

# Research Thesis Format & Style Guide



  
Assistant Director  
Academics  
University of Chitral

**University of Chitral**

## Preface

*As a rule, the main components of a research study are nearly the same in all disciplines throughout the world. Though, various styles of referencing and citation are used by the researchers in their research work i.e. APA, MLA, Harvard, Chicago, Turabian etc. Nonetheless, every established university develops its own customized format for its students' facilitation in presentation of research proposals and theses. This handbook is compiled to facilitate the BS and M.S/M. Phil students at University of Chitral in developing their theses and to bring an overall uniformity in their research thesis. **The format suggested in this handbook is MANDATORY for all BS and MS / M. Phil Students to develop and submit their theses.** Further, the students are required to prepare their research proposal/theses under the supervision of their respective supervisors. The purpose of the research proposal / synopsis is to help the scholars to focus and define their research plans/theses.*

# General Format of Thesis

## Page Size and Quality

AA4 (A4-Fine paper) should be used for submission of thesis. Minimum paper weight should be 80 grams.

## Page Setup / Margins

1 inch margins on all sides

## Page Numbering

Include a page header (also known as the “running head”) **in the top-right corner** and one-inch margins. For a professional paper/thesis, this includes your paper/thesis title and the page number. Preliminary pages, except cover page and title page, shall be given Roman number format (i, ii, iii). Arabic Number format (1,2,3) shall start from Chapter-1.

## Cover Page Colour

Indigo

## Font guide

New Times Roman font should be used throughout the proposal / synopsis.

## Font guide Table

TEXT	Font Size
Title	<b>16pt BOLD</b>
Author's name Student ID Institutional affiliation Course title Date of paper submission	14 pt NORMAL
University	<b>16pt BOLD</b>
Chapter Titles	<b>16pt BOLD</b>
Headings	<b>14pt BOLD</b>
Sub Headings	<b>12pt BOLD</b>
Table/Figure Headings	<b>12pt BOLD</b>
Text	12pt NORMAL
Footnotes / End notes	10pt NORMAL

## Paragraph Setting

Line spacing should be double spaced and all paragraphs should be justified. Indentation of each paragraph should be First Line Indentation.

## **Preliminary Pages of Thesis**

- Cover Page
- Title Page
- Blank Page
- Author's Declaration
- Plagiarism Undertaking
- Certificate of Approval
- Acknowledgement
- Abstract
- Table of Contents

## **Title of the Thesis**



### **Scholar name**

Registration number

Program name

Department Name

Session

**Department name**

**College Name**

**University of Chitral**

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## **Title of the Thesis**



### **Scholar name**

Registration number

Program name

Department Name

Session

### **Supervisor**

**Dr. Aslam**

Designation and Department

**Department Name**

**College Name**

**University of Chitral**

## **Author's Declaration**

I **Name of Scholar** hereby state that my BS/MS/ thesis titled “**TITLE OF THESIS**” is my own work and has not been submitted previously by me for taking any degree from this university, **University of Chitral** or anywhere else in the country/world. At any time if my statement is found to be incorrect even after my graduate the University has the right to withdraw my BS/MS/MPHIL/ degree.

**Name of Author:**

**Date:**

## Approval Certificate

This is to certify that the research work presented in this thesis titled -----  
conducted by -----scholar name under supervision of **supervisor name**. no part of  
this thesis has been submitted anywhere else for any other degree. This thesis is submitted to  
Controller of Examination, University of Chitral for the partial fulfilment of the requirement for  
the degree of -----.

\_\_\_\_\_  
(Student Name)

\_\_\_\_\_  
(Student ID.)

**Supervisor:**

\_\_\_\_\_  
(Signature)

**External Examiner:**

\_\_\_\_\_  
(Signature)

**Name of Chairman/HoD**

## **Plagiarism Undertaking**

I, **[Name of Student]** declare on oath that the research work presented in my UG/MS/PhD project/thesis, where applicable, entitled “**Project/Thesis Title**” is my own research work and is not substantially contributed by any other person or Generative AI Tools. Any small contribution / assistance wherever received has been duly acknowledged/cited and that whole project/thesis has been written by me under the latest plagiarism policy declared by HEC and my respective university as per the policy on use of Generative AI Tools. I acknowledge the HEC and **[Name of University]** zero-tolerance policy on plagiarism. I as an Author of the above titled project/thesis declare that no part of my project/thesis has been Plagiarized, and any material used for reference has been properly referred/cited. I undertake that if I am found guilty of any plagiarism in the above titled project/thesis even after award of UG/MS/PhD degree, the University reserves the right to withdraw/revoke my degree and that HEC and the University has the right to publish my name on the HEC/University Website on which names of students are placed who submitted plagiarized project/thesis.

**Author Name:**

**Author Signature:**

## **Acknowledgements**

First, I would like to express my sincere appreciation to my supervisor, -----  
-----, who guided me well throughout the research work from title's selection to finding the results. His knowledge, motivation and patience have given me more power and spirit to excel in the research writing. Conducting the academic study regarding such a difficult topic could not be as simple as he made this for me.

I am deeply indebted to all those who are cited in my thesis and whose works in form of research paper, thesis, chapter, and book, enabled me to write my thesis.

**Scholar name**  
University of Chitral  
December 2022

## **Abstract**

- ☐ The abstract needs to be dense with information.
- ☐ Embed key words in your abstract
- ☐ Ensure that the abstract correctly reflects the purpose and content of the manuscript.
- ☐ Do not include information that does not appear in the body of the manuscript.
- ☐ Write in clear and concise language.
- ☐ Begin the abstract with the most important points.
- ☐ Do not waste space by repeating the title.
- ☐ Include in the abstract only the four or five most important concepts, findings, or implications.
- ☐ Do not exceed the abstract word limit range from 150 to 250 words.
- ☐ Begin the abstract on a new page
- ☐ The label Abstract should appear in Title case letters,
- ☐ Centered, at the top of the page
- ☐ Type the abstract itself as a single paragraph without paragraph indentation.

## **Main Pages/Elements of Thesis**

In general, the main body of the research thesis includes the following chapters:

- Chapter One – Introduction
- Chapter Two– Literature Review
- Chapter Three – Research Methodology
- Chapter Four – Data Analysis and / or Discussion
- Chapter Five – Conclusions/Results and Recommendations

However, some scholars may divide their thesis in sections with the above titles and further divide each section into relevant chapters and present each subsection as a separate chapter. In that case the number of chapters may increase.

# 1. Introduction

## 1.1. Overview

Provide a concise overview of the Chapter at the beginning stating how this chapter had been organized including all the subsection etc.

The body of a manuscript opens with an introduction that presents the specific problem under study and describes the research strategy. When research is driven by the desire to resolve controversial issues, all sides in the debate should be represented in balanced measure in the introduction. Before writing the introduction, consider the following questions:

Why is this problem important?

How does the study relate to previous work in the area?

If other aspects of this study have been reported previously, how does this report differ from, and build on, the earlier report ?

What are the theoretical and practical implications of the study?

A good introduction answers these questions in just a few pages and, by summarizing the relevant arguments and the past evidence, gives the reader a firm sense of what was done and why.

It should provide a brief description with a view to introducing the area of research and provide background information relating to the social / political / historical / educational / organizational (etc) context of the study. This chapter may include the following subsections:

## 1.2. Background of the Study

The background section of a research explains to the reader where your research journey started, why you got interested in the topic. That means that you first establish the context of the research you did with a general overview of the field or topic and then present the key issues that drove your decision to study the specific problem you chose. The following elements should all be included in the background:

- A **general overview** of the topic and why it is important (overlaps with establishing the “importance of the topic” in the Introduction)
- The **current state of the research** on the topic or on related topics in the field
- **Controversies** about current knowledge or specific past studies that undergird your research methodology
- Any **claims or assumptions** that have been made by researchers, institutions, or politicians that might need to be clarified

- **Methods and techniques** used in the study or from which your study deviated in some way

### **1.3. Research Problem / Statement of the Problem**

A concise research problem statement that, in one to three sentences, describes specifically what the problem is that you intend to solve. It explains what problems or issues you wish to explore and why you wish to explore them.

State why the problem deserves new research: For basic research, the statement about importance might involve the need to resolve any inconsistency in results of past work and/or extend the reach of a theoretical formulation. For applied research, this might involve the need to solve a social problem or treat a psychological disorder.

Conclude the statement of the problem in the introduction with a brief but formal statement of the purpose of the research that summarizes the material preceding it. Also clearly state the reasons that the reported content is important and how the article fits into the cumulative understanding of the field.

### **1.4. Research Questions (Mandatory) and / or Hypotheses (Optional)**

The students may include hypothesis of the study depending on the nature of the research. Hypotheses should be in the form of Null Hypothesis (H<sub>0</sub>) and Alternate Hypothesis (H<sub>1</sub>).

### **1.5. Research Objective / Purpose of the Study**

The General /Global Objective should state the expected contribution of the research to the general body of knowledge in the subject area. The Specific Objectives should state how specifically the general objectives will be achieved.

## **1. 6. Significance of the Study**

While documenting the significance of the research you need to indicate how your research will refine, revise, or extend existing knowledge in the area under investigation. Note that such refinements, revisions, or extensions may have substantive, theoretical, or methodological significance. The documentation of the significance of the study should among other things address the following questions:

What are the specific, significant, unique/major contributions that the research work will make to the area/body of knowledge?

What will be the practical implications/use of the results/outcome?

How will the results/outcome of the study be implemented, including a statement on its possible impact and on what innovations will come about through its implementation (if any)?

What areas/directions of further/subsequent research work are likely to arise from the expected outcome/findings or results of the research study?

What will be improved or changed as a result of the research work?

## **1. 7. Limitations**

Document the weaknesses or the possible limitations of the results/outcome of the research study and as well as the limitations of the approaches, procedures, methods etc which have been adopted to achieve the results of the research study. Also, to be included are statements relating to issues, factors beyond the control of the study.

## **2. Literature Review**

### **2.1. Overview**

Provide a concise overview of the Chapter at the beginning stating how this chapter had been organized including all the subsection etc.

A review of the relevant literature showing the work done previously in the area of proposed research is essential to plan further research effectively. The information given in the review should be supported by references. The function of the literature review is to show your supervisor and the department that you are aware of significant writers / researchers in the field, and to indicate which issues / topics you will focus on in your review. You should demonstrate critical analysis and your review should be shaped by your argument and should seek to establish your theoretical orientation.

### **2.2. Review of Related Concepts/Theories**

If any theory/concepts/ module is used, relevant literature about it may be included here.

### **2.3. Review of Related Studies**

Discuss the relevant related literature, but do not feel compelled to include an exhaustive historical account. Assume that the reader is knowledgeable about the basic problem and does not require a complete accounting of its history. A scholarly description of earlier work in the introduction provides a summary of the most recent directly related work and recognizes the priority of the work of others. Citation of and specific credit to relevant earlier works are signs of scientific and scholarly responsibility and are essential for the growth of a cumulative science. Explain your approach to solving the problem. In empirical studies, this usually involves stating your hypotheses or specific question and describing how these were derived from theory or are logically connected to previous data and argumentation. Clearly develop the rationale for each.

Also, if you have some hypotheses or questions that are central to your purpose and others that are secondary or exploratory, state this prioritization. Explain how the research design permits the inferences needed to examine the hypothesis or provide estimates in answer to the question. What are the primary and secondary hypotheses and objectives of the study, and what, if any, are the links to theory? How do the hypotheses and research design relate to one another? Develop the problem with enough breadth and clarity to make it generally understood.

Refer the reader to general surveys or research syntheses of the topic if they are available. Demonstrate the logical continuity between previous and present work.

Do not let the goal of conciseness lead you to write a statement understandable only by the specialist.

State hypotheses and their correspondence to research design.

## **2.4. Summary**

Provide a concise summary of the findings of literature review at the end of the chapter highlighting imperative findings, significant procedural issues, and most important inferences. In the description of relevant scholarship, also inform readers whether other aspects of this study have been reported on previously and how the current use of the evidence differs from earlier uses. At the same time, cite and reference only works pertinent to the specific issue and not those that are of only tangential or general significance. When summarizing earlier works, avoid nonessential details; instead, emphasize pertinent findings, relevant methodological issues, and major conclusions.

### **3. Research Methodology**

#### **3.1. Overview**

Provide a concise overview of the Chapter at the beginning stating how this chapter had been organized including all the subsections etc.

The Methodology section is very important because it documents how you plan to tackle your research problem. It also permits experienced investigators to replicate the study. The Method section describes in detail how the study was conducted, including conceptual and operational definitions of the variables used in the study. Different types of studies will rely on different methodologies; however, a complete description of the methods used enables the reader to evaluate the appropriateness of your methods and the reliability and the validity of your results. If your manuscript is an update of an ongoing or earlier study and the method has been published in detail elsewhere, you may refer the reader to that source and simply give a brief synopsis of the method in this section

It is both conventional and expedient to divide the Method section into labelled subsections. These usually include a section with descriptions of the participants or subjects and a section describing the procedures used in the study. The latter section often includes description of (a) any experimental manipulations or interventions used and how they were delivered—for example, any mechanical apparatus used to deliver them; (b) sampling procedures and sample size and precision; (c) measurement approaches (including the psychometric properties of the instruments used); and (d) the research design.

Insufficient detail leaves the reader with questions; too much detail burdens the reader with irrelevant information. Consider using appendices and/or a supplemental website for more detailed information.

Depending on the nature and the underlying methodological approach which has been adopted for the research, the followings may be documented in this section:

#### **3.2. Methodological Framework**

##### **3.2.1. *Research Design and Method***

Indicate which research design has been adopted/used (if any) Is the research QUANTITATIVE or QUALITATIVE in nature in terms of the methodology?

Discuss and justify your choice of research method Highlight and discuss the relevance of the adopted method to your study Describe how the adopted method is applied

##### **3.2.2. *Research Type***

Is the research Explorative, Descriptive, Causal or a Case study method?

### **3.2.3. *Techniques / Tools /Approaches / Instrumentation/Devices***

Which techniques, tools/instruments, approaches etc have been adopted and used to develop/produce, present/demonstrate the expected results of the research.

Highlight and discuss the relevance of these techniques /tools / instruments /approaches to your study.

Describe how these techniques/tools/ instruments or approaches have been applied or used.  
Criteria for judging credibility and trustworthiness of results (where relevant)

### **3.2.4. *Data Collection Methods***

Clearly indicate whether you are going to use primary or secondary data. Indicate what does primary or secondary data mean (i.e. provide a theoretical perspective). Identify the secondary data which you are going to use for your study. Explain how each variable will be measured (where relevant)

### **3.2.5. *Population and Sampling Procedures (where relevant)***

Identify and document the population or reference for the study. In case of different components of the population, clearly indicate this. Discuss the various sampling frames, types and techniques that will be adopted including an indication of the type of statistical data analysis that will be carried out to analyse the results.

### **3.2.6. *Variables (where relevant)***

Describe aspects of the cases on which data collection and analysis will focus. Break up variables in terms of independent, dependent, moderating, and mediating variables with headings. On the whole the guiding principle for writing the methodology section is that it should contain sufficient information for the reader to determine whether the methodology is sound. It may well be the longest section of your research.

## **3.3. Theoretical Framework (Where relevant)**

## **3.4. Chapterization/ Organization of the Study**

## **4. Data Analysis and / or Discussion)**

### **4.1. Overview**

Provide a concise overview of the Chapter at the beginning stating how this chapter had been organized including all the subsections etc.

### **4.2. Data Analysis and / or Discussion**

In this chapter the data is analyzed. Data may be analyzed quantitatively or qualitatively depending on the level of measurement and the number of dimensions and variables of the study. Analyze and discuss in depth to give meaning to the data presented in corresponding table.

Statistics and data analysis: Analysis of data and the reporting of the results of those analyses are fundamental aspects of the conduct of research. Accurate, unbiased, complete, and insightful reporting of the analytic treatment of data (be it quantitative or qualitative) must be a component of all theses.

## **5. Conclusions**

### **5.1. Overview**

Provide a concise overview of the Chapter at the beginning stating how this chapter had been organized including all the subsections etc.

### **5.2. Summary of Findings**

This describes the problem, research design, and the findings (answer to the questions raised). The recommended format is the paragraph form instead of the enumeration form.

For each of the problems, present:

The salient findings,

The results of the hypothesis tested

### **5.3. Conclusions**

These are brief, generalized statements in answer to the general and each of the specific sub problems. These are general inferences applicable to a wider and similar population.

Flexibility is considered in making of conclusions. It is not a must to state conclusions on a one-to-one correspondence with the problems and the findings as all variables can be subsumed in one paragraph.

Conclusions may be used as generalizations from a micro to a macro-level or vice versa

### **5.4. Recommendations**

- They should be based on the findings and conclusion of the study.
- They may be specific or general or both and should be in non-technical language and be feasible, and flexible
- Must include suggestions for further studies.

## References

References acknowledge the work of previous scholars and provide a reliable way to locate it. References are used to document statements made about the literature, just as data in the manuscript support interpretations and conclusions. The references cited in the manuscript do not need to be exhaustive but should be sufficient to support the need for your research and to ensure that readers can place it in the context of previous research and theorizing. The standard procedures for citation ensure that references are accurate, complete, and useful to investigators and readers. Start the reference list on a new page. The word References should appear in uppercase and lowercase letters, centered. Double-space all reference entries. APA publishes references in a hanging indent format, meaning that the first line of each reference is set flush left and subsequent lines are indented. Footnotes are used to provide additional content or to acknowledge copyright permission status. The researcher will use 7<sup>th</sup> edition of APA for referencing.

References acknowledge the work of previous scholars and provide a reliable way to locate it. References are used to document statements made about the literature, just as data in the manuscript support interpretations and conclusions.

The references cited in the manuscript do not need to be exhaustive but should be sufficient to support the need for your research and to ensure that readers can place it in the context of previous research and theorizing.

The standard procedures for citation ensure that references are accurate, complete, and useful to investigators and readers.

Start the reference list on a new page.

The word References should appear in uppercase and lowercase letters, centered. Double-space all reference entries.

APA publishes references in a hanging indent format, meaning that the first line of each reference is set flush left and subsequent lines are indented.

Footnotes are used to provide additional content or to acknowledge copyright permission status.

## In-Text Citation Samples

## In-Text Citations

Thus, using existing data could xxxxxxxx xxxxxxxx xxxxxxxx xxxxxxxx xxxxxxxx xxxxxxxx  
xxxxxx xxxxxxxxxx xxxxxxxxxx xxxxxx xxxxxxxx xxxxxxxxxxxxxx.

# Reference List

## Reference List Samples

### Reference List Tips

- ♦ Start a new page. Use alphabetical order, and double spacing.
- ♦ Use hanging indentation: Highlight the text. Go to: Format → Paragraph → Indentation → Hanging
- ♦ *Italicize* major titles like journals, books, movies, DVDs, and so forth.
- ♦ Do not italicize the title of journal articles, book chapters, and web pages.
- ♦ Break a long URL before the punctuation.
- ♦ Page numbers: Use "pp." to indicate page numbers when citing **newspaper articles** (if the article has page numbers) and **book chapters**. Omit "pp." when citing journal and magazine articles. In cases where a newspaper article/book chapter occupies a single page, the page is preceded by "p."

### References

#### References

- Imber-Black, E. (2009). Snuggles, my cotherapist, and other animal tales in life and therapy. *Family Process*, 459-461. doi:10.1111/j.1545-5300.2009.01295.x
- National Park Service. (2006, July 24) *Abraham Lincoln Birthplace National Historic Site*. Retrieved from <http://www.nps.gov/abli/index.htm>

#### Online Periodicals (Journal, Newspaper & Magazine Articles)

Author, A. A., & Author, B. B. (Year). Article title. *Journal Title*, volume number(issue number), page numbers. doi:xxxxxxxxxxxxxx

#### Journal Articles\*\*\*

- Grindstaff, C. F., & Ebanks, S.P. (1973). Male sterilization as a contraceptive method: An empirical study. *Population Studies*, 27, 443-455. Retrieved from <http://www.jstor.org/>
- Imber-Black, E. (2009). Snuggles, my cotherapist, and other animal tales in life and therapy. *Family Process*, 459-461. doi:10.1111/j.1545-5300.2009.01295.x
- Sagarin, B. J., & Lawler-Sagarin, K. A. (2005). Critically evaluating competing theories: An exercise based on the Kitty Genovese murder. *Teaching of Psychology*, 32(3), 167-169. doi:10.1207/s15328023top3203\_8

#### Newspaper

- Smith, T. (2008, May 6). Psychiatry handbook linked to drug industry. *The New York Times*. Retrieved from <http://www.nytimes.com>

#### Books

Author, A. A. & Author, B. B. (Year). *Book title*. Location City, State: Publisher.

#### Book

- Gabaldon, D. (1991). *Outlander*. New York, NY: Delacorte Press.

#### Book Chapter

- Hawkins, R. C., & Clement, P. F. (1984). Binge eating: Measurement problems and a conceptual model. In R. C. Hawkins, II, W. J. Fremouw, & P. F. Clement (Eds.), *The binge-purge syndrome: Diagnosis, treatment, and research* (pp. 229-251). New York, NY: Springer.

\*\*\*These labels are for example only. Do NOT use labels like Journal Articles, Newspaper, and so forth in your References.

**Other Electronic Resources and Websites**

- When there is no author for a web page, the title moves to the first position of the reference entry.
- If no date is given, put "n.d." in the parentheses rather than a year: (n.d.)
- Do not include retrieval date unless the entry changes frequently (like on a Wiki)

**Online Dictionary**

Arthropod. (2004). In *Merriam-Webster's Collegiate Dictionary*. Retrieved from [http://www.credoreference.com/entry/mwcollegiate/arthropod\\_%C3%A4rthr\\_p%C3%A4d](http://www.credoreference.com/entry/mwcollegiate/arthropod_%C3%A4rthr_p%C3%A4d)

**Specific Page within a Web Site**

Chou, L., McClintock, R., Moretti, F., & Nix, D. H. (1993). *Technology and education: New wine in new bottles: Choosing pasts and imagining educational futures*. Retrieved from Columbia University, Institute for Learning Technologies website: <http://www.ilt.columbia.edu/publications/papers/newwine1.html>

Sea Turtle Restoration Project. (2010). *Threats to sea turtles*. Retrieved from <http://seaturtles.org/section.php?id=104>

**Weblog/Blog**

Kellermann, M. (2007, May 23). Disclosing clinical trials. Message posted to <http://www.iq.harvard.edu/blog/sss/archives/2007/05/>

**Podcast**

National Academies (Producer). (2007 June 6). Progress in preventing childhood obesity: How do we measure up? *The Sounds of Science Podcast*. Podcast retrieved from <http://media.nap.edu/podcasts>

**Government Websites**

National Park Service. (2006, July 24) *Abraham Lincoln Birthplace National Historic Site*. Retrieved from <http://www.nps.gov/abli/index.htm>

U.S. Office of Personnel Management. (2008, November). *Report to Congress: The employment of veterans in the federal government, fiscal year 2007*. Retrieved from <http://omp.gov/veterans/dvaap.asp>

## **Appendices**

In general, an appendix is appropriate for materials that are relatively brief and that are easily presented in print format. If your manuscript has only one appendix, label it Appendix; If your manuscript has more than one (Appendix A, Appendix B, etc.) in the order appendix must have a title. appendix, label each one with a capital letter in which it is mentioned in the main text. Each In the text, refer to appendices by their labels.

- Center the word Appendix and the identifying capital letters (A, B, etc., in the order in which they are mentioned in text)
- At the top of the page
- Center the title of the appendix, and
- Use uppercase and lowercase letters.
- Begin the text of the appendix flush left, followed by indented paragraph