like a roadmap that guides researchers in their quest for answers. By formulating a hypothesis, researchers make educated guesses about the relationship between variables or phenomena.

### **Variables in Hypothesis**

In hypotheses, variables play a crucial role as they represent the factors that are being studied and tested. There are two types of variables commonly found in hypotheses:

**1. Independent Variable:** This variable is manipulated or controlled by the researcher. It is the factor believed to have an effect on the dependent variable. example:

***Hypothesis:** "Increasing study time (independent variable) leads to improved test scores (dependent variable) in students."*

In this hypothesis, the independent variable is the study time, which the researcher can manipulate to observe its impact on the test scores.

**2. Dependent Variable:** This variable is the outcome or response that is measured or observed as a result of the changes in the independent variable. example:

***Hypothesis: "Exposure to sunlight (independent variable) affects plant growth (dependent variable)."***

In this hypothesis, the dependent variable is plant growth, which is expected to be influenced by the independent variable, sunlight exposure. The researcher measures or observes the changes in plant growth based on the different levels of sunlight exposure.

## **Research Question vs Hypothesis**

A research question is an inquiry that defines the focus and direction of a research study. A hypothesis, on the other hand, is a tentative statement that suggests a relationship between variables or predicts the outcome of a research study.

## **How to Develop a Hypothesis Step by Step?**

Developing a hypothesis is an important step in scientific research, as it sets the foundation for designing experiments and testing theories. the step-by-step process of developing a hypothesis, using the example of studying the effects of exercise on sleep quality.

### **Step 1. Ask a Question**

To begin, ask a specific question that focuses on the relationship between variables. In our example, the question could be: "Does regular exercise have a positive impact on sleep quality?"

### **Step 2. Do Background Research**

Before formulating your hypothesis, conduct preliminary research to gather existing knowledge on the topic. Review scientific studies, articles, and relevant literature to understand the current understanding of exercise and its potential effects on sleep quality. This research will provide a foundation for formulating your hypothesis.

### **Step 3. Develop Your Hypothesis**

Based on your question and preliminary research, formulate a hypothesis that predicts the expected relationship between variables. In our example, the hypothesis could be: "Regular exercise has a positive influence on sleep quality, resulting in improved sleep duration and reduced sleep disturbances."

### **Step 4. Refine Your Hypothesis**

Refine your hypothesis by making it more specific and testable. Specify the variables involved and the anticipated outcomes in clear terms. For instance: "Engaging in moderate-intensity aerobic exercise for at least 30 minutes, three times a week, will lead to an increase in total sleep time and a decrease in the frequency of sleep disruptions."

### **Step 5. Express Your Hypothesis in Three Forms**

To ensure comprehensiveness, phrase your hypothesis in three different ways: as a simple statement, as a positive correlation, and as a negative correlation. This will cover different perspectives and potential outcomes.

Using our example:

- **Simple Statement:** "Regular exercise positively affects sleep quality."
- **Positive Correlation:** "As the frequency of regular exercise increases, sleep quality improves."
- **Negative Correlation:** "A lack of regular exercise is associated with poorer sleep quality."

## **Step 6. Construct a Null Hypothesis**

In addition to the main hypothesis, it is important to write a null hypothesis. The null hypothesis assumes that there is no significant relationship between the variables being studied.

The example below shows how to state the null hypothesis in a research paper:

H0: "There is no significant difference in test scores between students who receive tutoring and those who do not."

H1: "Students who receive tutoring show higher test scores compared to those who do not receive tutoring."

By following these steps, you can develop a well-structured and testable hypothesis that serves as a guiding framework for your scientific research.



## **What Makes a Good Hypothesis?**

Crafting a good hypothesis is essential for conducting effective scientific research. A well-formed hypothesis sets the stage for meaningful experiments.

Here are some key characteristics that make a hypothesis strong:

### **1. Testable and Specific**

A good hypothesis should be testable through observation or experimentation. It should be formulated in a way that allows researchers to gather data and evidence to support or refute it.

When writing a research hypothesis, it is crucial to structure it in a manner that suggests clear ways to measure or observe the variables involved.

### **2. Grounded in Existing Knowledge**

A strong hypothesis is built upon a foundation of existing knowledge and understanding of the topic. By connecting your hypothesis to previous findings, you ensure that your research contributes to the broader scientific knowledge.

This incorporation of existing knowledge aligns with the concept of research hypotheses, where hypotheses are framed based on the understanding of the subject from previous studies.

### **3. Falsifiable**

A good hypothesis must be falsifiable, meaning that it can be proven false if it is indeed false. This principle is important because it allows

for rigorous testing and prevents researchers from making claims that are impossible to verify or disprove.

This aligns with the idea of statistical hypothesis, where hypotheses need to be formulated in a way that allows statistical testing to determine their validity.

#### **4. Clearly Defines Variables**

A well-formulated hypothesis clearly identifies the independent and dependent variables involved in the research. It specifies the relationship between two variables and states what researchers expect to find during the study.

The clarity in defining variables is a crucial aspect of developing logical hypotheses.

#### **5. Supported by Logic and Reasoning**

A good hypothesis is logical and based on sound reasoning. It should be supported by evidence and a plausible rationale. The relationship between two variables proposed in the hypothesis should be grounded in a solid understanding of cause-and-effect relationships and theories.

A strong hypothesis, whether it is a research hypothesis, statistical hypothesis, or logical hypothesis, encompasses these key elements. By incorporating these elements you lay the groundwork for a robust and meaningful research study.

## **How to Write a Hypothesis for Qualitative Research:**

**Qualitative Research Topic:** Exploring the experiences of first-time mothers during the postpartum period.

**Hypothesis 1:** "First-time mothers will report feelings of increased anxiety and stress during the early weeks of the postpartum period."

**Hypothesis 2:** "There will be a common theme of adjustment challenges among first-time mothers in their narratives about the postpartum experience."

### **Research Questions**

The research questions are research objectives stated in question form. By putting the objectives in the form of questions one is more able to attract the intended type of data. They must be stated in a way that they will carry the same meaning as the research objectives. Research questions should relate to the research objectives and guide the research process by addressing the variables of the study. The researcher is at liberty to use within the study either research questions or hypotheses.

### **Scope of the Study**

The scope specifies the boundary (ies) of the research in terms of time spent collecting data, geographical location and theoretical coverage. It defines the factors and variables to be considered.

## **Significance of the Study**

This refers to the relevance of the study in terms of academic contributions and practical use that might be made of the findings. It should address the way the study is crucial to policy formulation and review. On top of that, it should reflect on knowledge creation, technological or socio-economic value to the community. It should focus on its contribution following a priority order. For example, from the level of the ministry, public or private institution, which was involved in the study including the community, researchers and adding knowledge to the researcher and finally fulfilment of the requirement of his/her levels of academic attainment.

## **Definition of Key Terms**

Give definitions of major terms that are to be used in the research.

## **Literature Review**

This section deals with analysis of existing literature on the subject with the objective of revealing contributions, weaknesses and gaps. It should reflect the themes of the study, objectives, hypotheses, methods and research questions. Citations should be in accordance with the approved format.

It also deals with the analysis of the literature related to the subject of the study with the objective of seeing what other scholars have studied and discovered and what knowledge gaps remain to be filled. The review must be focused on the study variables by reviewing literature

under the sub-themes which synchronize with the research objectives or hypotheses.

### **Conceptual Framework**

A conceptual framework is a scheme of concepts (variables) which a candidature will operationalize in a study in order to achieve the set objectives. The conceptual framework illustrates what the researcher expects to find through the research. It defines the relevant variables for researcher's study and maps out how they might relate to each other. The researcher should construct a conceptual framework before the researcher begins collecting data. It is often represented in a visual format. Conceptual framework is related to /assumes a theory, it may be necessary to have separate sections of conceptual and theoretical framework.

### **Theoretical Framework**

Theoretical framework implies an examination of existing or self-formulated theories in relation to the study objectives. In carrying out basic research, there is a need for the researcher to use a theory or some theories of relevance to a study problem. Theories are statements about how concepts and variables are connected and their purpose is to explain why things happen as they do. A theoretical framework helps the researcher to identify the assumptions that underpin the study.

## **Research Methodology**

This section shall address the methods proposed to be used when conducting research. It shall include area of the study, research design and approach, population, sample and sampling techniques, data collection methods and analysis, reliability and validity of the data.

### **Area of the study**

It is the part of the field of study to be involved, or the geographical location to be involved. Selecting research area is the very first step in writing researcher's dissertation/thesis. It is important for the researcher to choose research area that is interesting to the researcher professionally. Also, the researcher has to provide justification for the chosen area.

### **Research design**

Research design is the arrangement of the conditions for collection and analysis of data in a manner that aims to combine relevance to the research purpose with economy in procedure. In fact, the research design is the conceptual structure within which research is conducted; it constitutes blueprint for the collection, measurement and analysis of data.

### **Research approach (Paradigm)**

Research approach is a plan and procedure that consists of steps of broad assumption to detailed methods of data collection, analysis, and interpretation. Research approach is essentially divided into two categories; qualitative approach and quantitative approach.

Quantitative research is based on the measurement of quantities or amounts that may be amenable to statistical analysis. Qualitative research is concerned with non-measurable phenomena such as values, beliefs, and attitudes.

## **Population**

Population (where applicable) refers to the whole group of people, animals or things that is to be studied or on which the research is based. However, due to the large sizes of populations, researchers often cannot test every individual in the population because it is too expensive and time-consuming.

## **Sample**

A sample is a group of people, objects, or items that are taken from a large population for measurement. The sample should be representative of the population from which it was drawn and it must have good size to warrant statistical analysis. The main function of the sample is to allow the researchers to conduct the study to individuals from the population so that the results of their studies can be used to derive conclusions that will apply to the entire population.

## **Sampling techniques**

This explains the ways in which the researcher's sample was obtained. Ways of sampling ensure the selection of a subset of individuals from within a statistical population to estimate characteristics of the whole population.

## Methods of Data Collection

This section explains the kind of data to be collected, whether primary or secondary.

Primary and secondary data are two types of data used in research, each serving different purposes and collected through different methods:

### Primary Data:

Primary data refers to original data collected firsthand by the researcher specifically for the research purpose at hand. This data is directly obtained from the source and has not been previously collected, processed, or interpreted by others. Examples of primary data collection methods include:

1. **Surveys and Questionnaires:** Administering structured or semi-structured surveys or questionnaires to gather information from individuals or groups.
2. **Interviews:** Conducting structured, semi-structured, or unstructured interviews with participants to obtain in-depth insights and perspectives.
3. **Observations:** Systematically observing and recording behaviors, events, or phenomena in natural or controlled settings.
4. **Experiments:** Manipulating variables in a controlled environment to examine cause-and-effect relationships and gather empirical data.



5. **Focus Groups:** Facilitating group discussions with a small number of participants to explore opinions, attitudes, and experiences on a particular topic.
6. **Case Studies:** Conducting in-depth investigations of a single individual, group, organization, or phenomenon to gain detailed insights into its characteristics and dynamics.

### **Secondary Data:**

Secondary data refers to data that has been collected, processed, and interpreted by others for purposes other than the current research. This data is obtained from existing sources, such as published literature, official records, databases, and organizational documents. Examples of secondary data sources include:

1. **Literature Review:** Reviewing published articles, books, reports, and other scholarly sources to gather information and insights relevant to the research topic.
2. **Official Records:** Accessing governmental or organizational records, such as census data, economic indicators, or healthcare statistics.
3. **Databases:** Using existing datasets available from sources such as academic repositories, government agencies, or research organizations.
4. **Published Surveys:** Utilizing data from surveys or studies conducted by other researchers or institutions and made publicly available.

5. **Digital Sources:** Analyzing data from online sources, such as social media platforms, websites, or digital archives.
6. **Meta-Analysis:** Aggregating and synthesizing findings from multiple primary studies to draw overarching conclusions or identify patterns across a body of research.

Data collection methods can also be broadly categorized into qualitative and quantitative approaches, each serving different purposes and providing distinct types of data. Here's an overview of some common methods in each category:

### **Qualitative Data Collection Methods:**

Qualitative data is non-numerical data that describes qualities or characteristics. It captures subjective information, including people's experiences, perceptions, opinions, and behaviors. Qualitative data often involves rich descriptions, narratives, and interpretations. Common forms of qualitative data include: Textual Data: Transcripts from interviews, focus groups, open-ended survey responses, or written documents such as diaries or field notes, Visual Data: Photographs, videos, or drawings that provide visual representations of phenomena or experiences, Audio Data: Recordings of interviews, focus groups, or other verbal interactions, Observational Data: Field notes or descriptions of observations made by researchers in natural or controlled settings and Artifacts: Physical objects or artifacts that hold cultural, historical, or symbolic significance and are studied for

their meanings or contexts. Qualitative data analysis involves techniques such as thematic analysis, content analysis, narrative analysis, or grounded theory to identify patterns, themes, and meanings within the data.

**Qualitative data collection methods include;**

1. **Interviews:** Conducting structured, semi-structured, or unstructured interviews to gather in-depth insights and perspectives from participants. Interviews can be one-on-one or group-based.
2. **Focus Groups:** Bringing together a small group of participants to discuss a specific topic guided by a moderator. Focus groups allow for interaction and exploration of diverse viewpoints.
3. **Observation:** Systematically observing and recording behaviors, interactions, or phenomena in natural settings. Observations can be participant or non-participant, depending on the researcher's involvement.
4. **Ethnography:** Immersing oneself in a particular culture or community over an extended period to understand its practices, beliefs, and social dynamics through participant observation, interviews, and document analysis.
5. **Content Analysis:** Analyzing textual, audio, or visual data from sources such as documents, media, or social media to identify patterns, themes, or trends.

6. **Case Studies:** In-depth investigation of a single individual, group, organization, or phenomenon to gain a comprehensive understanding of its context, dynamics, and complexities.

### **Quantitative Data Collection Methods:**

Quantitative data is numerical data that can be measured and analyzed statistically. It provides objective information about quantities, amounts, or frequencies. Quantitative data is typically structured and precise, allowing for mathematical calculations and statistical analysis. Quantitative data analysis involves techniques such as descriptive statistics (e.g., mean, median, mode), inferential statistics (e.g., t-tests, ANOVA, regression analysis), and data visualization (e.g., histograms, scatter plots, bar charts) to summarize, explore, and draw conclusions from the data. Qualitative data describes qualities or characteristics, while quantitative data represents quantities or amounts.

Quantitative data collection methods include;

1. **Surveys:** Administering structured questionnaires or surveys to collect standardized data from a large sample of participants. Surveys can be conducted through various means, including online, telephone, or in-person.
2. **Experiments:** Manipulating variables in a controlled setting to examine cause-and-effect relationships. Experiments often

involve random assignment of participants to different conditions and measurement of outcomes.

3. **Observational Studies:** Systematically observing and recording behaviors, events, or phenomena in controlled or natural settings to gather quantitative data. Observational studies can be structured or unstructured.
4. **Secondary Data Analysis:** Analyzing existing datasets collected by other researchers, organizations, or institutions for purposes different from the current study. Secondary data sources include government surveys, academic databases, and organizational records.
5. **Longitudinal Studies:** Following a cohort of participants over an extended period to track changes, trends, or developments across time. Longitudinal studies can provide valuable insights into developmental trajectories and causal relationships.
6. **Biometric Measurement:** Using sensors, devices, or instruments to collect physiological or behavioral data, such as heart rate, brain activity, or movement patterns. Biometric measurement allows for objective and real-time data collection.
7. **Web Analytics:** Collecting quantitative data on website or digital platform usage, such as page views, click-through rates, or conversion rates. Web analytics tools provide valuable insights into user behavior and preferences online.

## **Data analysis and interpretation**

Data analysis is a process that involves examining, and molding collected data for interpretation to discover relevant information, draw or propose conclusions and support decision-making to solve a research problem. This involves interpreting data to answer research questions and making research findings be ready for dissemination. Data analysis and interpretation are the most crucial part of any research.

### **Qualitative Data Analysis and Interpretation:**

1. **Data Coding:** The process of systematically organizing and categorizing qualitative data into themes, patterns, or concepts. This often involves labeling segments of text or other qualitative data with codes that represent underlying meanings or concepts.
2. **Thematic Analysis:** Identifying recurring themes or patterns within the data, which may involve inductive or deductive approaches. Researchers immerse themselves in the data to understand the context and meaning of these themes.
3. **Content Analysis:** Examining textual or visual data to identify specific content, such as keywords, phrases, or images, and analyzing their frequency, distribution, or relationships within the dataset.
4. **Narrative Analysis:** Exploring the stories, narratives, or accounts provided by participants to understand their lived

experiences, perspectives, and interpretations of events or phenomena.

5. **Constant Comparison:** Continuously comparing and contrasting data segments or cases to identify similarities, differences, and relationships across the dataset.
6. **Triangulation:** Using multiple sources of data, methods, or researchers to cross-validate findings and enhance the credibility and trustworthiness of the analysis.

### **Interpretation of Qualitative Data**

Interpretation of qualitative data involves making sense of the emergent themes, patterns, or narratives within the context of the research questions and existing literature. It often requires reflexivity, critical reflection, and engagement with the data to generate rich, nuanced insights.

### **Quantitative Data Analysis and Interpretation:**

1. **Descriptive Statistics:** Summarizing and describing quantitative data using measures such as mean, median, mode, standard deviation, and range to understand central tendencies, variability, and distributions.
2. **Inferential Statistics:** Drawing conclusions and making predictions about populations based on sample data using statistical tests such as t-tests, ANOVA, chi-square tests, or regression analysis.

3. **Hypothesis Testing:** Testing research hypotheses or claims using statistical methods to determine whether observed differences or relationships in the data are statistically significant.
4. **Correlation and Regression Analysis:** Examining the strength and direction of relationships between variables using correlation coefficients and predicting outcomes based on the relationship between independent and dependent variables.
5. **Data Visualization:** Representing quantitative data visually through charts, graphs, histograms, scatter plots, or pie charts to facilitate interpretation and communication of findings.
6. **Meta-Analysis:** Aggregating and synthesizing findings from multiple quantitative studies to draw overarching conclusions, identify trends, or estimate effect sizes across a body of research.

**Interpretation of Quantitative Data:** Interpretation of quantitative data involves drawing conclusions based on statistical analyses and determining the implications of the findings for the research questions or hypotheses. It requires attention to the validity, reliability, and generalizability of the results.



## **Validity and reliability(trustworthiness)**

Validity refers to how accurately a method measures what it is intended to measure. Reliability is the degree to which research produces stable and consistent results. This section says how the research will attain these measures of validity and reliability. Validity and reliability, often referred to as trustworthiness in qualitative research, are essential concepts that ensure the rigor and credibility of research findings, regardless of the research method used. Let's explore how validity and reliability/trustworthiness apply to both quantitative and qualitative research:

### **Validity in Quantitative Research:**

1. **Internal Validity:** The extent to which the study accurately measures or tests what it intends to measure or test. It assesses whether there is a causal relationship between variables without interference from extraneous factors.
2. **External Validity:** The extent to which the findings of the study can be generalized to other populations, settings, or contexts beyond the sample used in the research.
3. **Construct Validity:** The extent to which the operationalization of variables accurately represents the theoretical concepts or constructs under investigation.

## **Reliability (Trustworthiness) in Quantitative Research:**

1. **Internal Consistency Reliability:** The extent to which items within a measure or scale consistently measure the same underlying construct. This is often assessed using techniques such as Cronbach's alpha for scales with multiple items.
2. **Test-Retest Reliability:** The extent to which the results of a measure or test are consistent over time when administered to the same individuals or groups under the same conditions

## **Validity in Qualitative Research:**

1. **Credibility:** Similar to internal validity in quantitative research, credibility refers to the extent to which the findings accurately represent the participants' perspectives, experiences, or realities.
2. **Transferability:** Comparable to external validity, transferability assesses the extent to which the findings can be applied or transferred to other contexts or settings.
3. **Confirmability:** Similar to construct validity, confirmability refers to the extent to which the findings are grounded in the data and free from researcher bias or influence.

## **Reliability (Trustworthiness) in Qualitative Research:**

1. **Dependability:** Similar to reliability in quantitative research, dependability refers to the consistency and stability of the

research findings over time and across different researchers or contexts.

2. **Inter-coder Reliability:** The extent to which different researchers or coders analyzing the same data reach similar conclusions or interpretations. This is often assessed using techniques such as coding comparisons or Cohen's kappa for categorical data.

### **Ensuring Validity and Reliability/Trustworthiness:**

1. **Triangulation:** Using multiple sources of data, methods, or researchers to cross-validate findings and enhance the credibility and dependability of the research.
2. **Member Checking:** Seeking feedback or validation from participants regarding the accuracy and authenticity of the research findings to enhance credibility and confirmability.
3. **Reflexivity:** Engaging in critical self-reflection and transparency about the researcher's biases, assumptions, and values throughout the research process to mitigate the risk of researcher bias.
4. **Pilot Testing:** Conducting preliminary tests or trials of research instruments or procedures to identify and address potential sources of error or ambiguity.

By addressing validity and reliability/trustworthiness concerns, researchers can ensure the integrity and credibility of their research

findings, regardless of whether they employ quantitative or qualitative methodologies.

## **References**

References are detailed citations of works (e.g., books, articles, websites) that have been consulted or cited within a piece of academic writing. They typically appear at the end of a paper or document in a section commonly titled "References," "Bibliography," or "Works Cited." References provide readers with the necessary information to locate and verify the sources cited by the author.

Referencing involves citing and acknowledging the sources of information used in academic writing.

## **Documentation styles?**

A documentation style is a standard approach to the citation of sources that the author of a paper has consulted, abstracted, or quoted from. It prescribes methods for citing references within the text, providing a list of works cited at the end of the paper, and even formatting headings and margins. Using sources in your research paper is an important part of building and supporting your argument. Different academic disciplines use different documentation styles. It is important to note that different disciplines use different documentation styles. However the most commonly used documentation style by most universities is called the American Psychological Association (APA) The mechanics of citing are

complicated, and vary in each format. Most Universities use APA but they do not restrict its usage to disciplines where APA is not applicable. Documentation/referencing styles may include:

- i. American Psychological Association (APA)
- ii. University of Chicago Press (Chicago Manual of Style)
- iii. Modern Language Association (MLA)
- iv. Council of Science Editors (CSE)
- v. American Chemical Society (ACS)

## **What is Citation?**

A citation is both a signpost and an acknowledgement. As a signpost, it signals the location of your source (Source is the book or internet site or journal you have gotten your information from). As an acknowledgement, citing reveals that you are indebted to that source.

A citation can appear in different formats: within the text (in-text citation) at the bottom of the page (footnotes), or at the end of the paper (endnotes).

We cite when we have used other people's works in academic writing.

## **Why cite**

### **Reasons Why Citation is Important**

Citation is important because it is the basis of academics, that is, the pursuit of knowledge. In the academic endeavor, individuals look at evidence and reason about that evidence in their own individual ways. That is, taking what is already known, established, or thought, they use their reasoning power to create new knowledge. In creating this knowledge, they must cite their sources accurately for three main reasons:

#### **Reason One: Because ideas are the currency of academia**

Citing sources is important because the core of academia is ideas. Citing enables us to credit other writers for their contributions. When a writer cites ideas, that writer honors those who initiated the ideas.

#### **Reason Two: Because failing to cite is considered as plagiarism (Academic stealing)**

Using someone else's idea without giving credit violates that person's ownership of the idea. To understand this violation, envision the following scenario: You and your friend are discussing some ideas from class during lunch one day, and you make what you consider to be a particularly insightful observation. During class discussion that afternoon, your friend brings up your observation but neglects to point out that it is yours, not his. The professor compliments your friend on

his clear and insightful thinking. You likely to feel that there's something unfair about your friend's claim that your idea was his or her own. That sense of violation you feel, the sense that something valuable has been stolen from you, suggests why failure to cite sources hurts another person.

**Reason Three: Because academics need to be able to trace the genealogy of ideas.**

### **How to cite**

According to APA style, there are two ways to communicate to your reader that you've used others' work:

1. In your text, you need to show that you've paraphrased or directly quoted someone else.
2. At the very end of your paper, you need to provide a list of all the articles, chapters, books, and websites that you've used within the body of your text.

### **When to Cite**

- In-Text: within the text
- When paraphrasing someone else.

When you paraphrase someone else, you're putting someone else's work in your own words. To make that happen, you need to select only the most important information and do one or both of the following:

- Completely change the original wording.
- Completely change the order of the ideas and words.

It is important to paraphrase because it shows your readers that you can extract an author's ideas into a tight, compact sentence. While it does require more effort than directly quoting an author, it is an important skill that you have to demonstrate when you're writing an academic paper.

To signal to your reader that you have paraphrased an author, you need to indicate the author and the year that the article/chapter/book/website was published.

- Directly quoting someone else

When you directly quote someone else, you need to keep all or almost all of the original wording intact. Directly quoting others' work is effective, especially when the original wording is powerful or when there is no way for you to reasonably paraphrase the original wording.

To signal to your reader that you have directly quoted someone, you need to use quotation marks around the quoted words and you need to indicate the author, the year that the article/chapter/book/website was published, and the page number or URL where the quotation can be found.



## **How to use direct quotation**

1. Use active voice, the use of the personal pronoun “I” instead of “this researcher” is acceptable. The use of “he” or “she” when presenting the work of other authors is discouraged.
2. Block quotations should be single spaced, not double spaced, and should be indented on the left (only) by 1/2 inch

## **APA Guidelines**

- a. Page margins are to be one inch for the top, bottom, and right side. The left margin is 1.5” in your thesis.
- b. Start page numbering on the first page of text (not the title page), with it and each subsequent page (including the reference list) numbered at the top right margin;
- c. Any tables or figures should be inserted into text, close to the place cited (but where they are not broken by a page break) if possible.
- d. Reference lists should be single spaced, with double spacing between citations and arranged alphabetically

## **Citation and Referencing**

**One Author** Williams, J. H. (2008). Employee engagement: Improving participation in safety. *Professional Safety*, 53(12), 40-45.

## **Two to Seven Authors [List all authors]**

Keller, T. E., Cusick, G. R., & Courtney, M. E. (2007). Approaching the transition to adulthood: Distinctive profiles of adolescents aging out of the child welfare system. *Social Services Review*, 81, 453-484.

## **Eight or More Authors [List the first six authors, ... and the last author]**

Wolchik, S. A., West, S. G., Sandler, I. N., Tein, J.-Y., Coatsworth, D., Lengua, L.,...Griffin, W. A. (2000). An experimental evaluation of theory-based mother and mother-child programs for children of divorce. *Journal of Consulting and Clinical Psychology*, 68, 843- 856.

## **Magazine Article**

Mathews, J., Berrett, D., & Brillman, D. (2005, May 16). Other winning equations. *Newsweek*, 145(20), 58-59.

## **Books, Chapters in Books, Reports.**

### **General Form**

**Author, A. A. (Year). Title of work. Location: Publisher.**

### **One Author**

Alexie, S. (1992). *The business of fancydancing: Stories and poems.*

Brooklyn, NY: Hang Loose Press.

### **Corporate Author with an Edition and Published by the Corporate Author**

American Psychiatric Association. (1994). Diagnostic and statistical manual of mental disorders (4th ed.). Washington, DC: Author.

### **Anonymous Author**

Dorland's illustrated medical dictionary (31st ed.). (2007). Philadelphia, PA: Saunders.

### **Chapter in a Book**

Booth-LaForce, C., & Kerns, K. A. (2009). Child-parent attachment relationships, peer relationships, and peer-group functioning. In K. H. Rubin, W. M. Bukowski, & B. Laursen (Eds.), *Handbook of peer interactions, relationships, and groups* (pp. 490-507). New York, NY: Guilford Press.

General Format - Databases

**Author, A. A., Author, B. B., & Author, C. C. (Year). Title of article.**

Name of Journal, xx, xxx-xxx. doi:xxxxxxxxxx

### **Article Retrieved from an Online Database**

**NOTE: Use the article's DOI (Digital Object Identifier), the unique code given by the publisher to a specific article.**

Senior, B., & Swailes, S. (2007). Inside management teams: Developing a teamwork survey instrument. *British Journal of Management*, 18, 138-

153. doi:10.1111/j.1467-8551.2006.00507.x

**NOTE: Use the journal's home page URL (or web address) if there is no DOI.**

### **OTHER ONLINE RESOURCES**

#### **General Form**

**Author, A. A. (Year). Title of work. Retrieved from web address**

#### **Online Report from a Nongovernmental Organization**

Kenney, G. M., Cook, A., & Pelletier, J. (2009). Prospects for reducing uninsured rates among children: How much can premium assistance programs help? Retrieved from Urban Institute website: [http:// www.urban.org/url.cfm?ID=411823](http://www.urban.org/url.cfm?ID=411823)

## **Online Report with No Author Identified and No Date**

GVU's 10th WWW user survey. (n.d.). Retrieved from [http://www.cc.gatech.edu/user\\_surveys/survey-1998-10/](http://www.cc.gatech.edu/user_surveys/survey-1998-10/)

**Web Sites in Parenthetical Citations:** To cite an entire Web site (but not a specific document within the site), it is sufficient to give the URL of the site in the text.

## **Reference Citations in Text**

APA utilizes a system of brief referencing in the text of a paper, whether one is paraphrasing or providing a direct quotation from another author's work. Citations in the text usually consist of the name of the author(s) and the year of publication. The page number is added when utilizing a direct quotation.

## **Citing Secondary Sources**

When citing in the text a work discussed in a secondary source, give both the primary and the secondary sources.

In the example below, the study by Seidenberg and McClelland were mentioned in an article by Coltheart, Curtis, Atkins, & Haller.

‘Seidenberg and McClelland’s study (as cited in Coltheart, Curtis, Atkins, & Haller, 1993) provided a glimpse into the world.’

In the references page, you would cite only the secondary source you read and not the original study.

‘Coltheart, M., Curtis, B., Atkins, P., & Haller, M. (1993). Models of reading aloud: Dual-route and parallel-distributed processing approaches. *Psychological Review*, 100, 589-608.’

## **Appendices**

The appendices section shall be comprised of, among other things, the budget for the proposed study and the proposed work plan, including the time frame and data collection instrument(s)/tool(s). The budget shall state out the sources of funds required for the proposed study from data collection to final binding. The proposed work plan shall portray the chronology of events from data collection to the writing of the report, dissertation or thesis.

# Coherence

Coherence has to do with the way in which information presented in a paper is organized to move the reader as effortlessly as possible from beginning to end. Coherent writing is easier to read because the ideas flow seamlessly from one to another. Coherence in scholarly writing refers to the logical organization, clarity, and interconnectedness of ideas within a piece of academic writing. A coherent text flows smoothly from one point to the next, guiding readers through a clear and cohesive argument or narrative. Here's a breakdown of key aspects of coherence in scholarly writing:

1. **Logical Organization:** A coherent academic piece follows a logical structure that guides readers through the author's arguments, evidence, and conclusions. This typically involves an introduction that sets the stage, body paragraphs that present and develop key points, and a conclusion that summarizes the main arguments and implications.
2. **Unity of Ideas:** Coherent writing maintains unity by ensuring that each paragraph or section contributes directly to the central thesis or research question. Ideas are connected logically, with transitions that guide readers from one point to the next.

3. **Clear Transitions:** Effective transitions between paragraphs, sentences, and sections help to maintain coherence by signaling shifts in topic, perspective, or argumentation. Transitional phrases, such as "however," "in contrast," or "furthermore," bridge ideas and enhance the flow of the text.
4. **Consistent Tone and Style:** Coherent scholarly writing maintains a consistent tone and style throughout the text, reflecting the conventions of the discipline and the author's voice. Consistency in language, terminology, and writing conventions contributes to clarity and readability.
5. **Use of Signposting:** Signposting involves explicitly signaling to readers the structure and progression of the text. This can include previewing key points in an introduction, providing topic sentences at the beginning of paragraphs, and summarizing main points in a conclusion.
6. **Effective Paragraph Structure:** Well-structured paragraphs in coherent writing contain a clear topic sentence that introduces the main idea, supporting evidence or analysis, and a concluding sentence that summarizes or transitions to the next point. Each paragraph contributes to the overall coherence and flow of the argument.
7. **Integration of Evidence:** Coherent scholarly writing integrates evidence seamlessly into the text, providing support for claims and assertions through citations, examples, data, or



quotations. Evidence is presented logically and analyzed critically within the context of the author's argument.

8. **Reader-Focused Approach:** Coherent writing takes into account the needs and expectations of the intended audience, providing explanations, definitions, and context as necessary to ensure understanding. Clarity and accessibility are prioritized without sacrificing depth or complexity.

Overall, coherence in scholarly writing is achieved through careful planning, organization, and attention to detail, ensuring that the text effectively communicates the author's ideas and contributes to the scholarly conversation in the field

## **Organizational Structure**

Organizational structure refers to the order of presentation. Poor structure equates to poor writing, regardless of the importance or relevance of the topic. Authors should use their outlines or informal plans to organize their papers initially. As they develop their material, if more logical or effective approaches are discovered, authors can modify their original plans to improve coherence.

## **Paragraph Unity**

Paragraph unity is achieved by structuring paragraphs to ensure that each has only one main idea,

usually stated in a topic sentence. That topic sentence is followed by specific details. In writing paragraphs, authors may organize their

material based on one of several patterns. The following list of patterns is by no means exhaustive:

## **Final Words**

Scholarly writing is a process, not just a product. In producing academic or scholarly works, authors should remember to do the following to enhance their success.

1. Obtain copies of the general and specific style guides from the department, school, or publisher before beginning research or writing.
2. Follow the requirements within the style guides.
3. Research the subject thoroughly, noting all required information for citations and reference list entries needed in the finished work.
4. Develop a sound thesis statement.
5. Develop a sound organizational plan for the work.
6. Write the first draft according to the plan.
7. Revise the work one or more times to obtain the clearest, most succinct product possible.
8. Edit the work to ensure correction of any grammatical, mechanical, stylistic, and formatting issues.
9. Submit the work according to the specific requirements of the school or publisher.

Producing a well-written scholarly piece is as much art as craft. Authors must engage in the activity regularly to maintain and improve their skills. By following the general information in this paper and the

specific requirements of the school or publisher, authors should hone the writing abilities needed to advance in their chosen professions.

## **Scientific Writing**

Scientific writing is a technical form of writing that communicates scientific information to other scientists in a document, book or presentation in written form. It requires a lot of research and exact wording and can include grant requests, peer reviews and summarized findings.

Scientific writing is a technical form of writing that communicates scientific information to other scientists in a document, book or presentation in written form. It requires a lot of research and exact wording and can include grant requests, peer reviews and summarized findings. While there are many documents that fall under the category of scientific writing, typically anything written in a research environment is scientific writing

## **Features/characteristics of scientific writing**

Scientific writing has certain features that help set it apart from other technical documents and styles of writing. These features typically include:

### **1. Precision**

Scientific writing relies on unequivocal accuracy, as the mission of a scientific document is to provide relevant and factual information to

the scientific community. Precision in scientific literature can take the form of the following writing elements:

- **Objectivity:** A scientific paper takes an objective viewpoint toward the subject, meaning that it doesn't offer the author's opinion. Instead, the author focuses on presenting and analyzing facts.
- **Thoroughness:** Scientific writers offer as many details in their publications as are necessary for their readers to thoroughly understand the subject.
- **Exact language:** A scientific paper minimizes the use of figurative or imaginative language. Scientific writers use words and phrases that convey their literal meaning.

## 2. Clarity

Scientific writers typically write for their peers, but even scientists expect clarity in the writing. The writer clarifies the meaning of any uncommon terms and summarizes the results of the writing in a way that anyone can understand. Writers explain any experimentation and its results, using the metric system for measurements to ensure consistency and readability for a worldwide audience. Clarity also helps the writer establish a trusted voice within the scientific community.

## 3. Peer reviews

Some scientific documents contain peer-reviewed changes or information directly within the document. Colleagues in the same industry often review one another's work to verify the results of experiments, confirm hypotheses or hold one another accountable for

honesty and clarity. Typically, a writer includes any peer requests or findings in revised versions of the document to uphold their commitment to honesty and integrity in the face of new information.

#### **4. Primary audience**

A scientific document is almost always for a specific audience. Good scientific writing includes information that applies to the audience and is easy to understand. For example, if a pharmaceutical scientist is creating a scientific document for a drug in the approval stage, the primary audience is the drug evaluation board. However, colleagues may also read the document for peer review and consumers may view it for personal interest. This requires a good balance of scientific terms and common language to ensure readability.

#### **5. Formal language**

Keeping language formal in scientific writing helps maintain professionalism on behalf of the writer. Using common language can help appeal to a larger audience, but be mindful of the words and phrases you use in your writing. You can use synonyms for simple words and avoid things such as slang or idioms. Formal language also includes proper punctuation and grammar, so check your work before you submit it.

#### **6. Organization**

Scientific papers follow a clear organizational structure as per the normal thesis writing format.

## 7. Awareness of existing scientific literature

Most scientific authors express their awareness of the existing body of scientific literature and knowledge pertinent to their studies. Science is a continually evolving field where professionals continually make new discoveries, studies, connections and experiments based on the findings of previous scientists. A scientific author references the existing studies or experiments related to their findings and explains how their research connects to, revises or builds upon previous knowledge.

### Basic Rules of Scientific Writing

The hard truth is that scientific writing can be difficult even when you've already learnt the ropes of it, so you might as well be acquainted with the basics:

1. The **writing should be clear and precise**. While your sentences may be longer, they should still be coherent and have a point. Your audience is well educated and can conquer paragraph sentences, but no one can deal with text that goes on and on and never reaches its destination.
2. **There should be a clear organizational structure**. This includes the introduction, main part, conclusion, and relevant sub-chapters. The structure should follow a logical progression of studies, experiments, arguments, and discussion of results.

3. **The implicit should be explicit.** As a researcher, I guarantee you that once you get deep into your topic, everything makes perfect sense, and sometimes that spills into writing. Remember, **just because something is obvious to you doesn't mean it is as clear to someone else.** Don't leave people guessing; make your thoughts explicit. This sometimes also includes explaining in a few brief sentences certain key theories you're dealing with. Your paper should not force your readers to google a million other names you're alluding to – it should be clear why they're important.
4. **The writing must be neutral.** Avoid any slang or jargon like the plague. In fact, avoid it even more than the plague (because we've seen how people have dealt with Covid), write in neutral terms, and steer clear of colourful idiomatic expressions (anyone loves a good 'as dumb as a dodo', but even dodos have their time and place, and it's not a scientific paper).
5. **No plagiarism.** Here's my favourite thing to threaten students with. Any theft of intellectual property is illegal, and not only will it get you failed instantly, but it could also potentially land you with criminal charges. you avoid this by citing your sources properly (and using a plagiarism checker).

### **How to Use Tenses within Scientific Writing?**

One's tense will vary depending on what one is trying to convey within their paper or section of their paper. For example, the tense may change between the methods section and the discussion section.

## **Abstract --> Past tense**

The abstract is usually in the past tense due to it showing what has already been studied.

## **Introduction --> Present tense**

The introduction is usually in present tense due to the fact that you are presenting facts and background information on your research topic. By having this information in present tense, you are showing that you believe that this research is correct. Present tense should still be used even if the research you are speaking of is aged.

## **Methods --> Past tense**

In the methods section one would use past tense due to what they have done was in the past. It has been debated whether one should use active or passive voice. The scientific journal *Nature* states that one should use active voice as to convey the concepts more directly.

It can be beneficial to use passive when one wants to keep a similar subject in a series of sentences within a paragraph. Passive voice also allows one to help move words to emphasize them. Passive voice can also be useful when emphasizing the action but not the one doing the action.

## **Results --> Past tense**

Past tense would typically be used due to these results being found in the past



## **Discussion --> Present tense and past tense**

- One would use present tense if they are explaining why one cares about their results and why they are important
- One would use past tense to summarize one's results
- Example: "In the future to further this experiment, we would expand this project and expand our sample size in order to have a more solid base for our findings."

## **General Guidelines:**

1. **Maintain Consistency:** Choose one tense for each section of the manuscript and maintain consistency throughout.
2. **Use Tenses to Indicate Time Frames:** Select tenses that accurately reflect the timing of actions or events described in the text.
3. **Be Clear and Precise:** Use tenses that clearly convey the intended meaning and avoid ambiguity or confusion.
4. **Follow Journal Guidelines:** Some journals may have specific guidelines regarding the use of tenses in scientific writing. Be sure to consult the author guidelines for the target journal.

## **How to tackle writing problems**

Writing in the scientific domain can present various challenges, but there are several strategies to tackle common writing problems. Here are some tips to help you overcome challenges in scientific writing:

### **1. Start with a Clear Outline:**

Before diving into writing, create a detailed outline of your paper. This will help you organize your thoughts and provide a roadmap for your writing, making the process more manageable.

### **2. Understand Your Audience:**

Consider the knowledge level of your target audience. Tailor your language and level of detail accordingly. Strive for clarity and avoid unnecessary jargon that might hinder understanding.

### **3. Overcome Writer's Block:**

If you're struggling to start, focus on writing anything that comes to mind. You can always revise and refine later. Setting aside specific time blocks for writing and creating a conducive writing environment can also help overcome writer's block.

### **4. Seek Feedback:**

Share your work with peers, mentors, or colleagues. Constructive feedback can provide valuable insights into areas that need improvement, and it may help you identify blind spots in your writing.

## **5. Break Down the Writing Process:**

Tackle your writing in smaller, manageable sections. Start with the sections you find most comfortable or interesting. Breaking down the writing process can make it less overwhelming.

## **6. Edit and Revise:**

Scientific writing often involves multiple revisions. After completing a draft, take a break before revisiting it. This distance can help you review your work more objectively. Look for areas of improvement in clarity, structure, and coherence.

## **7. Manage Time Effectively:**

Set realistic writing goals and deadlines. Allocate specific time slots for writing, revising, and editing. Consistent, disciplined efforts can help you make steady progress.

## **8. Use Writing Tools:**

Take advantage of writing tools, such as grammar checkers and citation management software. These tools can help you catch errors, ensure consistency, and save time on formatting.

## **9. Address Perfectionism:**

Accept that your first draft doesn't need to be perfect. Perfectionism can hinder progress and lead to procrastination. Focus on getting your ideas down on paper and refine them during the revision process.

## **10. Stay Informed About Writing Standards:**

Familiarize yourself with the specific writing standards and guidelines in your field. Different scientific disciplines may have varying expectations regarding style, formatting, and citation.

## **11. Read Scientific Literature:**

Regularly read papers and articles in your field to understand different writing styles and structures. Analyzing well-written scientific papers can provide insights into effective communication.

## **12. Use Writing Prompts:**

If you're stuck on a particular section, use writing prompts to guide your thinking. These prompts can help you generate ideas and overcome mental blocks.

Remember that writing is a skill that improves with practice. Be patient with yourself, and don't hesitate to seek support from mentors, writing groups, or writing centers at your institution. Overcoming writing challenges is a gradual process, and each iteration of your work brings you closer to a polished, effective scientific document.

## **How to write a structured and coherent academic text**

Writing a structured and coherent academic text requires careful planning and attention to various elements. a step-by-step guide to help you create a well-organized academic document include:

## **1. Understand the Purpose and Audience:**

Clearly identify the purpose of your academic text (e.g., research paper, essay, thesis) and the target audience. Tailor your writing style, tone, and level of detail accordingly.

## **2. Create a Strong Thesis or Research Question:**

Clearly articulate the main argument, thesis, or research question of your text. This central idea should guide the entire document and provide a clear focus for your readers.

## **3. Develop a Detailed Outline:**

Create a comprehensive outline that includes major sections and subsections. Each section should correspond to a specific aspect of your argument, research, or analysis. This will serve as a roadmap for your writing.

## **4. Introduction:**

- **Hook the Reader:** Begin with an engaging introduction that captures the reader's attention and introduces the topic.
- **Thesis Statement:** Clearly state your thesis or main argument in a concise and compelling manner.
- **Context and Significance:** Provide background information to contextualize your work and highlight its significance.

## **5. Body:**

- **Logical Flow:** Organize your content in a logical sequence that follows your outlined structure.

- **Transitions:** Use clear and effective transitions between paragraphs and sections to maintain a smooth flow of ideas.
- **Subheadings:** Clearly label subsections with informative subheadings to guide the reader through your argument or analysis.
- **Evidence and Support:** Support your claims and arguments with relevant evidence, examples, and citations from reputable sources.

## 6. Conclusion:

- **Summarize Key Points:** Summarize the main points and arguments from your text without introducing new information.
- **Reiterate Thesis:** Reinforce your thesis or main argument, emphasizing its importance.
- **Call to Action or Future Research (if applicable):** Suggest potential implications of your work or propose directions for future research, if relevant.

## 7. Clarity and Coherence:

- **Clear Language:** Use clear and concise language. Avoid unnecessary jargon and complex sentence structures.
- **Consistent Terminology:** Ensure consistent use of terminology and definitions throughout the text.

- **Logical Connections:** Make sure there is a logical connection between sentences and paragraphs. Check that each point logically follows the previous one.

## **8. Proofreading and Editing:**

- **Revise for Clarity:** Read your text critically to identify areas that may be unclear or confusing. Revise accordingly.
- **Grammar and Style:** Check for grammatical errors, typos, and adherence to the appropriate writing style (e.g., APA, MLA, Chicago).
- **Formatting:** Ensure proper formatting, including headings, citations, and references.

## **9. Peer Review:**

Seek feedback from peers, colleagues, or mentors. A fresh perspective can help identify areas that may need improvement.

## **10. Citations and References:**

Ensure accurate and consistent citation of sources throughout the text. Follow the required citation style guidelines.

## **11. Revision:**

Be open to revising your work. Multiple drafts may be necessary to refine your academic text to its highest quality.

Remember that coherence and structure are essential for effective academic writing. Regularly review and revise your work to enhance clarity and maintain a logical flow of ideas throughout the document.

### **Efficient writing strategies**

Efficient writing involves employing strategies that optimize the process of generating written content, ensuring clarity, coherence, and effectiveness. Here are several efficient writing strategies:

#### **1. Pre-Writing Planning:**

**Outline:** Before starting to write, create an outline to organize your thoughts and structure your content. This helps in maintaining a logical flow and prevents the writing process from becoming disjointed.

**Research:** Gather relevant information and conduct any necessary research beforehand to have a solid foundation for your writing.

#### **2. Clear Thesis Statement:**

Clearly state your main idea or argument in a thesis statement. This helps guide your writing and provides readers with a roadmap for what to expect.

#### **3. Concise and Precise Language:**

Use clear, concise language to convey your ideas. Avoid unnecessary words or overly complex sentences that can confuse readers.

#### **4. Active Voice:**



Prefer the active voice over the passive voice to make your writing more direct and engaging. Active voice typically involves a clear subject performing an action.

### **5. Revision and Editing:**

Plan time for revision and editing. After completing a draft, review and revise for clarity, coherence, and organization. Editing helps catch errors in grammar, punctuation, and style.

### **6. Avoid Procrastination:**

Set realistic deadlines and avoid procrastination. Breaking down writing tasks into smaller, manageable goals can help maintain a steady writing pace.

### **7. Know Your Audience:**

Understand your target audience and adjust your writing style and tone accordingly. Tailoring your content to your audience enhances its impact and effectiveness.

### **8. Use Writing Tools:**

Leverage writing tools such as grammar and spell checkers to catch errors. Additionally, tools like style guides can help maintain consistency in formatting and language use.

### **9. Peer Review:**

Seek feedback from peers or colleagues. Another set of eyes can identify areas for improvement, offer different perspectives, and help ensure your message is clear to others.

## **10. Mindful Transitions:**

Use transitional phrases and sentences to guide readers smoothly from one point to the next. Well-crafted transitions enhance the overall flow and coherence of your writing.

## **11. Read Aloud:**

Reading your work aloud can help identify awkward phrasing, unclear sentences, or areas where the flow can be improved. This technique engages multiple senses and can lead to better overall clarity.

## **12. Focus on Key Points:**

Prioritize key points and focus on conveying them effectively. Avoid unnecessary details that might distract from the main message.

## **13. Continuous Learning:**

Stay open to learning and improving your writing skills. Regularly reading quality writing and seeking feedback contribute to ongoing development.

Efficient writing is a skill that improves with practice and a conscious effort to incorporate effective strategies. By following these guidelines, writers can enhance the clarity, impact, and overall quality of their written communication.

## **Scientific Publishing**

Scientific publishing is a critical aspect of the scientific research process, as it involves disseminating research findings to the wider academic community and beyond. Writing a scientific article, research paper, or proposal requires adherence to specific rules and regulations to ensure clarity, accuracy, and ethical conduct. The key considerations for scientific writing include:

### **Structure of Scientific Papers:**

The structure of scientific papers generally follows a standardized format to effectively communicate research findings. While variations may exist based on specific journal or conference requirements, the following is a common structure for scientific papers:

#### **1. Title:**

Represents the main focus of the research. Should be concise, informative, and accurately reflect the content of the paper.

#### **2. Abstract:**

- Provides a brief summary of the entire paper.
- Typically includes the purpose, objectives, methods, results, and conclusions.
- Helps readers quickly assess the relevance and significance of the study.

### 3. **Keywords:**

- Lists relevant keywords or phrases that capture the essence of the research.
- Aids in indexing and searchability.

### 4. **Introduction:**

- Offers background information on the topic.
- States the research question or hypothesis.
- Provides the rationale for the study and highlights its significance.

### 5. **Literature Review:**

- Reviews relevant literature to establish context.
- Demonstrates awareness of existing research and identifies gaps or areas requiring further investigation.
- May include theoretical frameworks or conceptual models.

### 6. **Methods:**

- Describes the research design, methodology, and materials used.
- Provides sufficient detail for replication.
- Includes information on participants, data collection procedures, and statistical analyses.

### 7. **Results:**

- Presents the findings in a clear and organized manner.
- Uses tables, figures, and graphs to illustrate data.
- Avoids interpretation at this stage.

#### 8. **Discussion:**

- Interprets the results in the context of the research question or hypothesis.
- Discusses the implications of the findings.
- Compares results to existing literature.
- Acknowledges limitations of the study.

#### 9. **Conclusion:**

- Summarizes the main findings.
- Provides recommendations for future research.
- Reinforces the significance of the study.

#### 10. **References:**

- Cites all sources referenced in the paper.
- Follows a specific citation style (e.g., APA, MLA, Chicago).

#### 11. **Acknowledgments:**

- Optionally includes acknowledgments for funding, assistance, or resources.

## **12. Appendices:**

- Includes supplementary material such as additional data, questionnaires, or detailed methods.
- Used when the main text would become too lengthy with such details.

Following this structured format enhances the clarity and organization of scientific papers, allowing readers to navigate the content efficiently. Researchers should always refer to specific journal guidelines or conference requirements for any variations or additional sections specific to the publication venue.

### **Rules for Scientific Writing:**

Scientific writing follows specific rules to ensure clarity, precision, and adherence to ethical standards. These rules contribute to the effective communication of research findings and the credibility of scientific publications. Here are key rules for scientific writing:

#### **1. Clarity and Precision:**

- Use clear and concise language to convey complex ideas.
- Define technical terms and concepts to ensure understanding.
- Avoid unnecessary jargon that may confuse readers.

#### **2. Objectivity:**

- Present findings objectively without personal bias.
- Use the third person to maintain a neutral tone.

- Focus on facts and evidence rather than personal opinions.

### **3. Data Presentation:**

- Clearly label and present data using appropriate tables and figures.
- Ensure consistency in formatting and style throughout the document.
- Use descriptive statistics and graphs to enhance clarity.

### **4. Citations and References:**

- Properly cite and reference all sources used in the paper.
- Follow a specific citation style (e.g., APA, MLA, Chicago) as per journal or conference guidelines.
- Provide sufficient details in the references for readers to locate the cited sources.

### **5. Grammar and Style:**

- Adhere to grammatical rules to maintain clarity and professionalism.
- Maintain a consistent writing style throughout the document.
- Pay attention to sentence structure, punctuation, and word choice.

### **6. Logical Organization:**

- Follow a logical structure with a clear introduction, methods, results, discussion, and conclusion.

- Use headings and subheadings to guide readers through the paper.
- Ensure a smooth and coherent flow of ideas.

## **7. Objectivity in Interpretation:**

- Interpret results objectively and avoid overgeneralization.
- Clearly distinguish between findings and interpretations.
- Acknowledge limitations and uncertainties in the study.

## **8. Avoiding Plagiarism:**

- Never present others' work as your own.
- Properly cite and reference all sources, including direct quotes and paraphrased information.
- Understand the specific rules on plagiarism outlined by the journal or conference.

## **9. Research Ethics:**

- Conduct research ethically, following institutional guidelines.
- Ensure the well-being and informed consent of human or animal subjects.
- Clearly state any potential conflicts of interest.

## **10. Consistency and Reproducibility:**



- Ensure consistency in terminology, abbreviations, and units of measurement.
- Provide sufficient detail in the methods section for others to reproduce the study.
- Clearly describe the procedures and conditions of the study.

#### **11. Conciseness:**

- Avoid unnecessary repetition or redundancy.
- Eliminate superfluous words to maintain a concise writing style.
- Keep the focus on essential information.

#### **12. Review and Revision:**

- Plan for multiple rounds of review and revision.
- Seek feedback from colleagues, mentors, or peers to enhance the quality of the manuscript.
- Revise for clarity, coherence, and adherence to guidelines.

#### **13. Adherence to Journal Guidelines:**

- Follow the specific guidelines provided by the target journal or conference.
- Pay attention to formatting requirements, word limits, and other editorial instructions.

By adhering to these rules, scientists and researchers can ensure that their writing is transparent, credible, and contributes meaningfully to the scientific community. Following ethical standards and maintaining a high level of clarity and precision are crucial aspects of effective scientific writing.

## **Ethical Considerations**

Ethical considerations in scholarly and scientific writing are essential to ensure integrity, transparency, and responsible conduct in research. Addressing ethical issues helps maintain the trustworthiness of the research process and protects the rights and welfare of research participants and other stakeholders. Here are some key ethical considerations in scholarly and scientific writing:

1. **Research Integrity:** Researchers must uphold high standards of integrity in all aspects of their work, including data collection, analysis, interpretation, and reporting. This involves avoiding fabrication, falsification, plagiarism, and other forms of research misconduct.
2. **Authorship and Acknowledgment:** Properly crediting individuals who have contributed to the research is essential. Authorship should be based on substantial contributions to the conception, design, execution, or interpretation of the study. All contributors should be acknowledged appropriately, including those who provided support or resources but do not meet the criteria for authorship.

3. **Informed Consent:** When conducting research involving human participants, informed consent must be obtained from all participants before data collection begins. Participants should be fully informed about the purpose, procedures, risks, benefits, and confidentiality of the study, and they should voluntarily agree to participate without coercion or undue influence.
4. **Confidentiality and Privacy:** Researchers must protect the confidentiality and privacy of research participants by ensuring that sensitive information is handled securely and anonymized or de-identified when necessary. Confidentiality agreements should be established with participants to safeguard their data.
5. **Conflict of Interest:** Researchers should disclose any potential conflicts of interest that could influence the design, conduct, or reporting of the research. Conflicts of interest may arise from financial relationships, personal relationships, or other competing interests that could compromise the objectivity or integrity of the research.
6. **Ethical Treatment of Subjects:** Researchers have a responsibility to treat research participants with respect, dignity, and sensitivity. They should minimize harm and discomfort to participants and ensure that their well-being is prioritized throughout the research process.
7. **Compliance with Ethical Guidelines:** Researchers should adhere to relevant ethical guidelines, regulations, and institutional policies governing research conduct. This includes

obtaining approval from institutional review boards (IRBs) or ethics committees before conducting research involving human participants or animals.

8. **Data Management and Sharing:** Researchers should responsibly manage and share research data to promote transparency, reproducibility, and the advancement of knowledge. This may involve archiving data in public repositories, providing access to data upon request, and ensuring the accuracy and integrity of data reporting.
9. **Responsible Publication Practices:** Authors should ensure that their manuscripts are original, accurate, and transparently reported. They should avoid duplicate publication, redundant publication, salami slicing, and other practices that could undermine the integrity of the scientific literature.
10. **Peer Review and Editorial Integrity:** Editors, reviewers, and authors have a shared responsibility to uphold the integrity of the peer review process and ensure that published research meets high ethical and methodological standards. Reviewers should provide fair, constructive, and unbiased feedback, while editors should maintain editorial independence and transparency in decision-making.
11. **Authorship:** Clearly define authorship criteria, and ensure that all listed authors have made a substantial contribution to the research.

12. **Plagiarism:** Avoid presenting others' work as your own. Properly cite and reference all sources.
13. **Non-Sexist Language:** Inclusive Language: Use language that is inclusive and avoids gender bias. For example, use "they" instead of "he" or "she" when referring to a singular person in a gender-neutral context.
14. **Avoiding Stereotypes:** Be mindful of language that may perpetuate stereotypes or reinforce gender norms.
15. **Balanced Representation:** Ensure balanced representation of both genders in examples and case studies.

## **Studying and writing at postgraduate level.**

Studying and writing at the postgraduate level requires a higher level of critical thinking, research, and analysis compared to undergraduate studies. The key aspects include;

### **1. Reading before writing:**

Postgraduate writing often involves diving deep into a subject matter, so thorough reading is essential before beginning to write. This reading helps you understand the existing literature, identify gaps in knowledge, and refine your research questions or arguments.

### **2. Finding appropriate literature:**

Utilize academic databases, libraries, online journals, and relevant websites to find scholarly literature. Keywords related to your topic

can help narrow down search results. Additionally, consulting with professors or experts in the field can provide valuable recommendations on seminal works or recent publications.

### **3. Making notes and recording excerpts:**

Develop a system for taking notes that works best for you. This could include traditional methods like handwritten notes, digital note-taking tools, or annotation features in PDF readers. As you read, record key ideas, arguments, evidence, and citations. Organize your notes by theme or topic to facilitate later reference.

### **4. Approaches to reading critically:**

Critical reading involves analyzing the strengths, weaknesses, and implications of scholarly texts. Some strategies for critical reading include:

- Questioning the author's assumptions and arguments.
- Evaluating the credibility and relevance of sources.
- Comparing different perspectives on the same topic.
- Identifying underlying biases or limitations.
- Considering the broader implications of the research findings.

Engage actively with the material by taking notes, highlighting important passages, and reflecting on how each piece of literature contributes to your understanding of the topic.

### **1. Recognizing your voice: ontology, epistemology, and positionality:**

**Ontology:** Ontology deals with the nature of reality and what exists. When writing, it's essential to consider your underlying assumptions about reality and how they shape your perspective. For instance, are you approaching your topic from a realist perspective, believing in an objective reality, or from a constructivist perspective, acknowledging multiple socially constructed realities?

**Epistemology:** Epistemology pertains to the nature of knowledge and how it is acquired. It's crucial to reflect on how you perceive knowledge and truth. Are you adopting a positivist stance, emphasizing empirical evidence and scientific inquiry, or do you lean towards interpretivism, valuing subjective experiences and meanings?

**Positionality:** Positionality refers to your social and cultural location, including factors like gender, race, class, and personal experiences, which influence your perspective. Being aware of your positionality helps you recognize biases and subjectivities in your writing. Embracing reflexivity allows you to acknowledge how your background shapes your interpretation of data and analysis.

## **2. Collaborative writing:**

Collaborative writing involves multiple authors working together to produce a single piece of written work. Effective collaboration requires clear communication, shared goals, and mutual respect among team members.

Utilize collaborative tools such as Google Docs or Microsoft Teams to facilitate real-time editing and feedback exchange.

Establish roles and responsibilities to ensure efficient workflow. Each team member may contribute to different aspects of the writing process, such as research, drafting, editing, or reviewing.

Foster a supportive and inclusive environment where all voices are heard and valued. Encourage open dialogue and constructive criticism to enhance the quality of the writing.

Set deadlines and milestones to keep the project on track and monitor progress. Regular check-ins and updates help prevent misunderstandings and ensure alignment with project objectives.

### **3. Writing tips and traps:**

- **Tips:**
- Start with a clear outline to organize your ideas and structure your writing.
- Write regularly to maintain momentum and avoid procrastination.
- Revise and edit systematically, focusing on clarity, coherence, and conciseness.
- Seek feedback from peers, mentors, or writing groups to gain different perspectives and improve your work.
- Practice self-care to prevent burnout and maintain productivity.
- **Traps:**



- **Falling into perfectionism:** Striving for perfection can hinder progress and lead to writer's block. Embrace imperfection and focus on making incremental improvements.
- **Ignoring feedback:** Dismissing constructive criticism deprives you of valuable insights for growth. Stay open to feedback and use it as a learning opportunity.
- **Over-reliance on sources:** While research is essential, avoid overwhelming your writing with excessive citations. Strike a balance between supporting evidence and your original analysis.
- **Procrastination:** Putting off writing tasks can result in last-minute rushes and compromised quality. Break large tasks into smaller, manageable steps and set realistic deadlines to stay on track.

By integrating these insights into your writing practice, you can develop a more nuanced understanding of your voice, engage effectively in collaborative endeavors, and navigate common pitfalls encountered in the writing process.

## **Technical aids to assist in writing assignments (6 hours)**

### **1. Reference management tools:**

- Reference management tools are software applications designed to help researchers and writers organize, manage, and cite sources in their writing assignments. These tools streamline

the process of collecting references, formatting citations, and creating bibliographies.

- Examples of popular reference management tools include Zotero, Mendeley, EndNote, and RefWorks. These tools allow users to import references from databases, websites, and PDFs, organize them into libraries or folders, and generate citations and bibliographies in various citation styles.
- Reference management tools enhance efficiency by eliminating manual citation formatting errors, facilitating collaboration among multiple authors, and providing features for annotating and tagging references for easy retrieval.

## **2. Data analysis tools:**

- Data analysis tools assist writers in analyzing and interpreting quantitative or qualitative data for their assignments. These tools range from simple spreadsheet software to advanced statistical packages and qualitative data analysis software.
- Spreadsheet software like Microsoft Excel or Google Sheets is commonly used for basic data manipulation, visualization, and analysis tasks. These tools are suitable for organizing data, performing calculations, and creating charts or graphs to present findings.
- Statistical packages such as SPSS, R, or SAS are more advanced tools tailored for statistical analysis. They offer a wide range of statistical tests, modeling techniques, and data

visualization options to explore relationships, test hypotheses, and generate insights from data.

- Qualitative data analysis software like NVivo or ATLAS.ti is designed for analyzing text-based data such as interview transcripts, survey responses, or literature reviews. These tools support coding, thematic analysis, and visualization of qualitative data to identify patterns, themes, and relationships.

### **3. Checking for resources on Webcourses:**

- Webcourses, also known as learning management systems (LMS), are online platforms used by educational institutions to deliver course materials, facilitate communication, and manage assessments.
- When writing assignments, students can utilize Webcourses to access course materials such as lecture notes, slides, readings, and assignment instructions provided by instructors.
- Webcourses often include features for accessing additional resources such as online textbooks, journal articles, multimedia content, and external websites relevant to the course topic.
- Students can also participate in discussion forums, collaborate with peers, submit assignments, and receive feedback from instructors through Webcourses, enhancing their learning experience and supporting their writing process.

reference management tools, data analysis tools, and Webcourses serve as valuable technical aids to assist writers in organizing,

analyzing, and accessing resources for their writing assignments, ultimately enhancing efficiency, accuracy, and productivity in academic writing endeavors.

## **Styles and types of writing (9 hours)**

Styles and types of writing broadly refer to the various approaches, techniques, and formats used to convey information, ideas, or stories through written language. These styles and types encompass a wide range of genres, formats, and purposes, catering to diverse audiences and contexts. Styles of writing refer to the particular manner or approach in which a piece of writing is crafted. They encompass aspects such as tone, voice, language, and rhetorical devices.

## **Different Types of Writing Styles**

### **1. Descriptive Writing**

Descriptive writing provides details about things such as an event, a setting, or a group of characters. More often than not, these writings are personal, short, and subjective. The main goal of descriptive writing is to make the readers feel like they're experiencing everything in the storyline themselves. For that, you need to provide a vivid image of the story to the readers.

### **2. Persuasive Writing**

Persuasive writing is used to convince the readers to believe in an idea (and implement it). This writing style is grounded in logical reasoning and works well for appealing to the reader on an emotional level. This

writing style is usually used in advertisements, reviews, recommendation letters, cover letters, company brochures, business proposals, and opinion columns.

### 3. Narrative Writing

Narrative writing is all about stories, connecting facts, teaching without explaining, and helping readers relate to the content. It often has a very clear beginning, middle, and end. Occasionally, writers also use flashbacks and foreshadowing as tools to engage with the audience, while some even use characters and dialogues to tell the story.

### 4. Expository Writing

As expository writing is all about facts and figures, it does not always make the best hook. However, as they say, there are exceptions to every rule. For instance, if you begin your **write-up with a shocking stat**, it is bound to grab a reader's attention. You can even use it along with persuasive and narrative writing, adding the power of logic to your stories.

### 5. Review Writing

This writing style aids the reader in deciding whether they should invest in a product/experience or not. It involves both subjective and objective thoughts in order to relay the authors 'experience.

### 6. Technical Writing

Most of us don't have the time to scour highly **technical and scientific writings** (instructional manuals, white papers, scientific

papers) to get the information that we need. You can use technical **writing to educate your employees** on how to conduct safety procedures, or to break down the research data into accessible text.

## **7. Objective Writing**

In **objective writing**, the author is supposed to remain neutral and unbiased and let the readers form their own opinions. In short, objective writing means sticking to facts instead of opinions.

This writing style tends to lack vagueness and is very to-the-point. For example, rather than ‘almost everyone voted for her’, it will be ‘83% of the residents voted for her’.

## **8. Subjective Writing**

**Subjective writing** originates from the personal experience and observation of the writer, and it gives the reader an insight into the author’s thinking process. This writing style often makes the readers feel like someone’s speaking to them personally. The words “I”, “you”, “us”, and “we are added throughout each line.

### **Key characteristics of academic writing:**

1. Academic writing is characterized by its formal tone, objective stance, and adherence to disciplinary conventions and standards.
2. Key features include clarity, precision, logical organization, and evidence-based argumentation.

3. Academic writing often involves critical analysis, synthesis of ideas from existing literature, and proper citation of sources to support arguments.

### **Postgraduate standard of writing:**

1. At the postgraduate level, writing is expected to demonstrate a high level of critical thinking, originality, and scholarly rigor.
2. Postgraduate writing should contribute new insights to the field, engage with complex ideas and debates, and demonstrate mastery of relevant literature and methodologies.
3. Expectations may vary depending on the discipline, but postgraduate writing typically involves in-depth research, sophisticated analysis, and clear communication of findings.

### **Types of writing:**

1. Academic writing: scholarly articles, research papers, theses, dissertations.
2. Creative writing: poetry, fiction, creative nonfiction.
3. Technical writing: manuals, reports, proposals, white papers.
4. Professional writing: business correspondence, memos, resumes, cover letters.
5. Persuasive writing: essays, opinion pieces, argumentative papers.

### **The basics of written presentation:**

1. Punctuation: Proper use of commas, periods, semicolons, colons, and other punctuation marks to clarify meaning and structure sentences.

2. Numbers: Consistent formatting of numbers according to style guidelines (e.g., APA, MLA).
3. The apostrophe: Use of apostrophes to indicate possession or contraction.
4. Foreign words and phrases: Proper integration of foreign words and phrases, italicization, and translation when necessary.
5. Abbreviations: Consistent use and explanation of popular abbreviations and acronyms.
6. Footnotes and endnotes: Proper formatting and citation of supplementary information, explanations, or references.

### **Essential writing skills:**

1. Summarizing: Succinctly conveying the main points of a text or argument.
2. Paraphrasing: Restating information in your own words while maintaining the original meaning.
3. Structuring: Organizing ideas logically and coherently into an introduction, body paragraphs, and conclusion.
4. Cohesion and coherence: Ensuring smooth flow and logical connections between sentences and paragraphs.
5. Developing an argument: Formulating a clear thesis statement, supporting it with evidence, and addressing counterarguments.
6. Drafting, editing, and proofreading: Iterative processes of writing, revising, and refining to improve clarity, coherence, and correctness.



## **Understanding assessment comments:**

1. Interpret feedback from instructors or reviewers to identify strengths and areas for improvement in your writing.
2. Address specific comments related to clarity, organization, argumentation, citation, grammar, and style in subsequent drafts.

## **Technical documents:**

1. Technical documents include manuals, reports, specifications, and instructions that convey technical information to a specific audience.
2. These documents require clear, precise language, visuals (e.g., diagrams, charts), and structured formats to facilitate understanding and usability.

## **Personal writing:**

Personal writing encompasses journals, diaries, memoirs, letters, and personal essays. It often reflects the writer's thoughts, feelings, experiences, and perspectives in a more informal and expressive style.

## **Common knowledge, plagiarism, and copyright:**

**Common knowledge:** Information that is widely known and accepted as fact within a particular field or culture does not require citation.

**Plagiarism:** Using someone else's ideas, words, or work without proper attribution is considered plagiarism and is a serious academic offense.

Copyright: Respecting copyright laws by properly citing sources, obtaining permissions for using copyrighted materials, and understanding fair use guidelines.

Incorporating these elements into your writing practice will help you develop effective communication skills and meet the standards expected in various writing contexts, whether academic, professional, or personal.

## **Publication Skills**

Publication skills include strong writing, editing, and proofreading abilities, along with research and critical thinking. Other essential skills involve understanding the publishing process, such as selecting the right journal and navigating peer review, as well as organization, communication, and using writing software.

## **Writing and content creation**

- **Writing and grammar:** Possess strong writing skills with a firm grasp of grammar, syntax, and a clear, coherent style.
- **Editing and proofreading:** The ability to edit for clarity, precision, and flow, and to proofread for final errors like spelling and punctuation.
- **Organization and structure:** Organize content logically with effective structure and avoid long, unfocused paragraphs.
- **Creativity and originality:** Develop unique ideas and present them in a compelling and original way.

- **Precision:** Use precise language and avoid unnecessary words or jargon.

## **Research and critical thinking**

- **Critical thinking:** Analyze information and form logical arguments to support conclusions.
- **Research skills:** Conduct thorough research to gather credible information for the publication.
- **Data literacy:** Understand and interpret data to support findings.

## **Process and project management**

- **Journal selection:** Know how to choose an appropriate journal based on its audience, scope, and requirements.
- **Peer review navigation:** Understand the peer-review process and how to respond to reviewer feedback.
- **Planning and outlining:** Plan and structure the writing process before drafting to ensure a focused and coherent final product.
- **Time management:** Manage deadlines effectively to complete projects on time.

## **Communication and professional skills**

- **Communication:** Effectively communicate with others, which is crucial for networking, building relationships, and explaining your work.

- **Collaboration:** Work with editors, colleagues, and other stakeholders to bring a project to publication.

## **The journal submission process**

The journal submission process involves preparing a manuscript according to the journal's guidelines, writing a compelling cover letter, and submitting both through the journal's online system. After submission, the manuscript undergoes initial editorial review and then peer review by experts. Based on the reviewers' feedback, the journal will either accept, reject, or request revisions, which must be addressed before resubmission.

### **1. Preparation**

- **Choose the right journal:** Select a journal with aims and scope that match your research.
- **Follow guidelines:** Adhere strictly to the journal's "guide for authors" for formatting, word count, and file types.
- **Prepare the manuscript:** Write a clear, concise manuscript and create a "blinded" version if required for the peer review type.
- **Write a cover letter:** Write a concise, one-page cover letter explaining the significance of your research and why it's a good fit for the journal.

### **2. Submission**

- **Create a profile:** Register on the journal's online submission system to create a user profile.

- **Start a new submission:** Go to the "new submission" section and select the appropriate manuscript type.
- **Enter metadata:** Provide information like title, abstract, and keywords, which may be auto-filled from your profile.
- **Upload files:** Upload the blinded manuscript and any other required documents, such as the cover letter, figures, and tables.
- **Confirm and submit:** Confirm all information and uploaded files are correct before finalizing the submission.

## **Peer-review criteria**

Peer review is the evaluation of a manuscript by experts in the same field to ensure quality, validity, and originality before publication. The criteria for peer review focus on the manuscript's scientific merit, including clarity, study design, interpretation of results, and significance, while reviewers are expected to be objective, constructive, and timely.

## **Peer review criteria for manuscripts**

- **Excellence and significance:** The research should be high-quality, novel, and contribute meaningfully to the field.

- **Scientific soundness:** The study design, methodology, and analysis must be robust and appropriate for the research question.
- **Clarity and organization:** The manuscript should be clearly written and well-structured, making the arguments easy to follow.
- **Interpretation of results:** The conclusions drawn should be logical and supported by the data presented.
- **Originality:** The work should be a new contribution to the existing body of knowledge.
- **Ethical considerations:** The research must meet all necessary ethical standards.

### **Criteria for good peer reviewers**

- **Expertise:** The reviewer must have sufficient knowledge in the subject area to provide a credible evaluation.
- **Objectivity:** The review should be impartial and free from personal bias or conflicts of interest.
- **Timeliness:** The reviewer must complete the evaluation within the specified timeframe.
- **Communication:** Feedback should be clear, constructive, and professional, providing actionable suggestions for improvement.

- **Attention to detail:** The reviewer should identify any errors, inconsistencies, or flaws in the manuscript.
- **Confidentiality:** The reviewer must treat the manuscript as confidential and not disclose its contents to others.

Peer review is the essential process of quality control in scholarly publishing, where a work is evaluated by independent experts (peers) in the field before it is published. Its purpose is to maintain the integrity and credibility of the academic record by ensuring the quality, validity, and significance of published research.



Dr. Thomas Gisemba Onsarigo holds a PhD in Sociology, Master of Arts in Sociology, Bachelor of Arts, LLB, a Postgraduate Diploma in Criminology and is also a Certified Mediator. A lecturer in Sociology at the catholic university of eastern Africa in department of social sciences and development studies, Nairobi. Has been

teaching Sociology, Criminology and Social work in various universities across Kenya and Uganda. Dr. Onsarigo is a prolific scholar with number of peer-reviewed publications books and book chapters. His research contributions extend to diverse areas including environmental sociology, criminology and human rights. As a member of a research team for the VIA Project Kenya chapter, he has led groundbreaking studies on violence against environmental defenders in mining regions such as Magadi and Mui Basin. He has also collaborated with organizations like the SOS Children's Villages, notably producing an influential study on children's reintegration in Uasin Gishu County. Beyond publishing, Dr. Onsarigo has contributed to curriculum development and innovative approaches in supervision and teaching undergraduate and post graduate. He has a commitment to bridge academia and practice that can foster both scholarly advancement and social transformation.





**Dr. Robert Onyango Ochieng'** is a Kenyan linguist with extensive academic and administrative experience. He holds a PhD in Linguistics, a Master of Arts in Linguistics, and a Bachelor of Education in English and Literature in English. Over the past nineteen years, he has taught a wide range of Linguistics courses at both Jaramogi Oginga Odinga University of

Science and Technology and the Catholic University of Eastern Africa (CUEA), where he has contributed significantly to curriculum development, research supervision, and mentorship of undergraduate and postgraduate students. Dr. Ochieng' currently serves as the Director of Quality Assurance at CUEA, where he leads institutional efforts in academic quality enhancement, regulatory compliance, and continuous improvement of teaching and learning standards. His scholarly work is grounded in both Theoretical and Applied Linguistics, and he has published widely on topics such as syntax, phonology, discourse analysis, and pragmatics. He also has an established research profile in Healthcare Communication, with a focus on language use, patient-provider interactions, and communication strategies in clinical settings. Across his academic career, Dr. Ochieng' has presented at conferences, contributed to peer-reviewed journals, and engaged in collaborative research projects, reinforcing his reputation as a dedicated scholar and educator in the field of Linguistics.



**Dr. Gladys Nyaiburi Ogaro**

is a lecturer at Alupe University, Kenya in the School of Education and Social Sciences where she teaches Literature in the Department of Language and Literature Education. She has previously worked at Mount Kenya University as an Assistant Lecturer and with

the Teachers Service Commission (TSC) as a teacher. A devoted scholar, Gladys holds a PhD in Literature, Master of Philosophy in Literature and Bachelor of Education (Arts) in English and Literature from Moi University, Kenya. She has published extensively, contributing valuable insights to the academic community. Her research publications delve into various aspects of literature with much focus on: African Literature, children literature, gender studies, diasporic studies, self-writings and issues on socio-economic and governance. Her scholarly endeavors are further enriched by her active participation in academic discourse through presentations at conferences. Her contributions at conferences have not only enhanced understanding of the research ecosystem but has also positioned her as a respected voice within the academic community. As an engaged scholar, she is a member of several professional and academic associations.

## ACADEMIC WRITING AND PUBLICATION SKILLS

This book provides a comprehensive and practical guide to academic writing for both undergraduate and postgraduate learners. It equips students with fundamental and advanced skills in research, scholarly communication, manuscript development and academic publication. Through clear explanations, structured guidance and real academic expectations, this text prepares students to produce high-quality proposals, theses, dissertations, journal articles and other scholarly works.

It is an essential resource for students, supervisors, and early career researchers seeking excellence in academic writing and publication.

### Authors



Dr. Thomas Gisemba Onsario holds a PhD in Sociology, Master of Arts in Sociology, Bachelor of Arts, LLB, a Postgraduate Diploma in Criminology and is also a Certified Mediator. A lecturer in Sociology at the catholic university of eastern Africa in department of social sciences and development studies, Nairobi.



Dr. Robert Onyango Ochieng' is a Kenyan linguist with extensive academic and administrative experience. He holds a PhD in Linguistics, a Master of Arts in Linguistics, and a Bachelor of Education in English and Literature in English.



Dr. Gladys Nyaiburi Ogara is a lecturer at Alupe University, Kenya in the School of Education and Social Sciences where she teaches Literature in the Department of Language and Literature Education. She holds a D.phil Literature, M.Phil Literature and Bachelor of Education Arts English and literature from Moi University, Kenya.

