

THE RESEARCH PROCESS

Maxine Samuels, February 2018 For Antioch University, Research Methodology - 2019

The Research Specification

PART ONE OF THE RESEARCH

Section 1: Executive Summary/Abstract

Section 2: Introduction

(Executive Summary; Justification For The Research Topic; Background And Rationale For The Research; Objectives Of the Research; and Scope of the Research).

Section 3: Critical Review Of Literature

Section 4: Resources Planning And Allocation Of Funding For The Research

PART TWO OF THE RESEARCH: Research Methods

Section 5: Research Methods

(Research Aim, Topic And Objectives; About Research Methods And Methodology; Research Approaches For This Paper; Justification Of The Research Methods And Methodologies selected For this Paper; Ethical Considerations; Limitations Of The Research)

PART THREE OF THE RESEARCH

Section 6: Research Findings And Discussion

PART FOUR OF THE RESEARCH

Section 7: Results And Conclusion

Section 8: Recommendations

List Of References And Appendices.

The Research Methods

5.1. Critical Analyses Of The Literature: Methods, Methodologies And Techniques In Business Research

Discuss and analyze the research methods, research methodologies and research techniques that can be used in research studies.

5.2. Research Design: Methods, Methodologies And Techniques For This Research

1. Provide an overview of your research topic, aims, and objectives of the study.
2. Discuss the methods, approaches and techniques that you will be using to carry-out your own research.
3. Discuss why the methods, approaches and techniques that you have selected are appropriate to achieving your research objectives.
4. how many people will you be studying? and why is this number of persons significant to your research objectives?
5. Who are the people to be selected in these participant groups? And what are their significance to your research objectives?
6. Where will you be finding them, and how will you be soliciting their permission to participate.
7. What is the nature of the questions that you be asking them, and what are the significance of these said questions to your research objectives?
8. How will you be storing and organizing the research findings/answers for analyses?
9. What methods of analyses will you be using to dissect and study their responses?
10. Who will the research findings and answers be impacting (audience and users)?
11. How will you be reporting the research process, and the results outcomes of the research?

REQUIREMENTS FOR THE RESEARCH PAPER

Research Specification VS Research Design

Research specification is different from the research design. The research specification is the layout of your research presentation. The research design is a broader plan for the execution of the research. Your research design is explained and discussed in the **Research Methods Section** and carried out by the actions that you take to implement these said methods e.g. development of your research questions, selection of your participants, contacting them for permission, gathering the data from them using the methodology that you stated, and the methods of evaluating the data gathered to produce the findings, results and outcomes. These issues you will discuss in the research methods section of your paper, along with the justification for the methods and approaches that you selected, and the ethical concerns and limitations you found.

What is the scope of the research?

Scope is the areas that the research will be covering. That is, what are the materials, concepts, and theories etc. that you will be covering in your literature review to address the research question. To discuss the scope of your research, you must:

- 1) conduct the desk research into the topic, guided by your research question and research aim.
- 2) identify about ten (10) materials that you will need to answer the research question. This is from valid sources such as journals, textbooks, newspapers, online articles etc.
- 3) review them to ensure that they are wholly relevant to answer your research topic and adequate to support your literature review.
- 4) summarize the main areas in these works (topics) that you will be exploring to answer the research question and for the literature review. **This is not the literature review so there is no need to discuss the materials here.** Just present them and say briefly why they are relevant to your topic. In other words, you are justifying their selection or relevance to the topic area.

The Literature Review

Literature Review is a great way to tell a story about the topics that you are reviewing by compiling narratives by way of the various sources selected about the topical problems, themes, perspectives, benefits, limitations, and importantly, finding solutions (answers) to the research problems.

To carry-out the literature review you will start by:

- 1) Identifying a good exemplar or several exemplars of literature reviews.
- 2) Reading through the literature reviews to understand how one is constructed. Look closely at how the Author cites sources, organize the story in the literature, structure the work, and tells the story about the topic writing on.
- 3) Go to iTutor and identify the supporting materials that you will need. Example, the Harvard Referencing Rules, AND the document with the examples of words that you can use when citing your sources.
- 4) KEEPING these three important tools through-out your work to guide you: i) exemplar/s of literature review, ii) Harvard Referencing Guides, and iii) list of verbs when citing will help a lot GUARANTEED!

PRINTING and using these whenever you are writing. *Do not attempt the literature review until you have completed the above.*

Activities And Behavior That Are Consistent With Good Literature Reviews

- 1) Identify all the books, journals, articles, etc. that will be used. *You already identified these materials when you were covering 'scope of the research' in the Introduction Section.*
- 2) Read through the materials thoroughly.
- 3) Select and mark the areas of these materials that are useful to the topic.
- 4) Bookmark the pages to ensure that you do not lose them and have to start the process all over.
- 5) Start writing up the review (summary) of the literatures.
- 6) Expand the list of texts and articles by bringing in new materials that offer differing viewpoints to those presenting e.g. drawbacks or limitations of the original idea presenting. This is what 'critical' means - to be able to examine different perspectives of an argument/topic.
- 5) **Paraphrase everything in your work.** Avoid using direct quotes. Cite and add sources for everything as this is not essay-writing but report on the research so you must say always who say what. Nothing should be your opinion.
- 6) Use www.citethisforme.com to reference in-text and in the end-of-text referencing list.
- 7) Use www.grammarly.com to review the grammar.
- 8) Ensure that your end-of text referencing list is compiled alphabetically.

IMPORTANT! You cannot use or copy the words from the materials, only the ideas that the authors presented. So, you must read and summarize everything by putting them in your own words.

Organizing The Information In the Literature Review

Main Paragraph: Common to all good writing, you start with an introduction, that is, 1) what is the topic that you are writing on, 2) what are the research objectives, and 3) define the key terms in your topic.

Within the body of paragraphs that follow: the main paragraph, you will group in a constructive way, a summary of your research findings from the various sources selected. Use different works to argue each other. Present both agreements on the points as well as disagreements. It is thus important to provide different perspectives. Also, present any limitation or shortcomings of the topic (or theories). That is, what authors agree and disagree on a point. Like any good debate, there are authors who will present different views on the same topic. Your literature review is a collection (summary) of these stories for and against the topic.

For the concluding paragraph of the literature review, very briefly summarize the different arguments presented in the work and outcomes determined e.g. the challenges and solutions to the issues that are surrounding the research topic. You will note the bias, flaws, or gaps in the literature reviewed.

DISCUSSION OF THE FINDINGS

1. Brief information on the research topic and aims of the primary study you just conducted.
2. Briefly, how many people did you talk to, and why this number of persons?
3. Briefly, who did you talk to, and why did you select this group?
4. Briefly, what media did you use to reach these participants? and why you selected these media?
5. Briefly, summarize what did you ask them, and critically evaluate why did you ask these questions specifically?
6. What were their responses to the questions posed? As a collective, group and analyze their responses to the individual questions and use an effective technique to show the areas of reasonings / questions that were mainly agreed to and of disagreement?
 - a. What was the primary area/s of agreement between the respondents? Compare.
 - 6.2 In what areas did they disagree? Compare.
 - 6.3. Discuss what you learned about the topic from the responses that you received? Analyze.
 - 6.4. Discussion of the results.
 - 6.5. How did the primary research findings support or diverge from the findings in the desk research (literature review?)

RESULTS AND CONCLUSION

1. Why did you undertake this topic?
2. What were the main findings from the study?
3. What was the *RESULT*? - this could be one specific statement.
4. Were the research objectives met? - How do you know?

RECOMMENDATIONS:

1. What areas of developments are necessary due to the limitations and opportunities that you found?
2. What actions could be taken to reduce or promote the issues in the future.

THE ABSTRACT

- 250 Words summary of the research: on the research topic/intentions, objectives, research methodology and main findings, and outcome. The abstract is written last but goes to the front of the research. That is, place the abstract on the page before the Introduction.

If you have any feedback or question, feel free to contact your research supervisor.