

Synopsis Writing

1. Introduction

The synopsis or the research synopsis is the plan of one's research project. In the words of Larsen: "The research synopsis is the plan of your research project. It provides the rationale for the research, the research objectives, the proposed methods for data collection and recording formats and/or questionnaires and interview guides". The limit of a good synopsis is of 3,000-4,000 words, excluding appendices. Actually, a good synopsis should give maximum information in minimum words.

2. Methods/Structure of a Synopsis

A synopsis can be structured under the following headings:

1. **Title:** At the outset, some working title should be given. Remember, it should be brief and directly related to the goals of the proposed research.
2. **Abstract:** It should contain briefly the main objective of research, statement of the problem and the methods to be used during the conduct of research.
3. **Introduction:** Introduction includes the justification of choosing the proposed research problem. It will state how the proposed problem should be researched and how it will fill the gap of knowledge.
4. **Problem analysis/Literature review:** This section will include other details regarding the research problem. It will present documents to highlight the complexity of the problem and also how and whom it affects. Besides, a critical review of scientific literature related to the problem will be conducted by the researcher because eventually¹ the problem analysis will be based on it.
5. **Objectives:** "These should be identified on the basis of the problem analysis. That means, after reading the problem analysis, it should be immediately clear that the choice of objectives is relevant and justified". What will be the contribution of the research proposal/project to the given subject area? It should be the main objective.
6. **Hypotheses²:** Formulation of hypotheses is an essential stage in writing a synopsis. Hypotheses actually means a tentative solution of the problem. The researcher, at the outset, on the basis of the present literature and experience sets certain hypotheses which are to be tested in course of research.
7. **Delimitation:** A problem may be multi-dimensional but it is not practical for a researcher to deal with all the facets of a problem. Hence, the relevant areas of the problem should be specified in the beginning.
8. **Methodology:** There should be a description of the methods which are to be used for fulfilling the objectives. There are many methods such as experiments, surveys, models and case study. Out of these several research methods, most suitable research method should be chosen.

1. At least; 2. Tentative solution of the problem.

9. **Results:** 'This section presents the analysed data, preferably in tables and charts.' Actually, no authentic statement of the results can be made at this stage. Here, only probable results which the researcher targets to achieve may be mentioned.
10. **Discussion:** This section includes some discussion on the influence of the chosen methods on the results. The researcher takes into consideration all the pros and cons³ of the research problem, the methods and the results.
11. **Conclusion:** Now, comes the stage of stating the main findings of the research. Also, it may throw light on the possibility of further research in the given area.
12. **References:** A reference list of the references used is to be given. There are two methods of source citation. One has been given by the Modern Language Association and the other by the American Psychological Association. (For more details please consult answer to the question no. 15 in the chapter 11, titled as **Technical Research Paper Writing**).



Questions and Answers

Q.1. What is a research synopsis?

Ans. "The research synopsis is the plan of your research project. It provides the rationale for the research