



# University of Management *and* Technology

No.ORG/NOT/3010/004/181  
February 6, 2019

## NOTIFICATION

Subject: Approval of format of synopsis and thesis of MS/MPhil and PhD Program

It is notified for information of all concerned that the Board of Governors in its 26<sup>th</sup> meeting held on December 20, 2018, considering resolution no. 8 regarding recommendations of 28<sup>th</sup> meeting of BASAR held on November 6-7, 2018 and 26<sup>th</sup> meeting of Academic Council held on December 15, 2018, vide para 7.15 has approved the format of synopsis and thesis of MS/MPhil and PhD program attached at Annexure A for implementation.

  
Aneesa Rahat  
REGISTRAR

Circulation:

Chairman Secretariat, Rector Secretariat, All Deans, All Directors, All Heads of Teaching Departments, OCE, OTR, Heads of Management Offices and Master file



## **FORMAT OF SYNOPSIS (MS/MPHIL & PHD)**

Given below is an outline for synopsis writing. It provides guidelines for organization and presentation of research in form of synopsis as well as organization of material within each section. Contents in each section tell what needs to be included in each section and how sequence of this content can be consistent across different Departments as well as within a Department.

For overall format guidelines please follow APA, Chicago or any other format prescribed by your discipline but stay consistent.

### **Overall synopsis organization**

**Title Page:** Title of the study, Participant (Student)'s name, Supervisor's name, Name of the Department, Institute

### **List of Contents**

**Summary / Abstract** (150-200 words)

#### **1. Introduction** (2-4 pages)

- Give Background information e.g. prevalence, statistics etc
- List down conceptual Definitions of the Constructs Under study
- Provide brief overview of theories / Models linking the topic to the available body of knowledge
- List down the theoretical frame work you will base your research work on.

#### **2. Literature Review** (2-4 pages)

- It mainly consists of review of existing relevant and related research
- Subsections can be included based on the nature of your work.
- Presents relationships between different specific constructs the researcher wants to study i.e. specify the relationships between and among variables
- Correlates and predictors of outcome variable identified in research
- May consist of a combination of mathematical, graphical, and/or diagrammatical presentations
- Provide an overview of Indigenous Researches i.e. overview of relevant research done in Pakistan

#### **Statement of the Problem**

- Identify the research gaps and justify the conduct of the study
- It serves as a guide in formulating the specific objectives of the study



### **Significance / Rational of the Study**

- It refers to justification, importance, and vital contribution of the findings of the study / research and its likely benefits.
- Why is it worth doing?
- While the particular topic and its context will determine a study's significance and contribution of a study in terms of: adding to the existing knowledge in the area; policy considerations; implications for practitioners etc.

### **Objectives of the Study**

List down main objectives of the Study

### **Hypotheses / Research questions**

- States the researcher's expectations concerning the relationships between the variables or differences in groups or treatment conditions in research

### **3. Methodology (2-3 pages)**

#### **Research Design**

- Specify whether descriptive, causal/explanatory, correlational, comparative, exploratory, evaluative or combination of two or more designs
- Design: Strategy & Frame work
- What strategy is proposed, quantitative or qualitative?
- If both quantitative/qualitative (mixed method) approaches are targeted then what would be the mixture of the proposed strategies.

#### **Sample/ Participants**

- The sampling strategy, especially whether it is probability (its type), non probability (its type), or both and what claims will be made for the generalizability of findings.
- Inclusion / exclusion criteria of the sample
- How Sample will be recruited and approached
- What would be the Sample size and how the size will be determined

#### **Operational Definitions of the Variables (optional)**

- Define constructs of the study as they will be measured / assessed

#### **Data Collection Techniques / Assessment Measures**



- Whether you will use already developed Instruments Used (provide detail).
- Whether Instruments will be development, (give detail)
- Other ways of eliciting Data (qualitative e.g. focus group discussion, interviews, texts etc)
- Material and method for observations

#### **Procedure**

- How the data will be collected i.e. taking necessary approvals /permissions, logistic arrangements and assessment etc

#### **Ethical Considerations: consent/access/and participants' protection**

- List down issues like informed consent, anonymity, confidentiality of data, data storage, and the use of the results etc.
- Other can be study specific like intervention and advocacy etc. etc.

#### **4. Proposed Analyses**

- Indicates the most appropriate analysis used for both quantitative (descriptive, inferential statistics) and qualitative data.
- Mathematical expressions must be italicized and numbered accordingly
- All models/equations must be properly numbered
- All major/key variables must be properly measured/categorized, indicating their specific units of measure.
- The sources of formulas must be indicated in the text.

#### **5. Limitations & Delimitations (if Applicable)**

- Limitations refer to limiting conditions or restrictive weaknesses
- Delimitations refer to defining the limits or drawing the boundaries around the study, and showing clearly what is and what is not included.

#### **6. Time Frame of Dissertation**

Must be provided for planning.

#### **7. List of References**

- Follow APA, Chicago or any other format prescribed for your discipline for writing references
- Ensure to match list of references with those given in citations.



## **8. Appendices**

- Participant Information Sheet, Letter for permission, Participant Consent form, Measuring instruments
- Interview guides, observational schedule, Assessment tools
- Example of pilot study or any other data/work already completed.

Prepared by the Committee constituted in the 100<sup>th</sup> Dean Committee meeting



## **Faculty members and Students**

Please find below the outline for thesis writing. It is a guide to organization and presentation of research in form of thesis as well as organization of material within chapters. Chapter contents tell you what needs to be included in each chapter and how sequence of this content can be as consistent across different departments as possible.

For overall format guidelines please follow APA or any other manual as prescribed for your discipline. This is not meant to be format guide.

### **Overall thesis organization**

**Title**

**Examiners' certificate**

**Dedication (optional)**

**Acknowledgements**

**Abstract**

### **List of Contents**

**page No**

Contents	I
List of tables	II
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Declaration	IV
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### **Chapter 1**

#### **INTRODUCTION**

**(This is just an example)**

- 1.1 Happiness: Conceptual Definitions
- 1.2 Quality of Life
- 1.3 Happiness and Quality of Life

1.4. Theories linking Happiness and Quality of Life

1.4.1. theory 1

1.4.2 theory 2

1.4.3 Theoretical framework of your study

1.5 Summary

**Chapter II: Literature Review**

2.1 Correlates and predictors of happiness identified in research

2.3.1 Biological factors

2.3.2 Personality traits

2.3.3 Situational factors

2.2 Happiness and Quality of Life

2.3 Indigenous Researches/ Research conducted in Pakistan

2.4 Rational of the Study

2.5 Objectives of Study

2.6 Research questions / hypotheses, hypothesized model

**Chapter III: METHODOLOGY**

3.1 Research Design

3.2 Sample / Participants

3.3 Operational Definitions of the Variables

3.4 Measures

3.4.1 Happiness Inventory

3.4.2 Quality of life

3.4.3 Scale development (if applicable)

3.5 Procedure

3.6 Ethical Considerations



## **Chapter IV: RESULTS**

4.1 Analyses

4.2 Descriptive analyses

4.3 Inferential analyses / Hypotheses testing

4.4 Summary of the Findings

## **Chapter V: DISCUSSION**

5.1 Discussion

5.2 Strengths and Limitations of the Study

5.3: Suggestions for Future Research

5.4 Implications of the Findings

References

Appendices



## Content Guide for each Section

### Abstract

Should only mention (a) what was investigated clearly giving variables in your title for example “the study investigated the relationship between happiness and quality of life among cardiovascular patients”, (b) hypotheses/ research questions; (c) sample; (d) measurement; (e) analysis; (f) findings and implications of the findings.

### Introduction and Literature Review

First paragraph of introduction should give a very brief (two -three sentences) description of variables under investigation then state what will be presented in the chapter in the sequence in which they are presented.

Below is an example:

*Hope for recovery and positive view of future can be a source of strength for people who are suffering from a major disease. This research is going to investigate how optimism is related to /affects quality of life among people with coronary heart disease. The following chapter will present definitions of the concepts of quality of life and optimism. It will also clarify some related terms, present existing information on optimism, quality of life and heart disease. It will then focus on relevant research in these areas and provide theoretical rationale for the relationship between variables. At the end after summarizing material presented in chapter, questions for the study will be formulated. Possible contribution of this study to existing body of knowledge will also be discussed.*

### Main body: Tips to remember

- Give sub headings in intro to organize your material.
- Link one paragraph to next with some explanatory or linking sentence.
- When providing summary of a research study or article include all relevant information but keep to format of citation. Do not give first names or initials.
- When a study is very relevant or your research is based on it, give detail as well as evaluation and comment how it could be done if repeated. What findings suggest, how findings can be applied to our cultural context and what are implications for further investigation.

Remember thesis is a story and introduction is the main script of that story where you set the stage for investigation. So start with a preamble (*tamheed*), introduce the variables, say all you know about variables and their relationship, convince the reader why it is important to learn about this topic. Clearly and in detail describe what has been done



before in this area. Also give relevant research conducted in Pakistan, What more can be done to improve the understanding of this phenomena and what unanswered or inconclusive findings are identified in research. These are called gaps in evidence. Once you identify the gaps (research authors sometimes comment upon these gaps and then choose one or two for their own study. You can choose from previous or by reading extensively will be able to develop your own gaps in existing evidence.

At the end a summary is a MUST. Summary should briefly overview all that was said in chapter and then identify questions or formulate hypotheses for investigation in view of the literature presented in introduction chapter. These must be linked both to existing research as well as theoretical perspective.

### **Methodology**

Note: In case of more than one study, prepare method section for each study separately.

Start method section with re-presenting your research statement.

“This study is investigating quality of life among heart patients and examining its relationship with .....

### **Methodology for a Quantitative Study**

**Design:** briefly describe design of the study e.g. between group design, correlational design, repeated measure design, Qualitative, Mixed methods etc.

**Sample:** Describe you sampling strategy and sample, how it was selected, where it was recruited from, inclusion/exclusion criteria, sample size, demographic characteristics of the sample, response rate etc.

### ***Operational Definitions***

Define constructs (variables) in terms of their measurement / assessment or how you are going to assess them in your study e.g. if you assess through already developed scale/questionnaire then how the author of the respective scale defines that construct. If you develop your own scale/questionnaire then how you conceptualize the construct for development of the scale.

### ***Assessment Measures***

– give detail of scales/ questionnaires with author, reliability reports as well as item examples. If you develop your own scale / questionnaires then give detail of the process in this section and if translated scale then give detail of the process.

### ***Procedure***



Provide detail of procedure i.e. getting required approvals and permissions, making logistic arrangements for data collection; how the potential participants approached; how the data was elicited e.g. were the scales/questionnaires distributed among participants and collected later on or were they completed in the presence of researcher....

### **Ethical Considerations**

Give detail of all ethical issues pertaining to your research e.g. getting proposal approval; permission for sample recruitment; permission from authors to use their scales / questionnaire and if need to translate; informed consent of the participants; maintaining confidentiality of data; storage of data; publishing data etc.

### **Results**

Demographics: can either go in sample section or presented in early part of results

Descriptive Statistics of the variables under study; Psychometric analysis (reliability) of the questionnaires /scales used in the study

Inferential Statistics for hypotheses testing give results one by one according to hypotheses

Give preamble for each analysis, present analysis in table form and then interpret analysis in qualitative way. Conclude by stating whether hypothesis was supported, partially supported or not supported.

Tables must be prepared as per APA prescribed format. Use tables mainly for inferential analyses results such as t-test, ANOVA, regression, correlation etc. For demographics use only if many sample characteristics need to be displayed. Graphs may be used to represent mean and SDs. Under each table give description of your results in qualitative manner and not to repeat numbers and figures if given in tables. Do not repeat sample information in tables and figures/charts.

Conclude your results chapter with summary of the main findings.

### **Discussion**

First para should be summary of your findings- a brief one. Then address each finding, relate it to theory and previous research and also discuss in the cultural context, provide explanations for your findings. At the end provide a summary and general discussion.

Limitations and strengths of your research, and further suggestions for future research can be a separate subsection in discussion chapter. Implications at end of discussion chapter and implications must be within the scope of your research, not generalized implications.



## **Methodology for a Qualitative Study**

There is no qualitative methods but a number of approaches that fall under the paradigm of “qualitative.”

### **Principles of selection**

Qualitative research in many cases includes non-probability sampling. The researched elements could include one or more of various categories; people, happenings, behaviors, speech, written and visual materials, etc.

The sample selection criteria should be clear, as well as the rationale for such selection from a theoretical point of view:

1. The sources of the data should have their own rationale; e.g. participants/respondents, documents, texts, settings, etc.
2. Limitations of the data should be analyzed, mentioned and discussed (non-response, refusal to take part, avoiding of questions by the respondents, etc.).

**During the research** various matters should be considered: the access process, mode of data collection and record, individuals who collected the data, time or timeframe of data collection, how the study was explained to the respondents.

### **Ethical considerations**

The following matters are important:

- a. Anonymize information regarding respondents.
- b. provide details of ethical approvals or permissions, if unable to obtain permission for any purpose it should be mentioned as well.
- c. procedures for informed content needs to be provided.
- d. any other ethical concerns that came up during the research need to be discussed.

## **Analysis & Interpretation**

The steps of the analysis need to be made as clear as possible one by one:

- How was the analysis conducted
  - How were themes, concepts and categories generated from the data
  - Whether analysis was computer assisted (and, if so, how, name of the software with citation, etc.).
  -



- Analytic rigor:
  - Steps taken to guard against selectivity in the use of data
  - Triangulation and what frameworks or theoretical approaches were used
  - Member and expert examining or checking
  - The researcher should state his/her own position. For example, have they examined their own role, possible bias, and influence on the research?

### **Consideration of context**

- The research should be clearly contextualized. For example”
- How does the research fit in the culture where it was conducted? Information about the settings and respondents needs to be provided.
- The study should integrate the phenomena being researched in its own social context rather than keeping it de-contextualized.
- Any unique influences should be identified, mentioned and discussed

### **Presentation of data:**

- Quotations, field notes, and other data where appropriate should be identified in a way which can enable other researcher to make a connection between data, instrument and results (validity).
- A clear line between the data and its interpretation