



UNDERGRADUATE RESEARCH FORMAT FOR USE

The following format should be used for writing the research proposal:

Preliminary pages

- Title page
- Declaration page
- Approval page
- Dedication
- acknowledgements
- Table of contents
- List of acronyms
- List of Figures
- List of Tables
- Abstract

Organization of the chapters

Chapter one.....

Chapter two.....

Chapter three.....

Chapter four.....

Chapter five.....

CHAPTER ONE

GENERAL INTRODUCTION

1.0 Introduction

This specifies the subtitles of content to be covered in this chapter

1.1 Background to the Study

Introduces the subject area under study and the current issues that generate the research problem

1.2 Statement of the problem

Explains in not more than half a page the “why” of your research. This section discusses the real issue or challenge an organization might be facing that the research seeks to resolve or provide answer to.

1.3 Objectives of the study

States what you want to obtain information about in order to resolve the research problem in 1.2. It seeks to predict the outcomes of your research results. It is split into:

General Objective

The general objective should be related to the overall purpose of the study according to the topic chosen.

Specific Objectives

These rotate around the major constructs or sub variables of your research or of your dependent and independent variables

1.4 Research Questions

States the objectives of your study in the form of specific questions to which answers must be sought or the assumptions to be verified. They are based on hypotheses or specific objectives of the study; moreover, they should equal the number of specific objectives.

1.5 Scope of the Study:

This section delimits your study in content, time and location. It explains the context within which your study takes place. It is subdivided into content scope, geographical scope and time scope:

1.5.1 *Content Scope*

State the areas of the discipline, the issues or subject matter of your study, those you will focus on and those you won't.

1.5.2 *Time scope*

Tell us the period about which data will be collected. The period under study and why you chose that period E.g. 2003-2011, that is, five years before and after the global financial crisis

1.5.3 *Geographical Scope*

Tell us the geographical location of the subject/organization/branch or department that is the focus of your study and about which data will be collected.

1.6 Significance of the study:

State how your study is important to various parties, constituencies or organizations. This provides the justification of the research to the body of researcher, case study and sector regarded with the study, policy makers or government and further researches the research findings are intended to.

1.7 Profile of the Case study:

This is a brief description of the organization chosen as a case study: fundamental statements (vision, mission, goals), management structure, products/services, branches and markets

1.8 Organization of the study

Tells us how the work is divided and sub-divided in terms of chapters, subtitles and titles. A brief explanation of all the five chapters and what each one deals with.

CHAPTER TWO

LITERATURE REVIEW

2.0 Introduction

This specifies the subtitles of content to be covered in this chapter

2.1 Definition of key terms or concepts

This section defines all the major concepts and variables in the study

2.2 Major Theories related to the Dependent and Independent Variable

Note that the sub titles to this section will depend on the topic and so will follow the major topical issues under study. E.g. In a study entitled “The Impact of Executive Compensation on Company Performance in Rwanda: Case Study of Bralirwa” the section 2.2 may for example be entitled: “Agency Theory in Executive Compensation and Company Performance”.

2.3 Empirical Studies that Examine the relationship Between the Dependent and Independent Variable

This examines the empirical literature or studies on the relationship between the dependent and independent variables. It is subdivided into parts related to the different constructs of the two variables. It identifies literature that affirms or denies or are neutral about the relationship between the variables and sub variables. In this way it establishes the gap within which the study is located

2.4 Conclusion

This summarizes the issues discussed in literature and concludes on the relationship between the dependent and independent variables as established in literature. (NB. The issues raised here become the basis of the questionnaire items which will seek to establish if the case study agrees with what literature has established or departs from it. Hence researchers will have to use information in Literature review to frame the questionnaire items)

CHAPTER THREE

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

3.0 Introduction

This specifies the subtitles of content to be covered in this chapter

3.1 Research Design

Tell us the design of the study: is it analytical, historical, descriptive, exploratory, quantitative or qualitative. Justify the design chosen

3.2 Population

Tells us the total number of subjects about which data may be collected. E.g number of all potential respondents or organizations.

3.3 Sampling Design

3.3.1 Sample Size

A brief paragraph that spells out the number of subjects selected from the population to represent that population and what it is composed of.

3.3.2 Sample Size Determination

Describes how the number or size of the sample was derived. Is it from a table of sample size derivations with different levels of confidence and margins of errors or from a specific sample determination formula? This helps in determining if the sample is representative of the population and based on the level of confidence we may have in the study findings

3.3.3 Sampling Techniques

This specifies the chosen sampling technique used to actually pick the samples from the population. Is it: random sampling/ stratified random sampling? Purposive or judgmental? or?

3.4 Data Collection

3.4.1 Sources of Data

This sub section specifies data in terms of Primary and Secondary data to be collected. Data should be collected from both secondary and primary sources. These must be specified

3.4.2 Data Collection Instruments

The sub section states the instruments used and for what type of data they are used. E.g Questionnaires, Interview guides, panel discussion etc. The researcher is expected to state the type and justify why each of a combination is used.

3.5 Data processing and Presentation

The researcher should describe how data will be organized and presented before they are analyzed. This may include such issues as tabulation, coding, editing, etc.

3.6 Data Analysis

The section that specifies how data will be analyzed for meaning and interpretation. This may include: descriptive statistical approaches such as means, standard deviations, cumulative frequencies, ANOVA, regression correlation analysis. It also involves specification of the tools for analysis such as SPSS, E-views, LINDO, etc

3.7 Research Limitations

The researcher herein states the challenges encountered during the research in such a way that they affected the conduct of the research and demonstrates how the limitations were overcome.

CHAPTER FOUR

DATA PRESENTATION, ANALYSIS AND INTERPRETATION OF FINDINGS

4.0 Introduction

This specifies the subtitles of content to be covered in this chapter

4.1 Profile of Respondents

The sub section uses descriptive statistics to highlight the characteristics of the respondents who were interrogated. This may be in terms of Sex, Age, Education, work departments, expertise, employment profile, etc.

4.2 Findings Regarding the First Research Question or Objective or Hypothesis

This will be entitled according to the issue under study. The title must express the hypothesized relationship between the Dependent and Independent variable as proven or denied by findings

4.3 Findings Regarding the Second Research Question or Objective or Hypothesis

This will be entitled according to the issue under study. The title must express the second assumed or hypothesized relationship between the Dependent and Independent variable as proven or denied by findings

4.4 Findings Regarding the Third Research Question or Objective or Hypothesis

This will be entitled according to the issue under study. The title must express the third assumed or hypothesized relationship between the Dependent and Independent variable as proven or denied by findings

4.5 Etc

CHAPTER FIVE

SUMMARY OF FINDINGS, CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

5.0 Introduction

This specifies the subtitles of content to be covered in this chapter

5.1 Summary

The section summarizes the findings according to the research objectives or questions or hypotheses. If there are four objectives then we expect four short paragraphs explaining the relationship between the dependent and independent variables

5.2 Conclusion

This section concludes in about a page on whether there is a relationship between the dependent and independent variables and any issue that qualifies that relationship

5.3 Recommendations

The section proposes answers to some of the issues raised by the research and recommends what the organization or parties could do as implication of the arising from the study. It also indicates areas for future research not addressed fully by the study

REFERENCES:

- Use APA style
- Start with authors surnames
- Indicate website URL and dates when website materials were retrieved

APPENDICES

- Questionnaire
- Interview Guides
- Tables of Secondary Data Collected and Analyzed

GENERAL REMARKS

1. Spacing is 1.5 with 6 before and 12 after.
2. Margins must be: Left 1.2” and Right 1.0”, Bottom and Top: 1.2” each
3. Page numbers must be centered and using numerals 1, 2, 3,Etc
4. Preliminary pages should be numbered using roman numerals i, ii, iii, ...etc