Handbook of Doctoral Research (1st Edition)

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https://sies.uz/

UDC: 001.891
M 21
LBC: 72.4

Praveen Bhasa Malla. **Handbook of Doctoral Research: A Quick Guide for PhD Scholars. -** *Samarkand.: SamIES, "STAP-SEL" L.L.C. editorial office, 2023 - 104 p.*

Handbook of Doctoral Research:

A Quick Guide for PhD Scholars

(1st Edition)

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ISBN: 978-9910-9986-0-7

Dedicated to the relentless struggle of all PhD Scholars

Foreword

As a Vice-Rector for Scientific Affairs and Innovation at Samarkand Institute of Economics and Service (SamISI) I keep myself abreast with information on international professors visiting Samarkand-based universities. In the year 2020, there was a buzz about an Indian scholar, Prof. Praveen Malla, who regularly visited Samarkand during the weekends to deliver lectures at two public universities. My colleagues from those universities spoke highly of him and his pedagogical proficiency. It was then that I decided to invite him to SamISI to deliver some guest lectures on innovation. Thankfully, he accepted my invitation despite his other engagements in Samarkand. With his unique pedagogical style, he made an impression on our students and teachers alike and I was determined to onboard him as a professor at SamISI. He agreed to my invitation in 2022.

We kickstarted our association with Dr. Malla conducting weekly Master classes and research workshops for our PhD students, young researchers and lecturers. His research workshops were very illuminating and the participants spoke highly of the tips he shared during his sessions. There was a lot of positive feedback about his style of engagement. I was inspired to recommend to him that he write a guide for doctorate research that may serve as the starting point for all of our researchers, not just those at SamISI but also for academics all across Uzbekistan.

Prof. Praveen Malla has done a remarkable job in putting together this handbook in a relatively short time. The handbook is filled with tips, tricks and notes that can help researchers accelerate their research process. The book offers a step-by-step approach to conducting doctoral research. I am hopeful that scholars in Uzbekistan will make good use of the advice given in the book and produce high quality research work that meets international standards.

Предисловие

Как проректор по научной работе и инновациям Самаркандского института экономики и сервиса (СамИСИ) я владею информацией о зарубежных профессорах, посещающих Самаркандские университеты. В 2020 году ходили слухи об индийском ученом, профессоре Правин Малла, который регулярно посещал Самарканд по выходным, чтобы читать лекции в двух государственных университетах. Мои коллеги из этих университетов высоко отзывались о нем и его педагогическом мастерстве. Именно тогда я решила пригласить его в SamISI как гостя, чтобы он прочитал несколько лекций по инновациям. К счастью, он принял мое приглашение, несмотря на другие свои дела в Самарканде. Своим уникальным педагогическим стилем он произвел впечатление как на наших студентов, так и на преподавателей, и я была полна решимости взять его на работу в качестве профессора СамИСИ. Он согласился на мое приглашение в 2022 году.

Мы начали наше сотрудничество с профессором Маллой, проводя еженедельные мастер-классы и исследовательские семинары для наших докторантов, молодых исследователей и преподавателей. Его исследовательские семинары были очень информативными, и участники высоко оценили советы, которыми он делился во время своих сессий. Было много положительных отзывов о его манере поведения. Я порекомендовала ему написать руководство для докторских исследований, которое может послужить отправной точкой для всех наших исследователей, не только для СамИСИ, но и для ученых по всему Узбекистану.

Профессор Правин Малла проделал замечательную работу по составлению этого руководства за относительно короткое время. Руководство наполнено советами, рекомендациями и примечаниями, которые могут помочь исследователям ускорить процесс исследования. Данное руководство предлагает пошаговый подход к проведению докторских исследований. Я надеюсь, что ученые Узбекистана воспользуются советами, данными в этой книге, и смогут провести высококачественные исследовательские работы, соответствующие международным стандартам.

Prof. Dilbar Xasanovna Aslanova
Vice-Rector for Scientific Affairs & Innovation
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PREFACE

When I first met Vice-Rector Prof. Dilbar Aslanova in 2020 I was impressed by her commitment to bolster SamISI's already established brand image. We had a couple of conversations before she drafted me in to deliver some guest sessions on Innovation and International Business in the Faculty of Management. I readily agreed as I loved the warmth shown by the vice rector and the camaraderie displayed by Prof. Farhod Tursunov and the faculty members of the Department of Management. Having delivered a couple of sessions, my association with SamISI ended and I was back to Tashkent where I was associated with other universities. Fast forward to December 2021 and I was reached out to by doctoral scholar Vazira Uzakova who wished to know if I would be back from India and if I would consider getting associated with SamISI yet once again but for a longer duration. At that time, I was on a vacation and was also associated with other universities both in Tashkent and Samarkand. In fact, I was actively engaged with a Samarkand based university and though deep in my mind I knew SamISI would be a great university to be associated with, my loyalty to the other Samarkand based university did not motivate me enough to respond to Vazira in the affirmative. However, when Vazira persisted, I gave in.

Post my return to Uzbekistan I visited SamISI casually expecting that I would not be insisted upon to join it. However, one meeting with Prof. Aslanova changed all that. It was evident that she wanted me to get associated and support the team in bringing about a paradigm shift in SamISI's approach to higher education. I readily accepted her offer and as part of my work agenda was asked to conduct research sessions for doctoral students at SamISI. Thanks to an enthusiastic bunch of doctoral scholars who showed remarkable patience in attending my sessions despite the language barrier, I enjoyed delivering the sessions. Soon after Prof. Aslanova wanted me to help put together a handbook/guide for doctoral researchers educating them on how to conduct scholarly research.

There are scores of books on the market on how to do research but none of them that handholds the scholars step-by-step to cover their research journey. In this handbook, I squeeze in over two decades of my academic experience in simplifying what is otherwise considered a daunting task by research scholars.

In this book, I offer simple tips and tricks that will help them not just accelerate their research process but also support them with topic discovery in a very seamless yet formidable manner. The tone adopted for the handbook is deliberately conversational and I hope the scholars feel the presence of an invisible mentor while reading it. Some ideas or concepts have been repeated across multiple chapters in various tones and forms. The idea is to allow scholars to start at any chapter and still not lose out on the core value offered by this handbook. But if you are a scholar in a hurry and cannot wait to read all the tips and best practices suggested in the chapters to come, read the Pro-Tip at the end of this preface and you are ready to get started. Do not forget to come back and refer to the other contents of this book to strengthen your understanding of the research process. Do not be overly worried if you find overlaps in suggestions. Overlaps are deliberate and are introduced to motivate you to think both critically and independently.

I would like to thank Vice-Rector Prof. Aslanova for conceiving the idea for this handbook and for offering necessary support to put it together. Prof. Farhod Tursunov the chair of the Department of Management deserves credit for giving me enough time and space to work on this handbook. Jonibek Maxmudov, Head of International department was kind enough to host me in his office for extended periods of time and was the driving force behind organizing doctoral workshops at SamISI which consequently led us to work on this book. I am also grateful to all the research scholars of SamISI who attended all my research workshops diligently and who silently motivated me to take active interest in their research work. Special mention to senior research scholar Vazira Uzakova for her unabated inquisitiveness in understanding the research process. She was my live storyboard on who I first experimented with all my tips

and tricks. Only after they passed her scrutiny were they implemented in my research workshops.

We would be eagerly awaiting feedback and suggestions from the users of this handbook which will help us address any unanswered questions and also improve the quality of content in our future editions.

Prof. (Dr.) Praveen Bhasa Malla

Ex-Professor, Samarkand Institute of Economics and Service

Professor at Samarkand Branch of Tashkent State University of Economics

Some Starting Tips to Get Started

Note

So you have just begun your scholarly journey and are overwhelmed with so many journals and so much literature around you? You pick a research paper to read and cannot make heads or tails of it?

You spend the whole day on it, read and re-read the paper and still cannot make sense of anything? It's because you are reading the work of a researcher who has already arrived or who is already established. Remember you are just a novice researcher still trying to put two and two together.

Pro-Tip

Here is how you should pick your first research paper to kick start your reading journey.

1. Talk to your research supervisor or your seniors and seek support from them in identifying seminal papers in your area of research.
2. No help from them? No problem. Google has an answer for everything.
3. Type "research area" (insert key words of your research) + seminal paper + pdf in Google. You will get a bunch of results. Patiently check for the most repeated seminal paper in your area. Download it from the institution's library database. Remember we have mentioned 'research area' not 'research topic' above. Area is broad. Topic is narrow.
4. Read the seminal paper. You will not understand anything during your first read. No problem. Read it again after a day. You will understand something but not everything.

In your own words write a paragraph on what you have understood. It's perfectly ok if you have written something that is not even remotely related to what you have read. Just write.

Pro-Tip (contd.)

5. Park the paper for a week. Meanwhile, keep reflecting on what you have written and if it makes sense. Keep mulling about the content/context of your paragraph.
6. A week later read the paper again. Believe it or not, you will have some perspective while reading the paper now. And still you would have digested just about 50-60% of the paper. Perfect! Repeat the process of writing a paragraph on what you have understood. Mull over it for the next 2 days.
7. Repeat the process above. Ideally, a novice researcher takes about 6-7 readings to comprehend a seminal paper fully well. But understand that these readings are to be spaced by a couple of days each time. Also, they are to be accompanied by your notes every single time.
8. Write a reflective note of about 1500 words that should accommodate the core idea of the seminal paper. Also write a brief paragraph that tracks the development of your thinking process over the 6-7 iterations of reading.

Ideally this process should take anywhere between 10 and 15 days. Do not worry. This is time well spent. Do not be in a hurry to read and understand all at once. Good research demands that you go slow in the beginning.

CHAPTER 1

GET YOUR BASICS RIGHT

Congratulations on your admission as a PhD scholar!

INTRODUCTORY NOTE

Higher educational institutions take immense pride in their research programmes and offer the best guidance to their research scholars in producing good quality research. Faculty supervisors extend all possible help in ensuring that the scholar's research has the right combination of rigor and relevance. PhD research can be both a very exciting and frustrating experience. Exciting because the scholar gets to explore new problems and discover new solutions and frustrating because the journey is filled with uncertainties and insecurities.

PhD journey can be both fun-filled and enlightening provided you, the scholar, know how to go about your research. In this handbook that has been specially put together for you we try to make your PhD journey easier through various time-tested tips and techniques. Throughout this handbook you will find encouragement as you navigate through the steps on conducting good quality research and also you will be discouraged from following practices that do not add value to the body of knowledge.

The general practice is for doctoral students to pre-select an existing problem and attempt at solving the problem. This in our opinion is **not the right approach** to doing doctoral research. While problem solving is important in any research endeavor, the doctoral researcher should focus more on acquiring knowledge of the research process, research methodology and subsequently deploying this knowledge to test hypotheses and arrive at conclusions. In doing so the researcher adds to the extant body of knowledge in her area of specialization and in the process solves a problem.

In this handbook we will answer all the important questions that you will likely grapple with in your PhD journey. Right from explaining the 'why' of research to deep diving into literature scanning and organizing research literature before you finalize your doctoral topic to writing your initial notes to compiling your final dissertation – all your concerns will be addressed in as much detail as possible. While we recommend that you give this handbook one full reading before you get started with your doctoral work, we strongly advise you to follow each step of the process as you progress in your journey and use this handbook like a ready reckoner.

Stuck at some step and need urgent advice? No problem. Just flip to the relevant stage to where you are now in your research journey and look up the steps in this book to continue with your research seamlessly.

REASON FOR EMARBKING ON A PHD JOURNEY

Before you get started let us explore the WHY question -- **Why PhD?**

There can be many reasons for one to pursue PhD. In the past 20 years we have captured responses from PhD scholars to understand what motivates them to enroll for a PhD course. Some of them are as follows–

- I aspire to build a career in academia
- I aspire to become a researcher
- PhD lends social prestige
- I love being addressed as "Dr."
- Intellectual pursuit makes me happy
- I am motivated because a family member has a PhD degree

There could be multiple other reasons and we feel any reason is a good reason to pursue PhD studies. As per OECD report titled "Enhancing labor market relevance and outcomes of doctoral education" just about 1.1% of the world's population has the coveted doctoral status.[1] This is reason enough for one to labor hard and qualify for a PhD degree and be a part of the global elite in higher education.

WHAT IS A PHD DISSERTATION?

A PhD dissertation is not a project report. We repeat, PhD is not equal to a project report. Most often than not we come across dissertation titles like "Employee health in UzAutoLoan company: A study" or "Problems and Prospects of tourism in Khiva region of Uzbekistan."[2] Such topics do not ideally qualify for a PhD level study. Instead, they are short duration non-thesis projects. These projects are designed to be flexible and are academically less rigorous. A PhD study on the other hand involves choosing of an original topic, delimiting the scope of the topic after an extensive literature review and then developing research questions/hypotheses that the scholar wishes to answer through her work. The scholar is required to focus on the methodology to be deployed that includes identification of data sources, method of collecting data and analysis of the data so collected to answer the research hypotheses. It is therefore important that the scholar understand the academic research process and follow each step of the process meticulously to produce quality research output.

[1] See https://www.oecd.org/publications/enhancing-labour-market-relevance-and-outcomes-of-doctoral-education-country-note-hungary-e3a2aafc-en.htm

[2] These are hypothetical titles and not real ones.

Remember, a PhD dissertation is not necessarily about solving multiple problems or answering multiple questions. It is about identifying gaps in the extant literature and through a thorough 'scope delimitation' exercise narrowing down on either one gap or a 'family of gaps'[3] for a methods-driven research study to produce a thesis that adds to the existing body of knowledge.

RESEARCH IS/SHOULD BE…..

Research is not needed –

1. When something is intuitive
2. When something can be concluded through plain observation
3. When the phenomenon is visible to the naked eye and needs no rigor for its understanding
4. When the objective is anything but rigorous scrutiny of existing phenomena and contribution to the existing body of knowledge
5. To prove how clever the scholar is.

Research should ---

1. Be focused on identifying gaps and filling them
2. Be relevant and address either one or all the questions: why, what, when, how, where
3. Either test/question/refute existing theory or advance a new line of thinking
4. Either support or reject existing literature/findings through a novel method of scrutiny
5. Eventually contribute to the existing body of knowledge either measured through Originality, Novelty, Rigor, Relevance, or Treatment.

[3] Ideally that can be addressed through the same set of data collected for the purpose of the study.

TYPES OF PHD RESEARCH

PhD research is very exciting and there are multiple types of studies that you can do to fulfill your doctoral obligations. Below are listed some types of research that you can do, with the caveat that each type requires you to (a) do an in-depth literature survey; (b) delimit the scope of your research topic; (c) follow the traditional academic research approach to conduct your study; and (d) add to the existing body of knowledge. Some study types are listed below -

1. Support or reject existing literature by employing a new methodology
2. Impact studies
3. Event studies
4. Signaling studies
5. Critical survey of literature
6. Testing extant theories

YOU ARE NO.1 WHEN….

To establish yourself as a world's No. 1 researcher in your focused area of study you need to

(a) master the fundamentals of your broad subject area well;

(b) have complete authoritative knowledge of your broad topic and sub-topic;

(c) identify unaddressed research gaps;

d) have full control over the direction of your study including having top-of-the-mind recall of extant literature in both the area of your study and the extended connected areas; and

(e) be able to offer new insights on your topic of study.

Remember

Post your PhD you will be the world's foremost authority in your research topic. No researcher before you would have as much mastery over the topic as you do. No researcher before you would have probed on research gaps (as identified by you) as much as you have. Also, isn't it intuitive that because you have identified the research gaps you have a better handle of the extant literature and therefore you know the research in that specific area better than others?

OVERVIEW OF THE INITIAL RESEARCH PROCESS

Here is a high-level view (see Figure 1.1.) of how to get started with your doctoral research and the broad steps involved in the 'pre-research design' research process. Figure 1.1 offers you only a high-level flowchart of the research process. The flow of activities must be embedded in your mind. Refer to content in Chapters 4, 5, 6 and 7 for a further drill down of these activities. These chapters offer (a) an operating framework to conduct literature surveys; (b) help in learning the concept formation technique while scanning literature, (c) tips on how to write down your initial research notes; and (d) an explanation on how to organize the literature, among other interesting research tips.

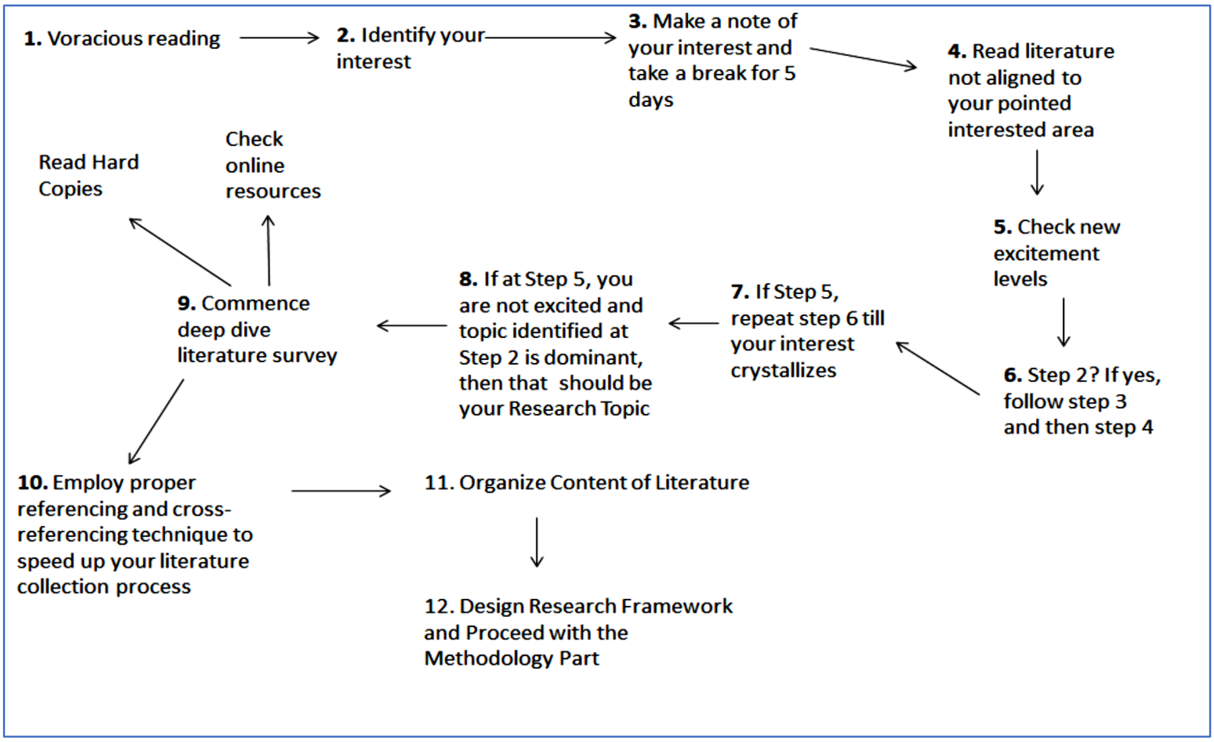


Figure 1.1: Flowchart of the initial research process

While you follow the process laid out in the flowchart it is essential to take timely breaks and allow yourself some time to check your excitement levels. It is normal for scholars to get excited over a certain theme when they read an interesting paper. This excitement is likely to taper down when the scholar lays her hands on the next paper which she now considers more interesting than the previous one.

Remember

Do not select a topic unless it motivates you from within and unless you are confident that you can sustain your enthusiasm for the topic for the next 3-5 years of your doctoral journey. It is perfectly acceptable to spend more time identifying your research topic than hurrying into a topic and then regretting your decision for a lifetime. You should remember that your choice of the topic is going to define and shape your academic future forever. The keyword therefore is **motivation.**

CHAPTER 2

TUCA FRAMEWORK

By and large all research work output gets assessed by the **TUCA framework**. When your full written dissertation is sent for evaluation to academic experts, they most often than not deploy the TUCA framework intuitively. In addition, they also use other global best practices of evaluation that they have exposure to. However, you will most likely do good if you take care of your dissertation's TUCA as that will help the evaluator sense your scholarly seriousness.

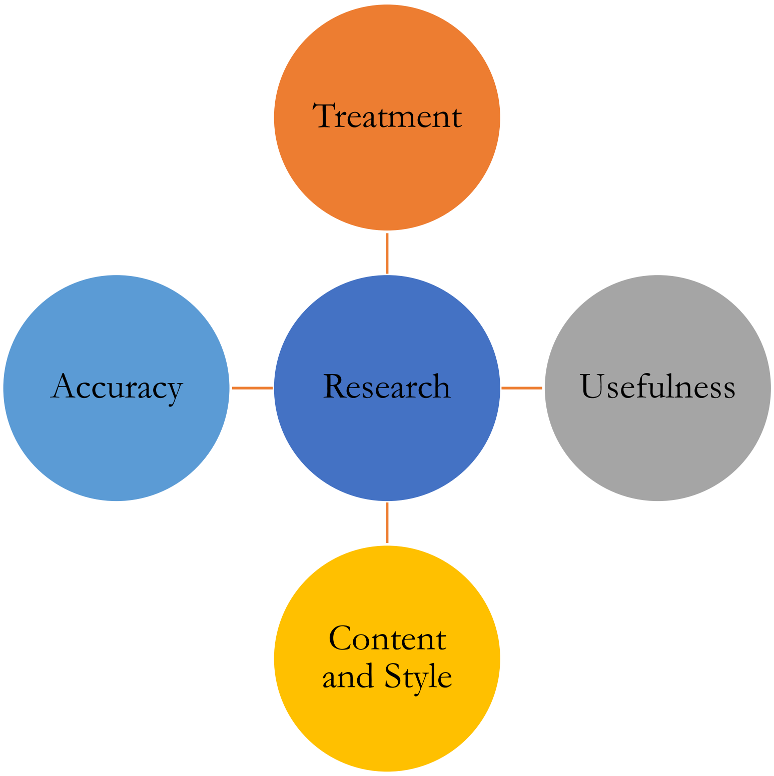


Figure 2.1: TUCA Framework

WHAT IS TUCA FRAMEWORK?

TUCA consists of four important assessment parameters, viz., Treatment, Usefulness, Content and Style, and Accuracy. Each of these parameters is assessed via indicators relevant to it. Tables 2.1-2.4 below list down the indicators corresponding to each parameter. Scholars may note that the list is not exhaustive nor are all indicators deployed for assessment of the scholar's dissertation. The parameters and the corresponding indicators form the suggestive framework for evaluation of research work. As mentioned earlier, the framework is intuitive in nature and expert examiners have the indicators embedded in their minds during the evaluation process. They may additionally use other guided frameworks, if needed.

We would advise you to spend a couple of days understanding the parameters, their corresponding indicators and the meaning of each indicator before you embark on your scholarly pursuit. Do not forget to note down the tips in your notebook.

Parameter	Indicators	Meaning
Treatment	Relevance and rigor	Is the topic contemporary? Is it relevant to the current advances in literature? Does your thesis capture the most recent developments in your area? Is the study rigorous? Does it apply the traditional research approach and is the study methodologically sound? Will it pass the scrutiny of global standards of research?
	Relevance to the readership, especially the scientific community	Does the topic address the research gaps that the scientific community would appreciate? Or is it just a non-thesis project that adds no value to scientific research?
	Originality of topic	Is the study original or is it a replication of an existing study with minor contextual changes in data sets?

		<u>Tip:</u> Originality is directly linked to the depth of your literature research. The deeper your literature research, the better is the identification of research gaps and therefore the more original your work.
	Novelty	Does the study exude characteristics of newness? **<u>Tip:</u>** Novelty is a desirable characteristic, not an essential one.
	Coverage and Depth	First and foremost, PhD research is a **'scope delimitation'** exercise. Hence it is important that the scope of the work be defined well post an in-depth literature survey. Coverage and Depth follow the 'T' model of knowledge creation where the horizontal bar of T indicates the coverage of the topic and the vertical bar refers to the depth of research.
	Contribution to the existing body of knowledge	Does the study make any real, if not substantial, contribution to extant knowledge?

Table 2.1: TUCA Framework (T for Treatment)

Parameter	Indicators	Meaning
Usefulness	Clarity in implications (academic, policy or technical implications)	Does the study offer clear insights to its relevant audience? For example, if the study is on economics, the findings should have relevance to economists or policy makers or both. The findings should help policy makers make informed decisions and help economists and researchers appreciate their importance for subsequent research and theory building. If the study is on management, it serves well if the findings have practical implications in the business context. The findings should help business practitioners acquire new knowledge that they were unaware of till then. This new knowledge should likely make their decision-making process easier and sharper.
	Usefulness to readers/research community	PhD dissertations are read by fresh doctoral scholars and researchers to gain some inspiration and get a perspective. It is therefore important that the thesis be useful to its research audience. While the structure of the thesis, literature review, research design employed, sources of data collection, etc., offer insights to the researchers, 'limitations of the study and future scope' section help the researchers get a starting

		point for their own research journeys. So essentially, you have to keep in mind that your research work should be of relevance to other researchers too. How strongly do you think your contribution can be generalized?

Table 2.2: TUCA Framework (U for Usefulness)

Parameter	Indicators	Meaning
Content and Style	Clarity	Do the ideas in the dissertation follow a structure? Are they clear enough for the reader to understand the research study without marking sentences, paragraphs or sections for clarifications from the scholar? The dissertation should also clearly establish where the core ideas for your research questions emerged from? Are the main objectives of your study clear to the reader? Are the main achievements of your research work clear to the readers?
	Readability and quality of writing (flow, language,	Is the flow of the writing seamless? Are the sentence-to-sentence, paragraph-to-paragraph, section-to-section, chapter-to-chapter connections tight enough to offer the

	structure, style, usages)	reader an unhindered and intuitive reading experience? Does the language pass the scrutiny of professional academic writing?
	Whether key findings appropriately delivered	Have the study's findings been appropriately articulated? Is the inferencing style ambiguous? Do the findings give conflicting insights? Have the readers comprehended the findings in the exact same way as articulated and meant by the scholar?

Table 2.3: TUCA Framework (C for Content and Style)

Parameter	Indicators	Meaning
Accuracy	Accuracy of sourcing	Is the reference sourced from its original source/publication or is the scholar citing a certain research paper that has been referenced in a study done by another researcher? ***<u>What is meant by reference sourced from original publication?</u>*** Let us for example take the seminal work of Adolf A Berle and Gardiner C Means. Berle and Means in their book titled "The Modern

		Corporation and Private Property," published in 1932, explain the emergence of diversified shareholders. This claim of theirs has been later studied more closely by economists and management researchers globally. Thousands of research papers in economics and business management cite Berle and Means' work. Let us call Berle and Means' 1932 book as **Origina**l source. Let us now call the other research papers that were published with the Berle and Means' hypothesis as **Secondary** source. If you have to refer to Berle and Means' hypothesis in your study, would you pick ideas/content/inspiration from the original source or the secondary source? Remember there is no harm in picking ideas from a secondary source as long as the context of your work justifies it. However, if you have to attribute a certain claim of yours to Berle and Means' work, then you should cite the **Original** source and **not the Secondary** source. Moreover, at times scholars download various kinds of articles and reports from non-journal

		online resources, for e.g., from government or media websites or websites of institutions, agencies, individuals, etc. If you decide to cite such articles or reports in your study, it is not enough to list them down in the References section but you should also ensure to mention the date the article has been sourced/accessed/downloaded from the website/internet followed by the source URL. For more details on how to cite online resources visit https://www.student.unsw.edu.au/how-do-i-cite-electronic-sources
	Appropriate literature cited	Do the references in your thesis link to the topic of your study? **Tip:** Most evaluators quickly browse through the references list as they have knowledge of the most important contributors in the relevant research area. If they do not see seminal papers or prominent authors listed in the references section, they intuitively dismiss the dissertation as weakly grounded in relevant academic literature. **Tip:** Always ensure to cite literature that is tightly linked with the topic of your research.

		DO NOT list references that are not cited in the body of your thesis. **Tip:** Never miss out on the most commonly cited research work in your area of study.
	Other sources acknowledged	PhD scholars liberally pick research ideas, knowledge nuggets, data and contemporary information from sources other than journal articles or research papers. They need to acknowledge such sources without fail.

Table 2.4: TUCA Framework (A for Accuracy)

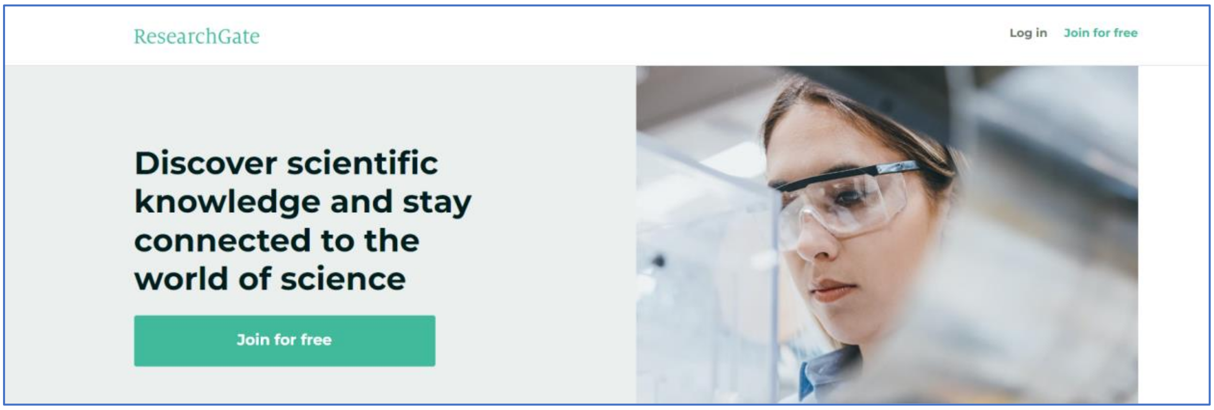
CHAPTER 3

INTRODUCTORY TOOLKIT

Ok now let us move from context setting to brass-tacks action. We hope that you will pay attention to what follows now and commit yourself to following the procedure detailed below to ensure a seamless research journey for yourself.

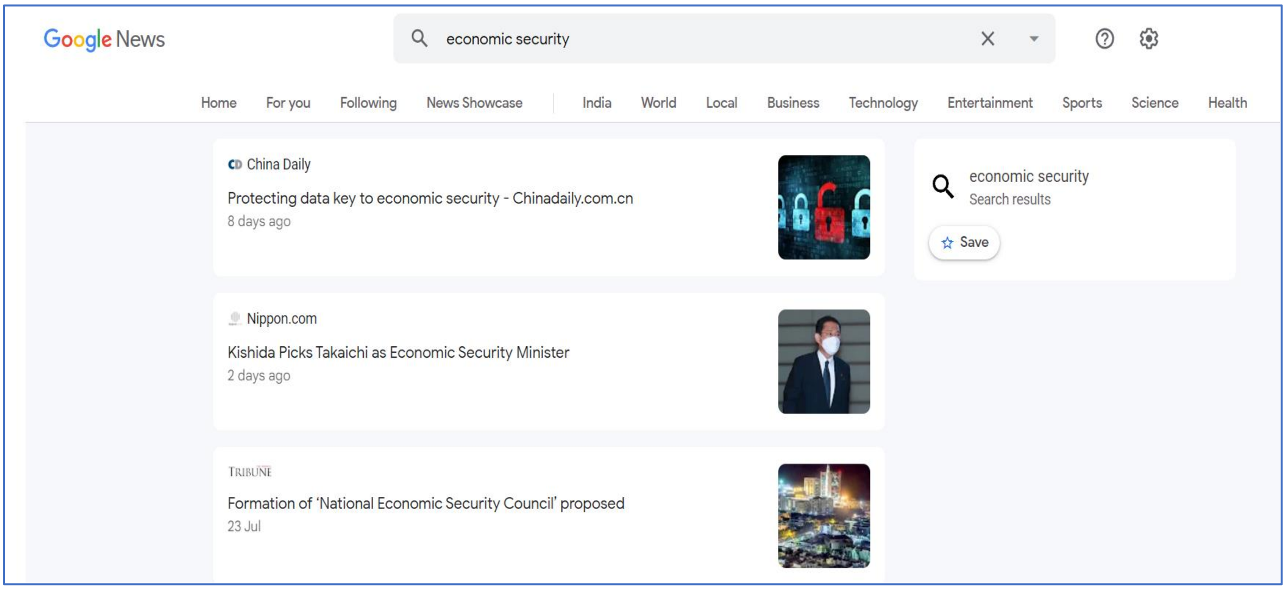
YOUR TOOLKIT

1. Create an account on www.researchgate.net. ResearchGate is a scientific social network where scientists and researchers post and share their research papers, ask research questions to their peers and collaborate with each other on research projects. ResearchGate helps researchers find and share research, discover scientific knowledge and remain connected to each other.

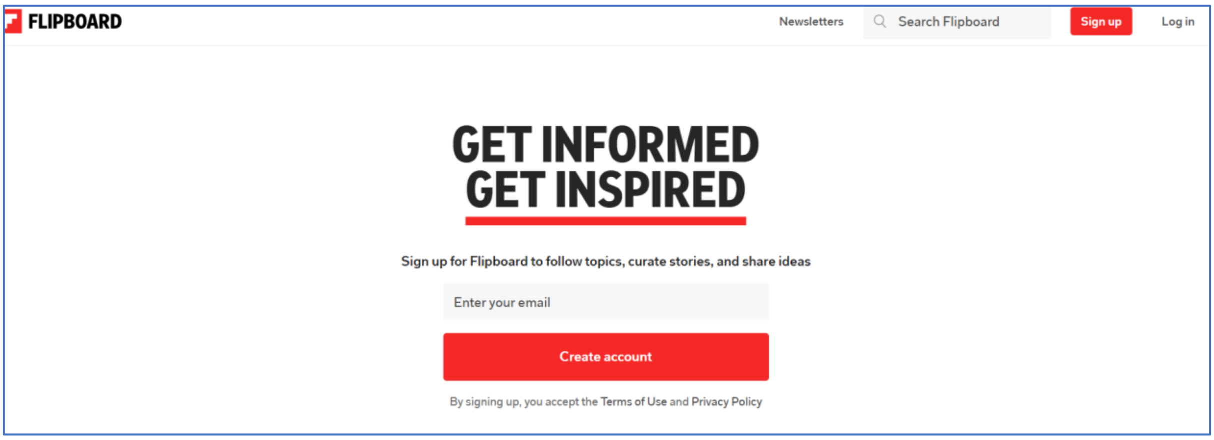


2. Open www.news.google.com and search for key terms based on your area of research. For example, if your research area/topic is Economic Security then type these words in the Search Box. See screenshot below for a better understanding. Now click on "Save" or "Follow" on the right-hand side under the topic (in this case it is economic security).

Every morning, make it a habit to go through your Google News feed and keep yourself abreast with the latest news, trends and developments around your area of interest.



3. On your smartphone download either FlipBoard or News360 or both apps. Open the apps and key in your interest areas to follow latest news stories related to your research field. Subscribe to the topics that are relevant to you. Do not expect scientific information as both these apps are social magazines and focus more on delivering contemporary information. Keep checking for latest articles on your topic from time to time to keep abreast with the contemporary developments.



4. If you do not already have a LinkedIn account create one. Ensure that you update your profile with your university's affiliation. Search for experts in your broad area of interest and send them a connection request. Do not shoot LinkedIn's templatized connection request. Instead, customize your connection request. You can follow the below mail template or alternatively draft your own customized message.

   "Dear XYZ,[4] I am a doctoral scholar in ABC University researching in the area of Economic Security.[5] I am happy to know that you have professional/research interest in this area.[6] As we share similar research interests, I would be glad if we could connect and exchange notes."

[4] If the recipient has a doctorate you can address him/her as 'Dear Dr. <Last Name' and if he/she is a Professor it should be Dear Prof. <Last Name>. While the standard Western style is to address the person with his/her name, Uzbekistan is known for its culture and the high standards of interpersonal communication. Just be an Uzbek and you would do good.

[5] In this case I have mentioned an indicative subject area. You can replace Economic Security with the area of your interest.

[6] I have written 'professional/research' interest here. Ensure to use the right applicable word. If the other person is an academic or researcher, write academic/research interest. If he/she has is an industry professional but has interest in your area, write professional interest.

There are multiple ways of writing polite messages. The keyword here is polite. Remember, it is you who is seeking the connection and not the other way round.

CHAPTER 4

LITERATURE SEARCH: FRAMEWORK AND ITS APPLICATION

A well identified topic is 50% of your work done. We acknowledge that the starting point is often the most difficult part of one's research journey. Most often than not doctoral scholars embark on their doctoral expedition with a pre-determined topic in hand. This in our opinion, though not a bad way to start research, is not the most appropriate way. A doctoral scholar's primary effort should be focused on identifying research gaps in extant literature and then assessing if she is motivated enough to address those gaps. If the answer is in affirmation, she should quickly do a plain and swift reconnaissance of sources and availability of data that she would need for the study. It is not unusual for scholars to get dejected on not finding relevant support or source to gather data. Essentially this means that motivation in itself is not enough. Motivation has to find its enabling ecosystem.

As you mature in your ***literature survey*** capabilities you will find many unaddressed research gaps. It is very likely that you will get excited as soon as you find your first problem and would want to solve it post haste in a rush to finish your PhD work. Always remember that if you could find a gap, it is also possible that another researcher from another part of the world would also have identified the same gap and has most possibly begun filling it.

Pro-Tip

1. Read research publications in your area of study with an inquisitive mind
2. Spare some time to think on the nuances presented by the paper's author
3. Attempt at establishing connects between arguments/claims made by the papers you have read. Do not be disappointed if you cannot. Just try!

Identifying a topic for doctoral research is easier said than done. Many a times it is observed that scholars give up mid-way through their doctoral research either because they have not been able to identify the right research topic, or even if they have, they are unable to find enough support from literature and in some cases they are unable to gather the right data for their research. It is therefore important that you spend considerable time in this phase of your research journey. Do not be bogged down by timelines at this point in time. Do not buckle under unwanted pressure to get going with a poorly identified topic. It is ok to spend upwards of a year to identify the right research topic. As we have mentioned earlier, identifying your research topic is 50% of the job done. We suggest that you adopt the ABSRT Model that we have developed for you in arriving at your research topic from your broad area of study. For e.g., if your broad area of study is Financial Management, you need to follow the steps as suggested under ABSRT model to arrive at your pointed research topic which as an example could be 'study of pre- and post-event ratios of public listed companies' (see Table 4.1 for similar suggestions).[7]

[7] The research topics mentioned in the table are all indicative and should not be construed as the only available options. Researchers are free to arrive at their own topics based on their literature search and their personal research interests. ABSRT Model should be taken only as a suggestive workflow.

Broad Area	Broad Topic	Broad Sub-Topic	Research Topic
Marketing	Advertising	Campaign Planning	Choice of Media Vehicles
Human Resources	Learning & Development	L & D Interventions for Mid-level Executives	Test-Retest Skilling
Finance	Investment Management	Ratio Analysis	Pre-Post Event Ratios
Entrepreneurship	MSME	Venture Finance	NPA and sickness

Table 4.1: Arriving at the Research Topic from the Broad Area of Study (ABSRT MODEL)

ABSRT MODEL EXPLAINED

Step 1: Identify the broad subject area of your research (A)

Most often than not, research scholars enter the doctoral program with a subject background. For example, a scholar with a Master's degree in Economics will of course not pursue a PhD programme in Music. So, the broad area is often pre-decided. As a best practice we advise scholars to spend about a month reading at least 2 textbooks and 2 reference books in their area of interest.

You may be confident that textbooks that you read during your Master's program should be enough. However, we feel that reading a textbook in the early stages of your doctoral studies has the following advantages –

a. It helps brush up your knowledge in the area
b. It helps you to acquire new knowledge about the latest developments in the area.

Always ensure to pick the latest edition of the textbook. Textbooks are constantly updated to accommodate for the recent advances in the subject area.

Let us understand this process through an example. Let us assume that you are a researcher in the field of Management and intend to pursue a PhD in the broad subject area of Human Resources. Pick two contemporary textbooks and give them a thorough read. For example, pick the following titles –

i. Human Resource Management: Gaining a Competitive Advantage by Raymond Andrew Noe, John R Hollenbeck, Barry Gerhart and Patrick M Wright.
ii. Human Resource Management by Sean R Valentine, Patricia Meglich, Robert L Mathis and John H Jackson.

As mentioned earlier ensure to read the latest editions. In suggesting these books, we have no bias. The suggestions are indicative only. You can pick textbooks that are commonly read in your subject area.

After having read the textbooks, pick two contemporary reference (non-academic) books. For example –

i. People Strategy: How to Invest in People and Make Culture your Competitive Advantage by Jack Altman
ii. Redefining HR: Transforming People Teams to Drive Business Performance by Lars Schmidt.

Choose the most recently published titles. Non-academic books offer a fresh perspective to the reader and quite often indicate the direction in which the subject is growing in the practical world. While older reference books offer a perspective, the ideas mostly become obsolete by the time you are mid-way through your research work. So, if you have joined your PhD program in the year 2023, ensure to pick reference/non-academic books that are published no earlier than 2021. Allot yourself at least 3 months to read and re-read these books. While reading the books – be they textbooks or reference books – ensure to jot down notes in whatever rough form you can. At this stage there is no need to be organized in note taking. Just note down whatever thoughts enter your mind while reading the content.[8]

Pro-Tip

Once every week, go through your raw notes and write a 250-1000 words' summary of your thoughts. Toward the end of this exercise, you will have 12 summaries and interestingly you will also have anywhere between 3000-12000 words of content with you.

Step 2: Identify the broad topic within the subject area (B)

Most doctoral scholars join their doctoral program with a broad topic in mind. We see no harm in that. We however suggest that the scholars follow the previous step to ground themselves in the fundamentals of their subject area which in turn should help them to find a certain broad topic interesting for their research work. For example, the HR scholar might find the topic of Learning and Development (L&D) interesting for her research work. She should then follow the same grounding process as mentioned in the previous step – read at least 2-3 textbooks and 2-3 reference/non-academic books.

For textbooks she may refer to –

[8] Alternatively, you can follow the template that is recommended in Chapter 6 under the heading "Writing Initial Notes'.

i. Employee Training and Development by Raymond Noe and Amitabh D Kodwani
ii. Training and Development: Theory and Applications by Dipak K Bhattacharya

And for non-academic books she can refer to -

i. Design Thinking for Training and Development by Sharon Boller and Laura Fletcher
ii. Revolutionize Learning and Development: Performance Innovation Strategy for the Information Age by Clark N. Quinn

In addition, the scholar should read up at least 20-50 research papers on the topic. More the merrier! Scroll to Chapter 5 to learn how to find relevant research papers and how to read them, especially when you are a research novice.

Step 3: Identify the broad <u>sub-topic</u> within the broad topic (S)

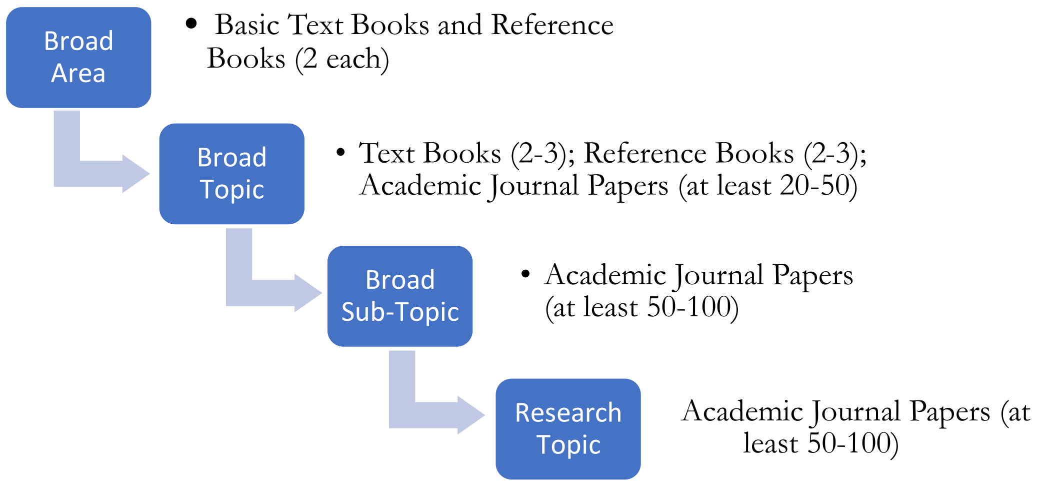
While on Step 2 you might consistently come across a sub-topic that you find interesting. Let us assume that you get inquisitive on what kind of L&D interventions are possible for mid-level managers. Bravo! Find and read at least 50-100 relevant research papers focused that sub-topic.

Step 4: Narrow down on your <u>research topic</u> (RT)

This step is a repeat of the previous step. While reading up literature on L&D you may find the concept of 'test-retest skilling' very interesting. Find and read at least 50-100 research papers on this topic.

REMINDER

Do not forget the number of books/research papers you are to read before finalizing your research topic.



Ok so you have finally identified your research topic. Does your literature scan/search activity come to an end with the identification of your research topic? The answer is a flat NO. This is the beginning of your real literature scan/search. Remember, we have used the term 'literature survey' and not 'literature scan' at this stage. Let us understand the difference between these two terms through an analogy.

Sherzod's Marriage Shopping

Sherzod is about to get married. He wishes to gift his bride a nice dress. In his mind's eye he has already sketched out the kind of dress he would like to see his bride wearing for the after-marriage party. He visits Makon mall and quickly browses through all the cloth stores located there. His mind has a limited number of variables, for e.g., type of cloth and aesthetics of the dress, when he is scanning the stores. At times he feels excited seeing dresses that are different from what he has visualized but quickly realizes that they may not suit his budget or his bride's taste. So, he sticks with his original plan. He continues browsing/scanning the stores. Sherzod may find a store in the mall that meets his requirements and also there is a possibility that he might have to visit and scan/search more malls or shopping locations before he can find a shop that can cater to his needs.

Let us assume that Sherzod **succeeds in finding a store** which he feels is appropriate for the purchase he has in mind. He **finds the dress** he needs but the store owner presents to him some more options in a wide range of quality, colour, price and design. Sherzod digs deeper to understand these variables better. He looks for the right combination of these variables that will help him make his purchase decision. While making his **selection decision** he has to be sure that that the dress (a) will look as appealing on his bride as he has visualized it; (b) is acceptable to his bride; (c) is appreciated for its quality, colour and design by the bride and her discerning friends and family; (d) is affordable; and (d) can be altered for minor changes, if any, when needed.

All activities undertaken by Sherzod till he **'succeeds in finding a store'** is akin to **literature scan/search**. Once Sherzod finds the store he realizes that he can **find the dress** that he is looking for.[9] However, as we have read above, the store manager presents options to him in **various formats and combinations**. It is for Sherzod to make a **decision**. Sherzod makes a decision based on various constraints he is locked in with, historical data available, online reviews of the store and its products. The activities involved from **finding the dress to finally arriving at a decision** are akin to **literature survey** which means before making the decision one has to study all the variables very closely, rule out those variables

[9] This dress is analogous to research topic in our example.

that will not likely add to the decision's value or quality and include those variables that would lead to the right outcome.

So, while literature scanning helps one build a strong foundation, literature survey helps with understanding the nuts and bolts of the selected topic and shows the researcher the way to where the gaps lie and how to address them.

ABSRT PLUS MODEL

As mentioned in the previous section, literature scanning helps one identify research topic but literature survey is what helps the scholar find gaps in extant literature and conduct research to fill them. Essentially, literature survey is what leads the scholars to research problems. ABSRT PLUS is an extension of the ABSRT Model. While the scope of ABSRT Model is limited to literature scanning, ABSRT PLUS extends to literature survey even while the steps involved in scouring literature remain more or less the same.

We understood the ABSRT Model through an example of Human Resources Management as our Area of Study. For ABSRT PLUS model let us use yet another broad area, for e.g., Marketing Management, for the sake of diversity in our examples. Refer to Table 4.1 to see the progression from Broad Area to Research Topic for Marketing. By following the ABSRT Model let us assume you have arrived at **'choice of media vehicles'** as your research topic. Excellent! You are doing good.

But as you read research papers related to 'choice of media vehicles' you would notice some dominant micro-topics fleshing out from literature. For e.g., micro-topics for the research topic '*choice of media vehicles*' could be automated screening of media vehicle, media mix, content mix, display/streaming mix, financial prudence, behavioural interventions, carrier appeasement, competition and so on and so forth as can be seen in Table 4.2 below.

Research Topic	Micro-topic	Research Questions
Choice of Media Vehicles	Automated screening of media vehicle	1. Random choices 2. Scientific Algorithm
	Marketing Strategy	1. Entering new markets 2. Targeting new customers 3. Penetrating existing markets 4. Top of the mind recall
	Media Mix	1. Digital vs. Traditional 2. Customer inclusivity
	Content Mix	1. Streaming vs. Print 2. Consumption Patterns 3. Content Plugs
	Display/Streaming Mix	1. Time/day of airing promos 2. Pre-/Post-/intervening displays
	Financial Prudence	1. ROME 2. ROI on MV vs. POS
	Behavioural Interventions	1. Senior management discretion 2. Media buyer behavior
	Carrier Appeasement	1. Relationship Management 2. Ulterior Motives
	Competition	1. Competitor Buying Behavior 2. Competitor's Success Analysis

Table 4.2: Progression from Research Topic to Research Questions

Some micro-topics could excite you as a researcher and some may not be as exciting. It is therefore advised that you follow the steps as discussed below –

Step 1: Read as much literature as available on the research topic and identify the micro-topics that emerge from it. Keep monitoring your motivation levels. Are you motivated or excited by a certain micro-topic? Do you feel voluntarily encouraged to dig deeper into a certain micro-topic? If yes, follow Step 2. If no, keep reading more on your research topic to identify other micro-topics.

Step 2: So, a certain micro-topic has caught your attention and you feel you are ready for brass tacks research? Good! Take a break for a week or ten days. Come back with a fresh mind and peruse literature on the micro-topic yet once again. Does it still seem interesting as before? Is your excitement level similar to the one you had before you took the break. If yes, jump to Step 3. If no, repeat Step 1.

Step 3: While reading research papers on a micro-topic you come across some common research questions being addressed in literature. Let us assume you have chosen "content mix" as your micro-topic. Pay attention to the research questions that are most often addressed by researchers in this topic.[10] Researcher A would have studied the efficacy of broadcast/streaming versus print media and the content mix strategy chosen by advertisers. Researcher B's paper would have addressed the behavioural elements of consumption of content and patterns of content use by social media users. Researcher C's research on the other hand would have studied how content can be plugged into print, broadcast or social media to influence and shape the opinions of audience. While each of these research papers could be equally interesting, the doctoral scholar should visually draw the scope of her research should she pick up the same micro-topic for her research. As we have mentioned earlier, choosing a research topic is a delimiting exercise. The scholar should exercise adequate caution in defining the limits of her study keeping in mind the following questions –

a. Can I obtain primary and/or secondary data for my study?
b. Will the questions I address in my research remain relevant at the time of dissertation defence?

[10] See Table 4.2 to check for the research questions corresponding to the micro-topic 'content mix.'

c. Who are the relevant stakeholders for my research? Will my findings offer them insights to make informed decisions, if any?
d. Will my research evaluators appreciate my research methodology?[11]

Of the four questions, the first one is singularly the most important one. The rest of them have work-arounds if the scholar applies herself diligently. There is no fun in choosing a micro-topic that leads to research questions that cannot be addressed due to non-availability of data.

So, while reading research papers on 'content mix' keep an eye on the research questions the researchers are addressing, the common literature they have cited, the methodology they have adopted and the conclusions they have arrived at. This will help you refine and recalibrate your thinking process and more importantly help you learn if the extant literature misses out on addressing some questions. This is what researchers call 'identification of gaps' in research parlance.

Step 4: If you stumble in answering your questions in Step 3 in the affirmative, go back to Step 1 and repeat the process. Else, commence your brass tacks research by (a) identifying gaps in literature that you come across in your micro-topic; and (b) framing 2-3 research questions that you wish to address in your research.

The transition from identification of research topic to identification of gaps is important for a doctoral scholar to kickstart her work in the right direction.

[11] It is not uncommon to see a doctoral scholar coming across various research methodologies during her course of literature survey. For example, she reads a research paper that has employed Interpretative Phenomenological Analysis (IPA) as a research tool. She gets excited about the research tool and wishes to use it for her own study. If her supervisor or her evaluators have had no exposure to using this tool, the scholar may face unwanted delays in her research progress. It becomes doubly challenging when she has to educate her superiors about the tool and its deployment. And even when she has the support of her supervisor, she might find it challenging to educate her adjudicators. I am not suggesting that the scholar avoid novel methods of conducting research but should be adequately prepared to counter challenges that follow thereafter.

CHAPTER 5

APPROACHES TO LITERATURE REVIEW

We have observed that in the past two decades academic research has grown in leaps and bounds, thanks to liberal funding and grants from various funding agencies. It is estimated that roughly about 2 million research papers are published every year in about 35,000 journals. That's quite a huge number for a doctoral scholar to keep pace with contemporary developments in her research area. Utmost care should be taken by the scholar to ensure that papers published in predatory journals or journals that do not follow a proper peer review process are strictly avoided during literature scan. With tonnes of literature available how does one go about finding the most relevant research articles that are connected to the topic under study? I would like to draw your attention to both the **'traditional'** as well as **'technology-intermediated'** approaches to literature scanning.

TRADITIONAL APPROACH

To start with we wish to acquaint you with the **traditional approach** to literature scanning.

1. When you commence your research journey it is advisable that you start the process with an open mind. **DO NOT, we repeat, DO NOT start with a pre-decided topic title in mind.** The topic of your title should always emerge from the gaps in literature under study. Scholars that start with a dissertation title very soon find the research process a frustrating exercise because their efforts are predominantly geared towards retrofitting literature and data to meet the demands of the title. Instead, the converse way of first reading up literature, then finding research gaps and then designing the research framework should be adopted which then will help the title of the study emerge effortlessly.

2. Doctoral scholars need to keep in mind that research involves disciplined inquiry and is a discovery process. With a pre-decided title in hand, the researcher does research but in contravention to established principles of academic research.

The quickest way to get a handle of the extant literature in your narrowed down 'area of study' is by Googling. Let us assume that your area of study is Economics of Service. Type the search string 'economics of service' in the search field. Google uses its semantic algorithm to interpret the search terms and returns relevant results that are connected with the original search string (see Exhibit 5.1 below). This could potentially trigger some research ideas in the scholar's mind.

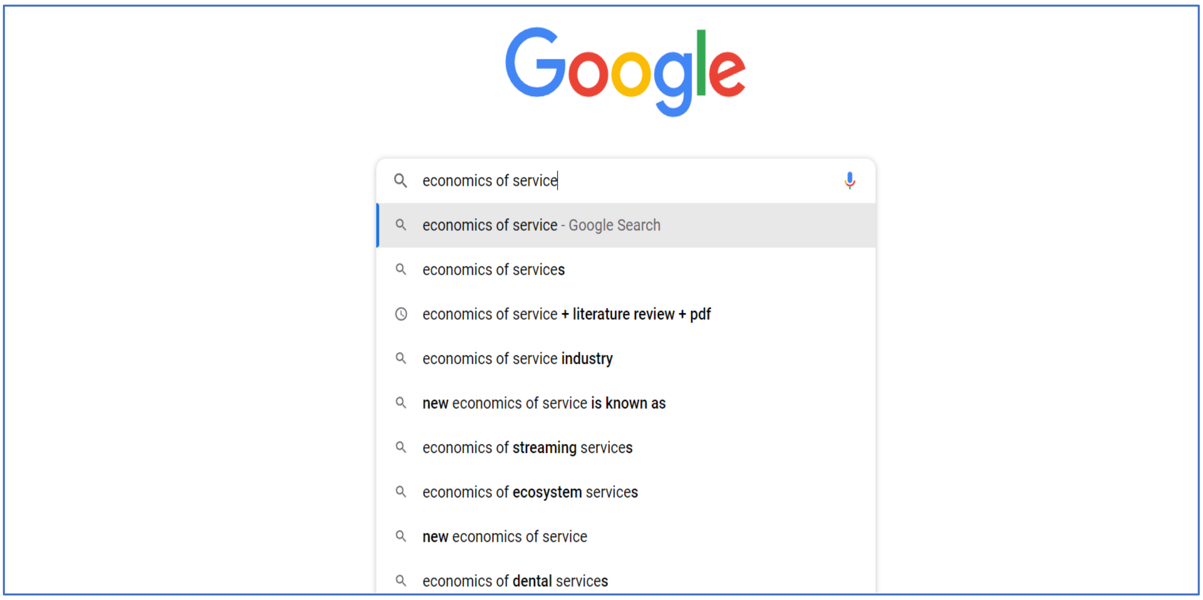


Exhibit 5.1

3. Now type "economics of service + literature review + pdf" in the search bar. See Exhibits 5.2 and 5.3 below. Millions of results have been rendered by Google in less than five seconds' time.

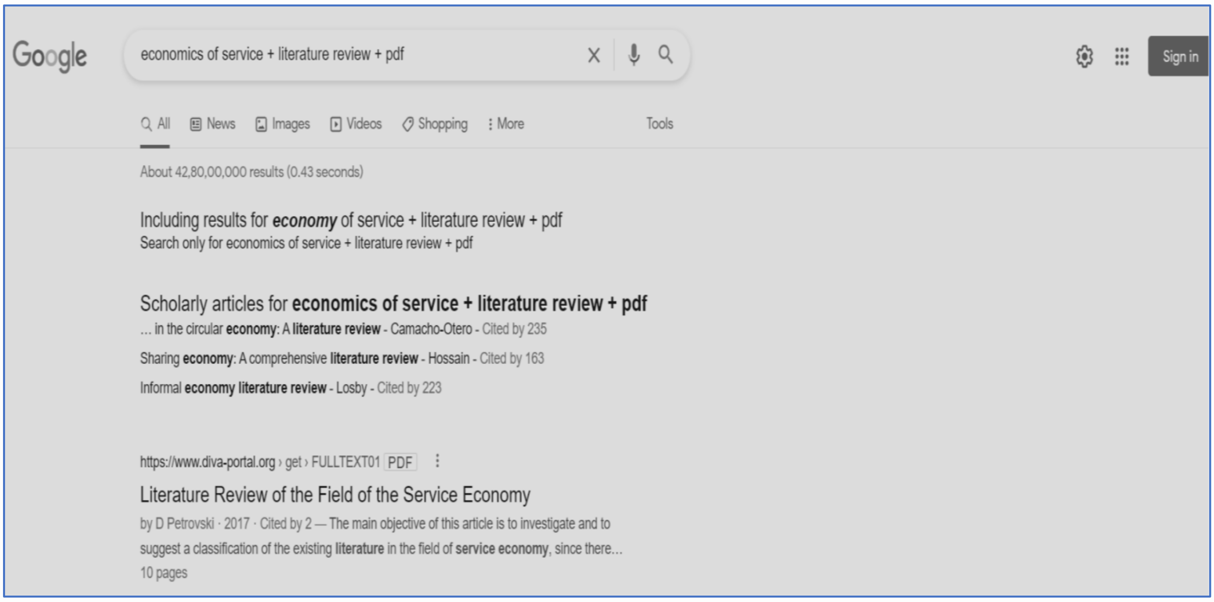


Exhibit 5.2

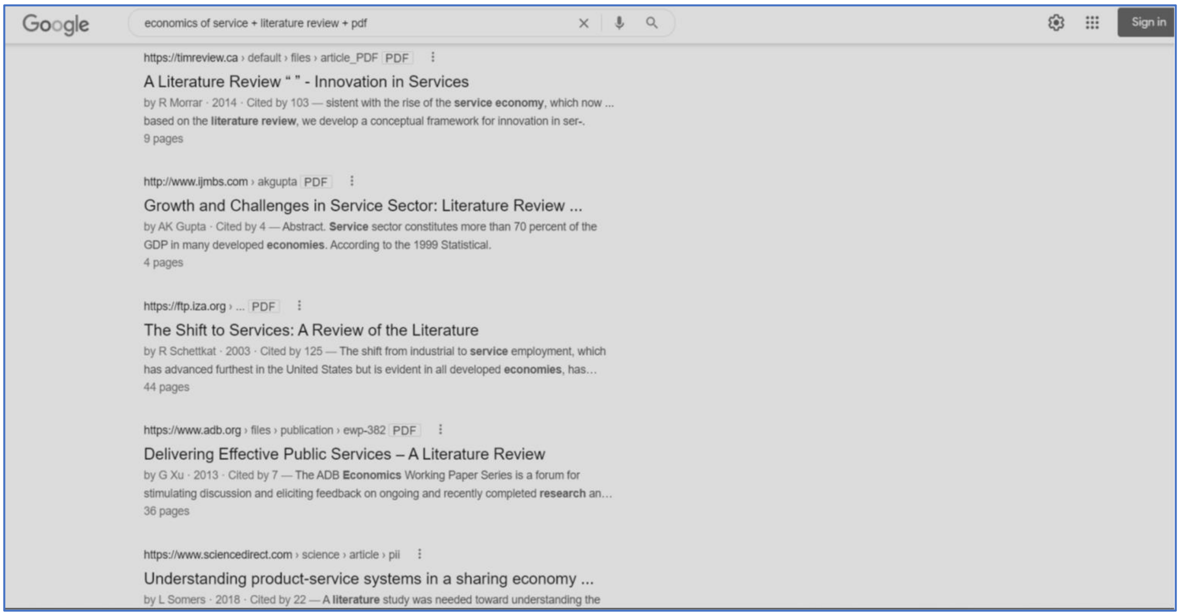


Exhibit 5.3

Not all results would be relevant though. There are **two methods** to narrow down the most relevant links for your consumption. Remember, this is a trial-and-error approach and an iterative process. While the tips mentioned below to narrow down the links hold good, there is a possibility that you might not find enough substance in the article. Do not lose hope. Just keep clicking on other links till you find a paper that attracts your attention.

Method 1: Results that show up with a www.researchgate.net link can be clicked to access or download the literature paper.[12]

Method 2: Scour the results and check for information as circled in Exhibit 5.4 below (snipped from Exhibit 5.3 above). Author's name, year of publication, the number of citations it has received and the length of the article (in this case – 9 pages) are to be looked for. More the number of citations, better it is an indicator of a literature review well done.

Exhibit 5.4

Look at yet another screenshot below -- Exhibit 5.5 (snipped from Exhibit 5.3 above). You have the author's name (R Schettkat), year of

[12] Not all papers on www.researchgate.net are downloadable directly. You need to create an account on ResearchGate to access the content. You can download the paper only if the original author has uploaded it to ResearchGate. If the paper is not available for download, use the ResearchGate interface to Request for the article from the author. ResearchGate has an inbuilt paper request template. It helps you reach out to the original author/s and seek the paper directly. Most often than not authors feel happy to share their research work with peers and scholars. So, approach them for their published work without any hesitation.

publication (2003), number of citations (125), length of the article (44 pages).

Exhibit 5.5

At a first glance the citation/link in Exhibit 5.5 looks like a good link to click on. But the scholar may also use her discretion here as the article was published in 2003 and will not have any contemporary insights to offer. However, a good researcher will ideally not drop this paper from her study as it serves as a background to recent advances in the researcher's topic of study. When this article is combined with the latest literature review article published, the scholar gains rich knowledge of the history of academic research in the given topic.

Ok now you have the review paper in your hand and you have you read it meticulously. While reading ensure to make notes on the ideas or research that appeals to you.[13] Look for the relevant in-text citation[14] and then scroll down to the References section to note down the full citation. If the citation has a DOI,[15] copy and paste it either in the Google search/address bar (as seen in Exhibit 5.6) or in the search bar of the DOI system website https://dx.doi.org/ . Click on the **Go** or **Enter** key and the link will lead you to the original resource.

[13] Scroll to Chapter 6 to learn how to make notes of the research papers you read.

[14] In-text citations invariably follow the author-date method. For e.g., in the sentence "Blended learning as a pedagogical intervention offered the advantage of self-paced learning to the students thereby helping them to navigate through the problem of their short attention spans in classroom sessions (Mayer, 2001)." Mayer, 2001 is the in-text citation.

[15] DOI expands to Digital Object Identifier. You will usually find them in your references against the relevant paper.

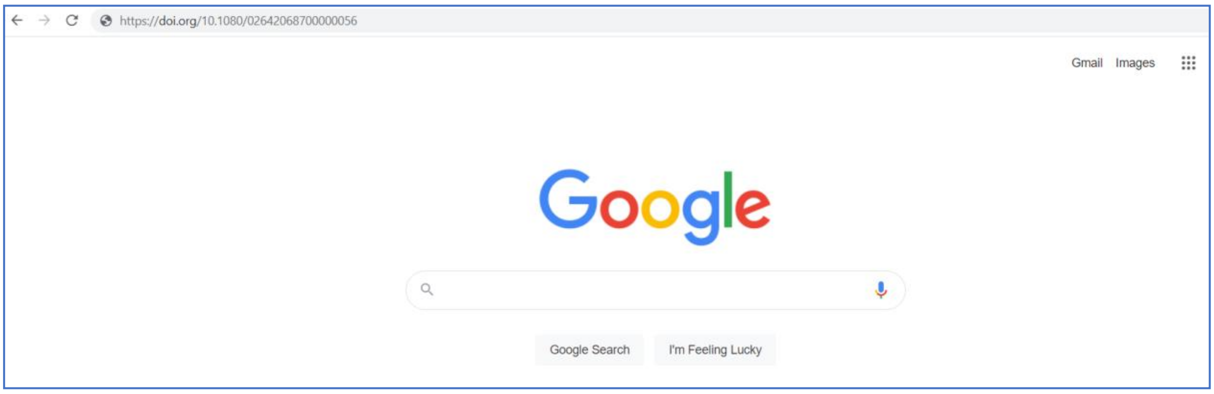


Exhibit 5.6

We will continue with our ***Economics of Services*** example mentioned earlier to demonstrate the process. Let us assume that while combing your literature research paper you have come across an interesting in-text citation of a research paper authored by Gary Akehurst. Scroll down to the References section and look for the full citation. The full citation may read somewhat like this:

"Akehurst, G. (1987), The Economics of Services: An Introduction, *The Service Industries Journal*, 7: 4, 1-11. https://doi.org/10.1080/02642068700000056."

If you are reading a soft copy of the literature review paper, you can directly click on the DOI link. It will lead you to the original source. If the link is not clickable, then copy the DOI and paste it in Google Address Bar as shown in Exhibit 5.6. Then, hit Enter on your keyboard. Google will take you to the original source of the paper.

Alternatively, you can also paste the link in https://dx.doi.org/ as shown in the Exhibit 5.7 below.

Exhibit 5.7

Click on 'Go' and you will be directed to the original source as seen in Exhibit 5.8. If your university has institutional access license for Taylor and Francis journals, you will have the option to download the research paper directly from this site. If not, do reach out to your research supervisor or your mentors and they would be happy to help find the paper for you.

Exhibit 5.8

Pro-Tip

In the traditional approach, the fastest way to pick relevant/connected literature for your study is to scroll down to the References section of the research paper that you are reading and choose references that are appropriate to further your understanding of the theme/concept.

Let us assume your research is related to foreign direct investment and you are reading a research paper titled "FDI and the costs of contract enforcement in developing countries" published in Policy Science in 2010.[16] See Exhibit 5.9 below-

Policy Sci (2010) 43:181–200
DOI 10.1007/s11077-009-9093-3

FDI and the costs of contract enforcement in developing countries

John S. Ahlquist · Aseem Prakash

Published online: 29 May 2009
© The Author(s) 2009. This article is published with open access at Springerlink.com

Abstract This article examines the relationship between foreign direct investment and

Exhibit 5.9

[16] Note: The online version of the paper was published in 2009 as you can see from Exhibit 5.9. However, the print version of the paper appeared in 2010 (see the citation on the top left-hand corner on Exhibit 5.9).

On reading the paper you realize that the paper is closely tied with your own research work and you feel that the author has cited some other researchers' work whose research is also relevant to your research. You now wish to peruse the other researchers' work. How do you that?

Here is a simple step: Scroll down to the bottom of the paper you are reading and check for the References section. Exhibit 5.10 indicates how the References section would look like.[17]

References

Acemoglu, D., & Johnson, S. (2005). Unbundling institutions. *The Journal of Political Economy, 113*(5), 949–995. doi:10.1086/432166.

Acemoglu, D., Johnson, S., & Robinson, J. (2002). Reversal of fortune: Geography and institutions in the making of the modern world income distribution. *The Quarterly Journal of Economics, 117*(4), 1231–1294. doi:10.1162/003355302320935025.

Ahlquist, J. S. (2006). Economic policy, institutions, and capital flows: Portfolio and direct investment flows in developing countries. *International Studies Quarterly, 50*, 687–710. doi:10.1111/j.1468-2478.2006.00420.x.

Ahlquist, J., & Prakash, A. (2008). The influence of foreign direct investment on contracting confidence in developing countries. *Regulation & Governance, 2*(3), 316–339. doi:10.1111/j.1748-5991.2008.00040.x.

Alt, J. E., Carlsen, F., Heum, P., & Johansen, K. (1999). Asset specificity and the political behavior of firms: Lobbying for subsidies in Norway. *International Organization, 53*(1), 99. doi:10.1162/002081899550823.

Baron, D. (2000). *Business and public policy* (3rd ed.). Upper Saddle River, NJ: Prentice Hall.

Barro, R. (1996). Democracy and growth. *Journal of Economic Growth, 1*(1), 1–27. doi:10.1007/BF00163340.

Blonigen, B. A., & Wang, M. G. (2005). Inappropriate pooling of wealthy and poor countries in empirical FDI studies. In T. Moran, E. Graham, & M. Blomstrom (Eds.), *Does FDI promote development?*

Exhibit 5.10

The author of the original paper[18] you are reading will not likely offer an expanded explanation of research that she has cited. For example, she has discussed how 'asset specificity influences political decision making' and

---

[17] The reference list in Exhibit 5.10 is a sample. In the original paper that authors have listed 60+ references. For the sake of brevity and for ease of understanding we have picked 8 references from the top of the list.

Remember: If the references are listed in alphabetical order (per author names) then the paper follows APA style of referencing. For more information on APA style visit this link: https://libguides.jcu.edu.au/apa/home

[18] Original paper in this context is "FDI and the costs of contract enforcement in developing countries."

cited some relevant research papers to ground her work in extant literature. As a researcher it is obvious that you might get more inquisitive about some strands of research over others. So let us assume that you liked the concept of 'asset specificity and political decision making' and would want to know more about it from the original researchers of that topic. You look up the citation in the text and scroll down to the relevant reference in the Reference List. In our example, we can see a related paper, viz., *"Alt, J. E., Carlsen, F., Heum, P., & Johansen, K. (1999). Asset specificity and the political behavior of firms: Lobbying for subsidies in Norway. International Organization, 53(1), 99. doi:10.1162/002081899550823"* (see the fifth entry in Reference in Exhibit 5.10). You may click on the **doi link** of the paper or alternatively you can copy paste the title of the paper in your university's Open Public Access Catalogue search bar which will lead you to the paper in the library's digital database. You may also check with the librarian if a print version of the paper is available.

You have been walked through one example of how a connected paper can be picked from the research article you are reading. As a researcher you will have to follow this exercise quite often to (a) do a primary reading of the relevant paper; (b) understand the concepts from a detailed explanation given by the original author; and (c) trace the history and emergence of relevant literature.

TECHNOLOGY-INTERMEDIATED APPROACH

While the traditional approach has the advantage of laying a strong foundation in research literature, the process could be cumbersome and at times frustrating. The researcher has to read or browse through innumerous research papers before she can find something that is worth adding to her bibliography. Precious time is wasted in the process and uncertainty looms large.[19]

Thankfully, in the recent times a variety of software applications have emerged that aim at drastically shortening the literature scanning period. Three such applications that we feel do ample justice to their claims are www.connectedpapers.com, www.researchrabbit.ai, and www.litmaps.com (refer Exhibits 5.11, 5.12, 5.13 and 5.14). All the three applications serve the same purpose.

Connected Papers claims to –

i. offer a visual overview of a new academic field. When you enter a paper title or DOI, it will build a visual graph of research papers that are similar to the title/content of the paper entered.
ii. ensure that important papers are not missed. As millions of papers get added to literature every year, it is practically impossible for a researcher to track every relevant and important paper. More often than not, researchers tend to miss seminal papers in their area of research that eventually puts them in bad light during the dissertation evaluation process. Connected Papers helps you cut through the clutter of publications and discover important papers for you.
iii. create a bibliography for you. It is often not possible for researchers to remain up-to-date with their references. Connected Papers helps fill this gap by suggesting the most relevant references that should become part of your thesis' bibliography.

[19] While the process has its disadvantages, there is one big advantage of the traditional approach though. The researcher lays her hand upon a variety of research papers and therefore has a wholesome and broad understanding of her research topic's ecosystem. This breadth of knowledge could come in use in the long run when the researcher matures to a professional academician, especially while supervising her PhD students or while co-authoring research papers with other collaborators.

iv. discover recent and prior derivative works effortlessly. This helps you build a chronology of the evolution of your research topic.

The other suggested applications – ResearchRabbit and LitMaps offer services similar to that of Connected Papers. As a researcher you need to choose an application that suits your requirements based on your comfort with the interface offered by each. It serves good to use all three applications in the initial stage of your literature scanning exercise and then decide one that you like.

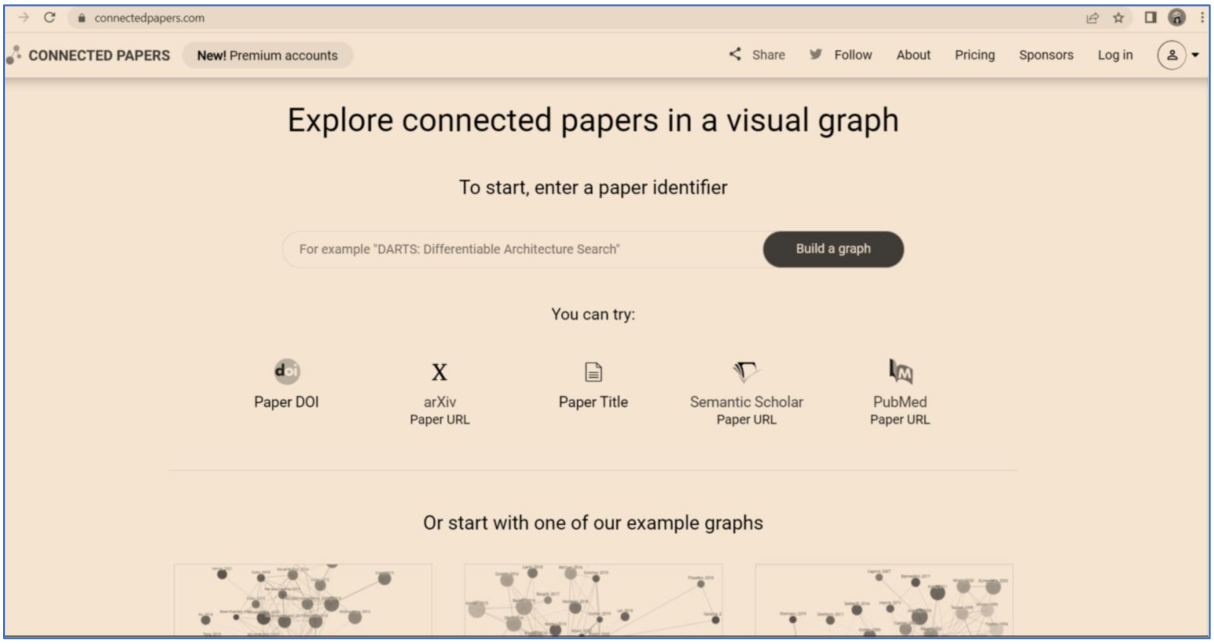


Exhibit 5.11: Homepage of connectedpapers.com

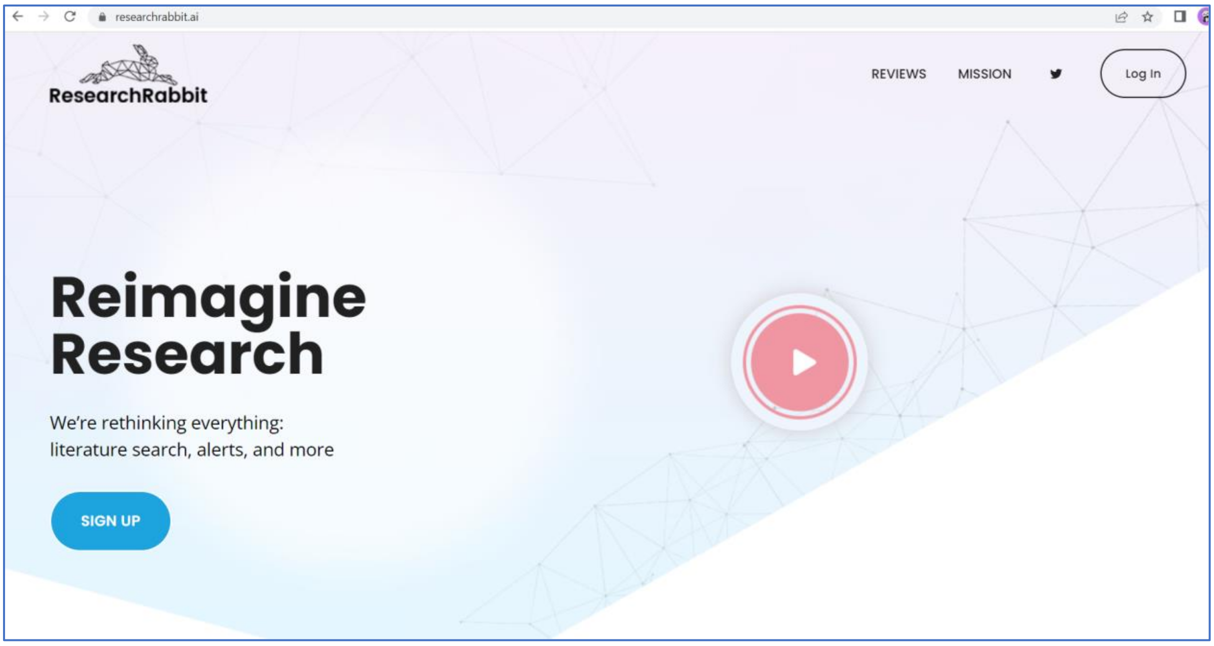


Exhibit 5.12: Homepage of researchrabbit.ai

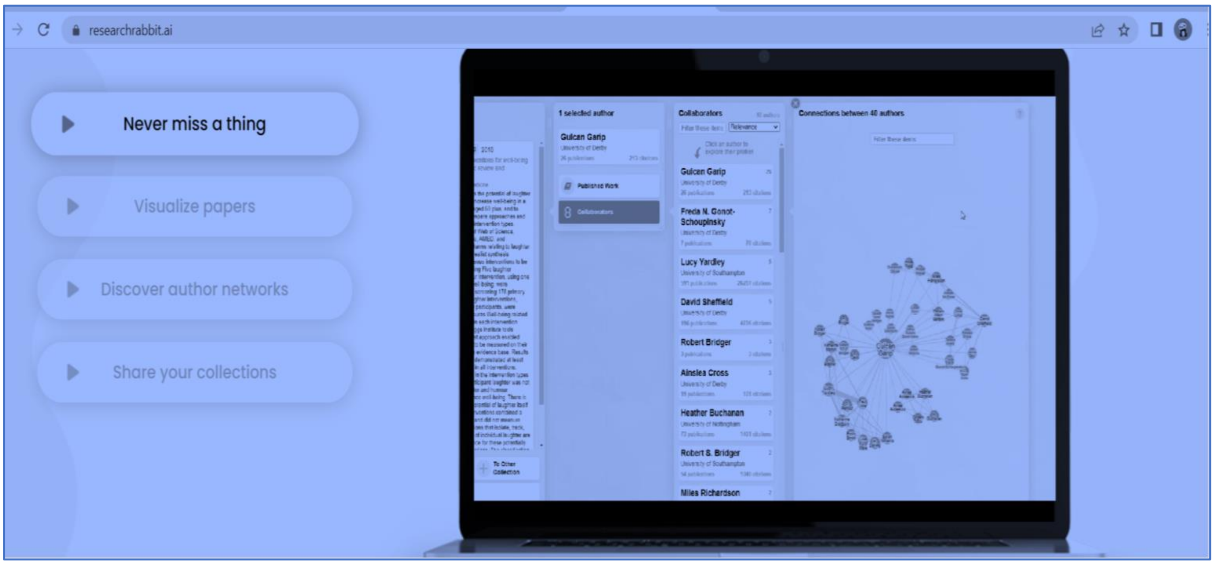


Exhibit 5.13: Homepage of researchrabbit.ai

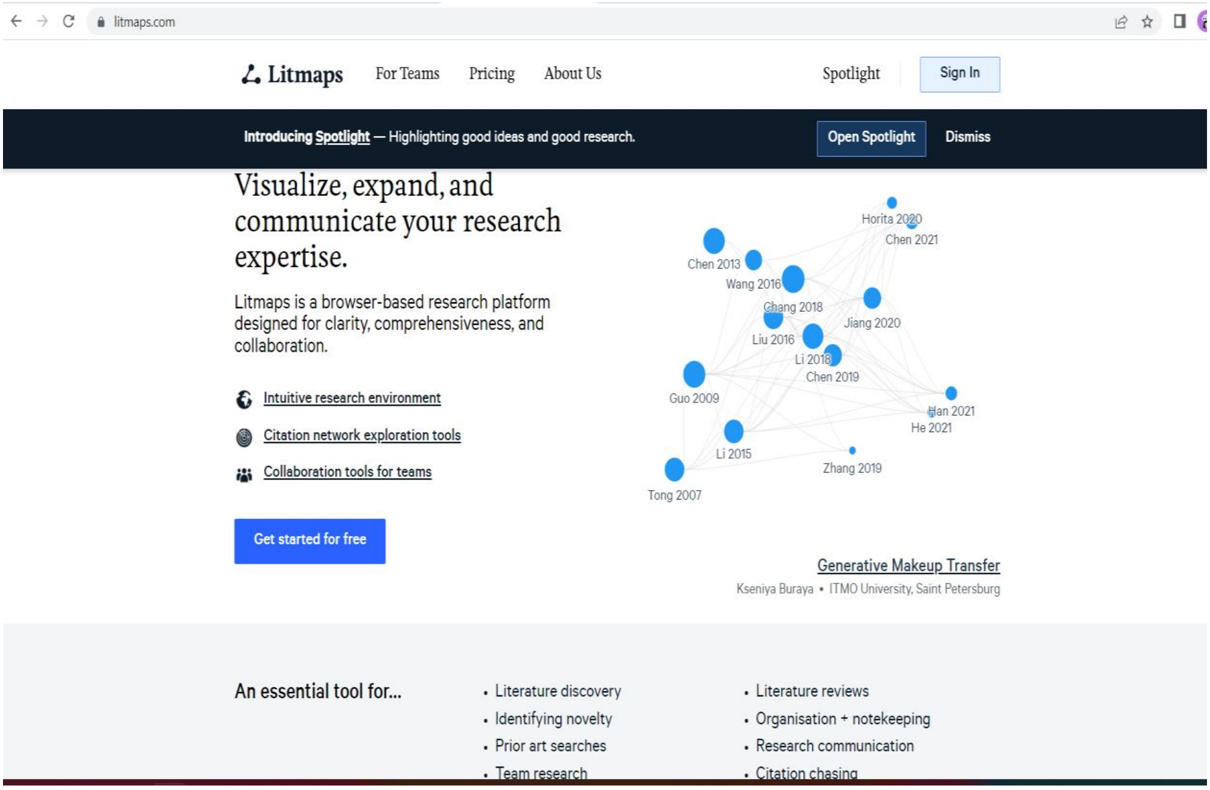


Exhibit 5.14: Homepage of litmaps.com

All the suggested applications show an excellent visual map linking your primary research papers with similar papers and therefore help you understand the directions in which your research has grown and the scope available for it to grow further.

Do not forget to create an account in each of these applications.

CHAPTER 6

LITERATURE SCANNING AND CONCEPT FORMATION

Often scholars are intimidated by the reams of literature they have to read before they can comprehend the extant literature in totality. Reading research papers is a daunting exercise especially when the scholar has just begun her research journey. Most often than not, scholars pick a bunch of research papers very enthusiastically to start their research reading. However, they are stuck in their first paper for days on end because they cannot get through the methodology part without getting confused. This discourages them from further reading and gradually the enthusiasm is lost.

Here is a simple tip on how to read research papers without losing interest. See the schema in the figure below and follow it unflinchingly.

At this stage, avoid reading Research Methodology

Figure 6.1: 3R1W Model of literature scanning

The plan is simple. We call it the 3R1W model. When you pick a research paper *read* the abstract, *read* the introduction and *read* the conclusion. Once you are done reading AIC[20], write down your initial notes. See the section below to learn how to write your first level notes.

[20] AIC is Abstract, Introduction, Conclusion

WRITING INTIAL NOTES

On an average, on a good day a researcher can read as many as 20-25 research papers without fatigue and even on an unproductive day 3-7 papers can be read without much of an effort.

A. If you have read a reference book, use the following schema to write down your initial notes [21]--

i. Summary – Write a summary of the book in about 800-1000 words. Do not copy 'word-for-word' content from the book. Also try avoid paraphrasing. Instead write it in free form in your own words and based on your own understanding. It is ok to superimpose your personal views on the content of the book. In fact, we would highly encourage you to do that as it helps you frame your opinions as you mature in your research reading.

ii. Key Points – Always highlight the key points in the summary. Remember, not every line of the summary is important. Only a few are. So do not forget to mark content that you feel is highly relevant and important. 'Highlighting key points' should come naturally to the researcher. While this may sound trivial in the initial stages of your research, this habit is worth its weight in gold as you will realize later. If possible, ensure citing the page number of the book against the key point you have made.

iii. Source – Always ensure that either at the beginning or at the end of the summary the full reference to the book is cited. This is essential as researchers tend to forget the right source from where they picked an idea or content and over a period of time begin to believe that the idea/concept has emerged from their own original thinking. To pick an idea or concept

[21] See Snapshot 6.1 if you are in a hurry.

without giving due credit to the original author is an act of plagiarism that the researcher should dutifully avoid.

iv. Suggested Readings – On a separate sheet/page list down the most relevant references that you have found in the book. It is possible that you have liked a certain idea or concept that you have read in the book but it is not the author's original content; instead, the author has cited reference of yet another paper or source that she took the idea from. You should note down such references on a separate sheet to read them later. If you are tech-savvy see and follow the pro-tips in this chapter.

Item	Instructions
Summary	800 -100 words
Key Points	Highlight
Source	Full Citation Mandatory. For Key Points, where highlighted, also mention page number from source
Suggested Readings	List down reference citations on a separate sheet

Snapshot 6.1

B. If you have read a journal paper the following schema should be deployed[22]

i. Abstract – In 3-4 lines summarize the abstract of the paper. Ensure to write the abstract in your own words. You may find this exercise difficult in the initial stages but as you develop

[22] For a quick understanding refer Snapshot 6.2

competence in reading research papers and comprehending them, you will find yourself mastering this activity.

ii. Introduction – Write the introduction to the research paper in 4-5 lines in your own words. The introduction should briefly touch upon (a) context setting; and (b) the questions the researcher is trying to address.

iii. Findings/Conclusion – In 2-3 lines write down the main findings or conclusion of the research paper.

iv. Researcher's Observations – This is a very important step in the note taking activity. In less than 10 lines write down your observations of the research paper. Do not worry about the direction your observations take. Do not fret over lack of sharpness in your observations. These are your initial notes and not your final dissertation. So, with a cool head reflect on the research paper and write what you liked or did not like about the paper, if you have identified any unaddressed gaps in the paper, if you agree or disagree with the researcher's hypotheses and in general whatever you feel you should write for your future reference.

v. Source – Ensure that either at the beginning or at the end of your notes, the full reference of the research paper is written down. As mentioned earlier, if you do not cite the source there is a possibility that you may forget to cite the author's work at a later date and there is also a possibility that you may forget that the idea belonged to a certain author and you may own it up, which is soft plagiarism in the research world.[23]

vi. References – Follow instructions as laid out in "Suggested Readings' (serial number A.iv above) If you are tech-savvy see and follow the pro-tips suggested in this chapter.

[23] For more information on what constitutes Plagiarism refer to Chapter 9.

Item	Instructions
Abstract	3-4 lines
Introduction	4-5 lines
Findings/Conclusions	2-3 lines
Researcher's Observations	< 10 lines
Source	Full Citation Mandatory
References	Citations to be taken on a separate sheet

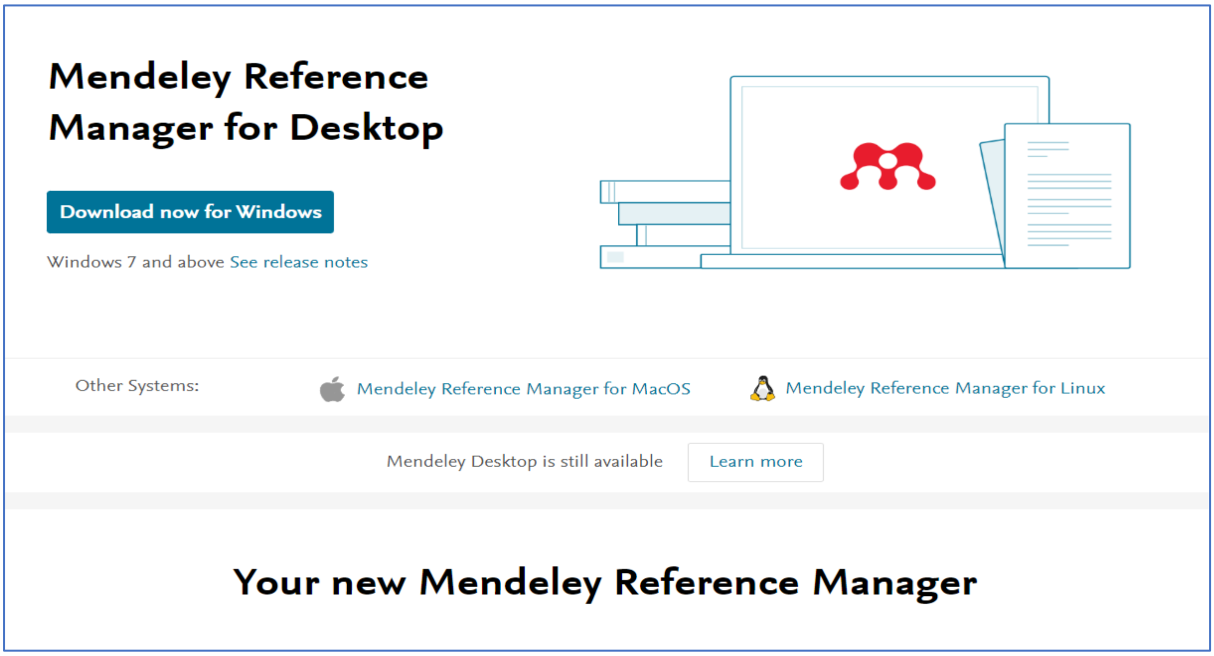
Snapshot 6.2

Pro-Tip

Download Mendeley Reference Manager (see Exhibit 6.1) on your local system, create your account and use it to note down the suggested readings/references.

APA style of citation is the default setting in Mendeley. However, Mendeley Reference Manager allows you to change your citation style to 10 different styles. Adopting Mendeley Reference Manager right at the beginning of your research career could save days and most probably months of effort in working around citation styles in your academic career.

Create an account in Mendeley Reference Manager.[24] It is a free web and desktop reference management application. With this reference manager you can search, store and organize all your references in one central library and most importantly using Mendeley Cite feature insert references in your research papers in any of the ten citation styles as required by your publication guidelines. There are multiple other benefits of using Mendeley Reference Manager. For a full list of benefits and the application's usability click on https://www.mendeley.com/guides/mendeley-reference-manager/ and read the instructions carefully.



Screenshot 6.1: Mendeley Reference Manager

[24] Download Mendeley Reference Manager here: https://www.mendeley.com/reference-management/reference-manager

There are multiple ways to export references from Mendeley Reference Manager to MS-Excel. You can click on https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=wplCCxF0i78 for a very simple explanation on how to go about it. Alternatively, you can also click on https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=HFJ4iCAIdAs for a second method.

Pro-Tip

Export all your references from Mendeley Reference Manager to a spreadsheet, preferably MS-Excel. Once done set up a filter for the top row and then sort the references by year (in ascending order, for e.g., 1990 -2022). This will help you see the chronology in which literature on your topic developed. Also, this helps look at your research topic from a historical perspective. Additionally, you will gain insights on the direction your area of research has taken and the various twists and turns it navigated before it reached its current stage.

CREATING EPISODIC-SEMANTIC MEMORIES

Spend an hour or two every day visualizing the notes you have written. Make mental notes. If you have made notes for 3 papers that you read on a particular day, try to visualize them as three different stories. Let each article be visualized like a story with a setting, a full plot, some characters and the interplay between these characters. In the case of a research paper, the setting is the same as introduction and literature review, the full plot is the research design and research questions and the characters are the same as variables. Note that every research paper tells a story albeit in a technical language. You need not master the technical language right from the beginning. This skill is usually acquired over a period of time.

After you have visualized each story separately, try to connect these stories in your own words. At times, it is difficult to find a common thread between these stories and so connecting them might sound impossible. However, a good researcher invariably finds way to link one concept with another, fuses one theme with another and experiments with thought fusion. If you cannot weave these stories with one common thread, there is no need to fret. You have an entire lifetime of academic pursuits left to master this art.

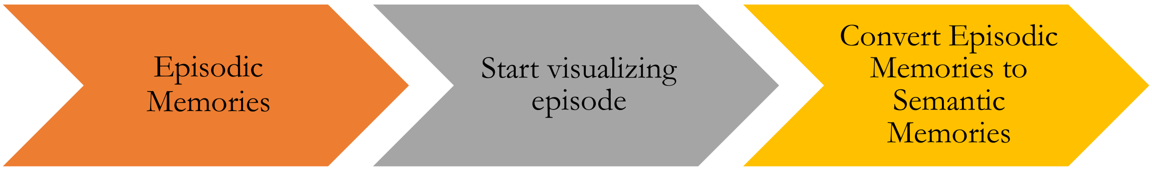


Figure 6.2: Progression from Episodic Memories to Semantic Memories

Let us assume that you are a researcher of management and your broad area of research is marketing management. You have diligently followed the Literature Search framework you got acquainted with in Chapter 4. In your effort to arrive at your research topic you are reading three or more research papers every day. At the end of the day, you are also creating your own initial notes as suggested above in this chapter. Bravo!

Let us assume that you have read the following three research papers in Marketing Management –

1. Malhotra, R., Malhotra, D.K., Mariotz, E. and Poteau, R.R. (2018), "Evaluating the Impact of Advertising on Sales and Profitability in The Apparel Industry", *Applications of Management Science*, Vol. 19, pp. 37-55. https://doi.org/10.1108/S0276-897620180000019003.

2. Khan, G., Mohaisen, M. and Trier, M. (2020), "The network ROI: Concept, metrics, and measurement of social media returns (a Facebook experiment)", *Internet Research*, Vol. 30, No. 2, pp. 631-652. https://doi.org/10.1108/INTR-07-2018-0346
3. Coursaris, C.K., van Osch, W. and Balogh, B.A. (2016), "Informing brand messaging strategies via social media analytics", *Online Information Review*, Vol. 40, No. 1, pp. 6-24. https://doi.org/10.1108/OIR-02-2015-0062.

As advised, you have written your own initial notes by the end of the work day. You are relaxed and go out to the park for a walk. You walk under the trees and hum Botir Zokirov's classics. You are happy. Suddenly your mind processes yet another singer humming a song. But this singer is a bird perched up on top of the tree. You look upwards and sight it. It's a canary singing in its mellifluous voice. You cannot believe that a bird can sing as soothingly as a human. Your mind has unleashed its own map at a sub-conscious level. You begin mapping and processing different ideas and thoughts simultaneously with the least efforts.

See the mind-map below (Fig 6.3) which we have developed only for illustration purposes. Look at the figure and read the narration below to understand how each one of us is capable of generating our own mind maps and which we consistently do at a subconscious level all the time.

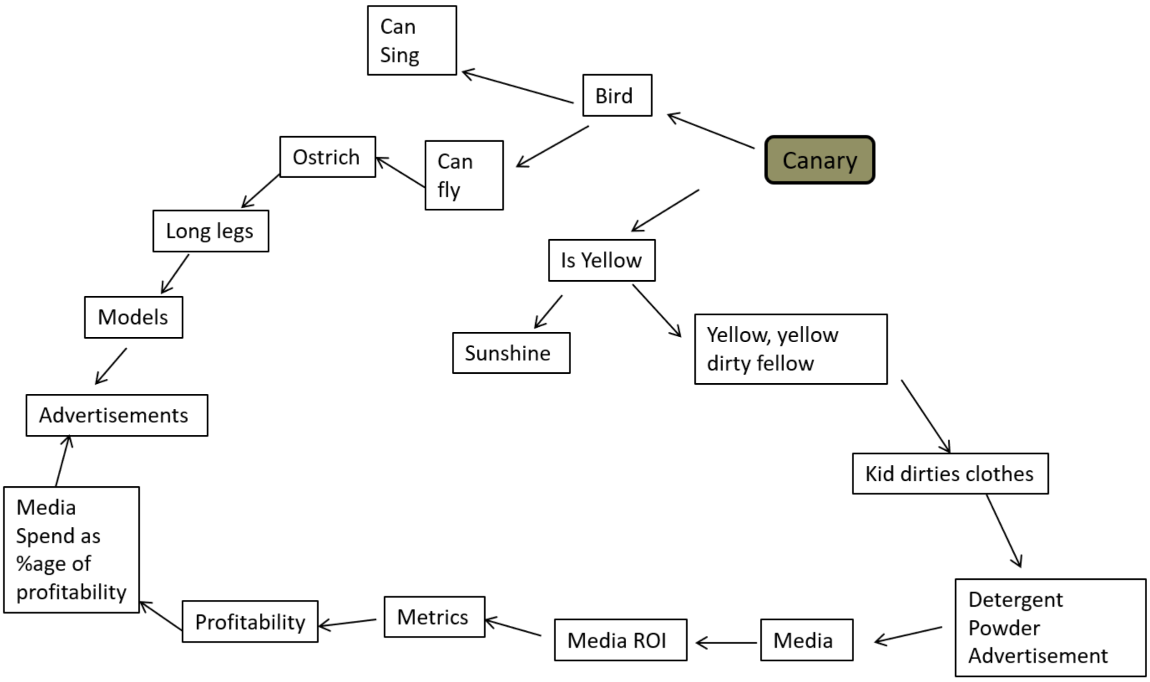


Figure 6.3: Illustrative Mind Map

a. So you see a canary and your mind processes the visual in various forms and assigns a word value to each of these forms. In this case, you consider canary a bird and you see that the bird is yellow in color.
b. Your mind then races in two different directions to associate other words or visuals or phenomena around bird and yellow. On the one hand you associate yellow with sunshine and on the other you are reminded of the famous phrase 'yellow, yellow dirty fellow' and smile at it. Also, your mind simultaneously takes a cue from the word 'bird' and you associate it with a bird singing and a bird flying.
c. Your train of thoughts do not end with visualizing or thinking of a bird singing or flying. You suddenly ask yourself inquisitively "hey, I know birds fly but can they run?" and then your subconscious responds saying "yes, they can….have you heard about an ostrich?" You visualize an ostrich in your mind and think of its long legs.

d. Simultaneously, your mind operates on ‘yellow, yellow dirty fellow’ cue too. As soon as the phrase pops in your mind, you visualize kids getting dirty all the time while playing. With your mind’s eye you can see them dirtying their clothes. Hmm!! And then you remember the famous television advertisement that says “Why worry about dirty clothes? UniWash for your dirty laundry….” This advertisement reminds you of the power and reach of media. You wonder if advertisers are assessing their media spends well enough given that social media has a better reach than traditional media. You are inquisitive if the spend on media justifies the return on investments (ROI) made. You ask yourself what metrics would the advertisers be adopting to measure the effectiveness of their media spends. Would they be profitable at all? If yes, what would be the average media spend by companies as a percentage of their profits.

e. Even while your mind is mapping and connecting all the dots from the ‘yellow’ cue, it hasn’t lost sight of the ‘bird’ cue. You may recall that you were thinking of ostrich and its long legs. You are reminded that fashion show models too have long legs and then without much of an effort you relate them to advertisements that they appear in. Advertisements, ahoy! Wasn’t that the thread that you were weaving while thinking of the power and reach of media?

Our minds have a unique knack of processing multiple threads simultaneously and somehow connect them by weaving a story with these threads. Despite the fact that you were done with writing your research notes for the day and are taking rest, if you apply yourself well enough, your mind would hover around the theme of the papers you have read. Now let us look back at the three papers you have read and highlight the keywords that played out in your mind a little while ago. See below --

1. Malhotra, R., Malhotra, D.K., Mariotz, E. and Poteau, R.R. (2018), "Evaluating the Impact of Advertising on Sales and Profitability in The Apparel Industry", *Applications of Management Science*, Vol. 19, pp. 37-55.

https://doi.org/10.1108/S0276-897620180000019003.
2. Khan, G., Mohaisen, M. and Trier, M. (2020), "The network ROI: Concept, metrics, and measurement of social media returns (a Facebook experiment)", *Internet Research*, Vol. 30, No. 2, pp. 631-652. https://doi.org/10.1108/INTR-07-2018-0346.
3. Coursaris, C.K., van Osch, W. and Balogh, B.A. (2016), "Informing brand messaging strategies via social media analytics", *Online Information Review*, Vol. 40, No. 1, pp. 6-24. https://doi.org/10.1108/OIR-02-2015-0062.

Interesting, isn't it? Of course, you might miss out on some keywords and that's perfectly fine. Also keep in mind that not all the thoughts that come into your mind will necessarily find other associations. In the example above, you have associated yellow with sunshine but then no other association was formed after sunshine to continue the thread. This is perfectly normal. Some associations drop themselves midway. Do not force yourself to pick them up for the sake of your story. Visual and word associations should come naturally during mind-mapping. If some words or images are lost in the mind-mapping journey, so be it. Do not fret!

As a scholar you need to carefully cultivate the habit of mind-mapping and allow your mind to travel its full distance unhindered. Allow it to make associations, howsoever irrelevant they are to your research topic. You have our assurance that as you mature in your mind-mapping capabilities your thoughts will invariably always land on the theme of your research. Just ensure that you allocate 'thinking/mind-mapping time' in your daily routine, especially after writing your research notes for the day.

CHAPTER 7

ORGANIZING RESEARCH LITERATURE

A diligent doctoral scholar ideally reads anywhere between 300 and 500 research papers on an average during her doctoral days spanning 3-5 years. Reading papers, mentally processing them, seeking and identifying gaps, framing research questions or hypotheses to address those gaps, designing research methodology to find answers to the questions, conducting research, arriving at findings and structuring inferences from those findings followed by drafting a commentary of conclusions is not just a very demanding job but challenging as well on multiple fronts. One of the biggest challenges that the scholar faces is that of organizing the read literature.

We cannot emphasize enough on the need to organize research literature if the researcher wishes to remain connected with academia in the long run. But what exactly do we mean by organizing research literature? Just like when you visit a university library and admire how the librarian has stacked a wide range of books on the bookshelves neatly arranging them in groups based on the subject discipline they belong to,[25] you will benefit from a similar classification scheme for the research papers you read. When the literature you have collected for your research is neatly classified and organized, you not only get quick access to the right research paper but also the classification/categories get deeply embedded in your mind and helps build a recall value for those research papers.

For example, in the course of discussion with a fellow researcher you have casually mentioned about the relationship between industry clusters and economic growth

---

[25] Globally, librarians follow the Dewey Decimal Classification scheme to stack books in discipline-based groups.

You: Rano, I have read an interesting research paper that finds evidence that knowledge and industry clusters are drivers of economic development.

Rano: "Oh that's nice, Gulkhida. Can you give me more information on the paper that you have read on this topic or can you share the citation please?"

You say a quick 'yes' but you are unable to locate the paper or you have forgotten the title of the paper from where you picked those findings. What do you do? Do you go back and say "Rano, I am sorry, I don't recall the title of the paper nor can I recollect the source from where I looked up the paper but you have my word that I read it somewhere." Doesn't sound professional. Does it?

By not being able to recall your source you come across as a non-serious researcher which is what you would want to avoid by all means. Only had you organized the literature that you had read in the same way a librarian organizes books in the library, you could have plucked out the right reference in a jiffy for your friend Rano.

SCHEMA FOR ORGANIZING 'READ' LITERATURE

Researchers read various types of research papers during their literature scanning/survey phase. The most common types of research they consume are –

1. Survey papers – Research articles that are in the form of systematic literature reviews, meta-analysis, meta-synthesis, traditional or narrative reviews or integrative reviews.
2. Theoretical papers – Papers that are exploratory in nature and are built on logical reasoning and coherent argumentation.

3. Empirical papers – Research articles that are measurement based are empirical by definition. Empirical research is related to observation, data collection, measurement and analysis with the end goal of generating insights that contribute to accepting or rejecting extant theoretical arguments.
4. Research Reports – Policy reports, white papers, budget speeches, technical reports, in-house publications, monographs, etc., published by governments and their agencies; and industry or sectoral reports, development reports, etc published by various multilateral and third-party consulting agencies like OECD, World Bank, IMF, PwC, KPMG, etc., that are an outcome of research or a study conducted by the publishing bodies are considered research reports. Scholars generally refer to multiple such reports, from time to time, to ground questions and arguments of their study on these reports.
5. Books – Books refer to academic books and reference books related to the subject area of research.

In addition, researchers take notes randomly as and when they read content that is relevant to their topic of research. We call them Personal Notes. It is important that the scholars learn how to organize all the content they are consuming or have consumed. Literature can be organized by a simple use of codes/notations. The schema proposed below is indicative and scholars are free to develop their schema based on their own categorization of research.

Assign notations/codes to your source/type of literature, topic of research, type of content and rack space as suggested in Table 7.1[26] –

[26] Notations/codes mentioned here are indicative. You may come up with your own coding scheme based on your convenience.

Source	Notation/Code
Survey Paper	S
Theoretical Paper (Journal)	T
Empirical Paper (Journal)	E
Research Report	R
Book	B

Table 7.1 Source of Literature

For ease of understanding refer to Tables 4.1 and 4.2 in Chapter 4. Let us assume that you are a researcher in the area of Marketing Management and are collecting and reading research papers across various research topics and micro-topics.[27] Let us pick some keywords from Tables 4.1 and 4.2 to understand how notations can be created easily.

Topic of Research	Notation/Code
Advertising	AD
Campaign Planning	CP
Content Mix	CM
Ownership Structure	OS
…. and so on and so forth	

Table 7.2 Topic of Research

[27] To understand how we define research topic and micro-topic read Chapter 4.

Type of Content

What kind of content do you have in your possession? Is it hard copy of a book/journal paper/research report or do you have soft copy of the same or is the content available on some online repository or can it be accessed via a weblink?

Notations – Hard Copy – H; Soft Copy – S; Online Repository – O; Weblink - W

Once these basic notations are internalized, organizing literature becomes very easy. As and when you read or collect a research paper or book or as and when you write your own notes you need to combine the individual notations as suggested above to create a code that will help you locate the right content in the right place.

For e.g., you have a read a research paper titled "Impact of Media Advertisements on Consumer Behaviour." The paper is an Empirical one as the author has collected data and measured the impact of advertisements on consumer behaviour. So, your first level notation will be EAD. E for Empirical and AD for advertisement. You can further improve on this notation by adding CB to it, for e.g., EADCB which expands to Empirical-Advertisement-Consumer Behaviour. So, all empirical research papers that deal with advertisement plus consumer behaviour can now be clubbed under EADCB notation. However, keep in mind that each paper has to have its own combined notation. For example, you have read 8 empirical papers that deal with advertisement and consumer behaviour. You list these 8 papers as E1AD1CB1, E1AD2CB2, E1AD3CB3, E1AD4CB4, E1AD5CB5, E1AD6CB6, E1AD7CB7 and E1AD8CB8 in the spreadsheet (as seen in Table 7.3) and mention the corresponding location where these papers can be found when needed.

If they are stored as soft copies in your personal computer, ensure to mention the folder/sub-folder in which these papers are located. If you have hard copies of these papers, we advise you not to retain them as loose papers. Instead combine six to ten such papers and get them spiral bound. The spiral bound book will now come in handy whenever you need to reference papers from that set.

Book/Paper Category	Set	Sub-set	Hard Copy/Soft Copy	Location
Personal Notes	P1, P2, P3.....			
P1	Marketing	P1M1, P1M2, P1M3....	H	Rack Location
P2	Advertising	P1A1, P1A2, P1A3....	S	Drive Location
P3	Campaign Planning	P1C1, P1C2, P1C3....		
Survey Paper	S1, S2, S3			
S1	Literature survey of Media Vehicles	S1M1, S2M2.....		
	Literature survey on digital marketing	S1D1, S2D2....		
Research Paper – Theory	T1, T2, T3....			
T1	Media Vehicles: Strategy Related	T1S1, T1S2.....		
T2	Media Vehicles: Content Consumption	T1C1, T1C2....		
Research Paper – Empirical	E1, E2, E3			
E1	Ownership structure and Digital Marketing	E1O1, E1O2....		
E2	ROI and Performance	E1P1, E2P2.....		

Table 7.3: Organizing literature in spreadsheet

If you have perused say 32 empirical research papers on the theme "advertising and consumer behaviour" then you should create 3-4 sets of spiral bound books. In such a case, each book will have its E-numbered code, like E1, E2, E3, E4 and so on and so forth. For the sake of better understanding let us assume that you have created 4 sets with 8 papers in each set. Your first set would have E1AD1CB1, E1AD2CB2,…… E1AD8CB8; second set E2AD1CB1, E2AD2CB2,…… E2AD8CB8; third set E3AD1CB1, E3AD2CB2,…… E3AD8CB8; fourth set

E4AD1CB1, E4AD2CB2,…… E4AD8CB8 and so on an so forth based on the number of papers in your collection.

As we have mentioned earlier, there is no hard and fast rule to follow our schema. You can create your own schema. We highly recommend though that you realize the importance of organizing literature for the benefits it delivers in the long run.

CHAPTER 8

RESEARCH METHODS

The phrase 'research method' can sound very intimidating to a novice researcher. During the initial phases of their research journey, doctoral scholars quite often find the 'research methodology' part of research papers quite daunting. However, it is important that scholars first understand the difference between research methods and research methodology. While they sound the same, they have different meanings.

'Research methods' is an umbrella phrase that indicates the options available to the researcher to solve a research problem. You will often come across the terms qualitative research and quantitative research during your literature scanning phase. These are essentially research methods. On the other hand, the use of one or a combination of these methods with a design explicating how the data would be collected and analysed to solve the research problem is what is known as research methodology.

Research methodology is not within the scope of this handbook. Methodology needs special attention and so books that deal exclusively with research methodology are listed in 'Suggested Readings' at the end of this book.

We will broadly introduce you to the available research methods that can help you ground your research study and consequently support you in framing your research design.[28] The purpose of this chapter is served when you can quickly distinguish between qualitative and quantitative research and choose one of them that you deem fit to answer your

[28] The idea is only to acquaint you with the various research tools available for you to choose from. For a deeper understanding on how you should apply them in your research context, you are advised to look up relevant research methodology literature.

research questions. We must caution you though that the choice is never always an 'either-or' i.e., either qualitative or quantitative. Most often, contemporary researchers deploy mixed methods which means the research design includes both qualitative and quantitative methods. Observations or data collected via qualitative methods can be quantified to further subject them to statistical inquiry.

Pro-Tip

If your research is in the area of Economics or Finance, you will most often than not choose Quantitative Research Method

If your research is on Marketing or Human Resources or any sub-discipline of Management or Tourism or Service your choice would ideally be Mixed Methods (Qualitative + Quantitative) Research.

If your research is on Culture Studies or Tourism with emphasis on its anthropological aspects, Qualitative Research Method is the way to go.

QUALITATIVE AND QUANTITATIVE METHODS - OVERVIEW

The focus of qualitative research is on text while that of quantitative research is on numbers. There are a variety of ways – both in qualitative and quantitative methods -- in which you can design your research study based on the problem you are aiming at solving (see Table 8.1).

Qualitative Research: Focus on Text	Quantitative Research: Focus on Numbers
Action Research Case Study Research Ethnography Grounded Theory Semiotics Discourse Analysis Hermeneutics Narrative and Metaphor	Surveys Laboratory Experiments Simulation Mathematical Modelling Structured Equation Modelling Statistical Analysis Econometrics

Table 8.1: Examples of qualitative and quantitative research; Source: Myers, M. D. (2013), Qualitative Research in Business and Management, 2nd edition, Sage Publications, p. 9

Qualitative research is often done to investigate social and cultural phenomena. It helps the researcher probe the context – social and cultural - within which certain actions take place. It is commonplace for qualitative researchers to ask the what, why, how and when questions quite frequently to solve the research problem. For example --What is happening? Why is it happening? How did it happen? When did it happen?

Data collected for qualitative studies come from in-person or face-to-face interviews, telephone interviews, digital/email interviews, focus groups, Delphi groups of the subjects being studied. Additionally, observation of phenomenon, participant observation, note taking, co-creation, first-hand lived experience (phenomenology) also help the researchers obtain data for their study.

Quantitative research is measurement focused research. It involves gathering or generation of data in numerical or quantitative form that is then subjected to rigorous quantitative analysis to arrive at evidence-based conclusions. Quantitative research can be sub-classified into the following three approaches – (i) inferential approach; (ii) experimental approach; and (iii) simulation approach. Inferential approach refers to the research that is conducted to infer relationships or characteristics of a population. For inferential approach to succeed, it is important for the researcher to work with database or data sets that can be collected both via primary and secondary sources. Experimental approach as the name suggests is focused on experiments. Researcher has a larger degree of control over the research environment and by manipulating some variables she can study the effect such manipulation has on other variables. Simulation approach is about designing an artificial environment that mimics real life settings in order to study the dynamic behaviour of the variables or the system under controlled conditions. All the three approaches focus on data collection, measurement and analysis.

Data for **quantitative research** can be obtained from both primary as well as secondary sources. Primary source is the researcher herself. Data gathered first-hand by the researcher is called primary data, for e.g., surveys, interviews, questionnaires, etc. While primary data is original and reliable as the researcher is involved in data collection it must be noted that researchers have their own biases and such biases may enter into the data collection process in the form of directed questioning, deliberately designing 'directed response' survey questionnaires, etc.

Secondary sources viz., published reports, government data, financial data obtained from annual reports of companies, data gathered from data aggregation firms, etc. offer the researcher the data she needs for her research. Such data is not collected by her but from second-hand sources. Data obtained from secondary sources always need to be vetted for authenticity and veracity before being used for analysis.

For **qualitative data analysis,** many software applications are readily available in the market. These applications help with analyzing interview/content transcripts, recursive abstraction, coding and interpreting text, content analysis, discourse analysis and grounded theory to name a few.

Some are free to download and some require subscription post a trial period. Listed below are four applications that we feel are contemporary and robust for qualitative data analysis –

a. NVivo
b. Atlas.ti
c. MAXQDA
d. Taguette

For **quantitative data analysis** many statistical packages are available for download/free trials. We suggest the following -

a. STATA
b. MATLAB
c. SPSS
d. SAS
e. R
f. E-Views (especially good for time series analysis, panel and pooled regressions)

Often times, scholars that work with econometrics (quantitative method) for their research are confused on the choice of analytical model they have to use. So here is a quick suggestion –

> If your study involves multivariate analysis, follow the schema in the Figures 8.1 and 8.2 to quickly identify the type of multivariate technique you will need to consider. Figure 8.1 lays down techniques

to examine 'dependence' relationships and Figure 8.2 suggests the same for 'interdependent' relationships.

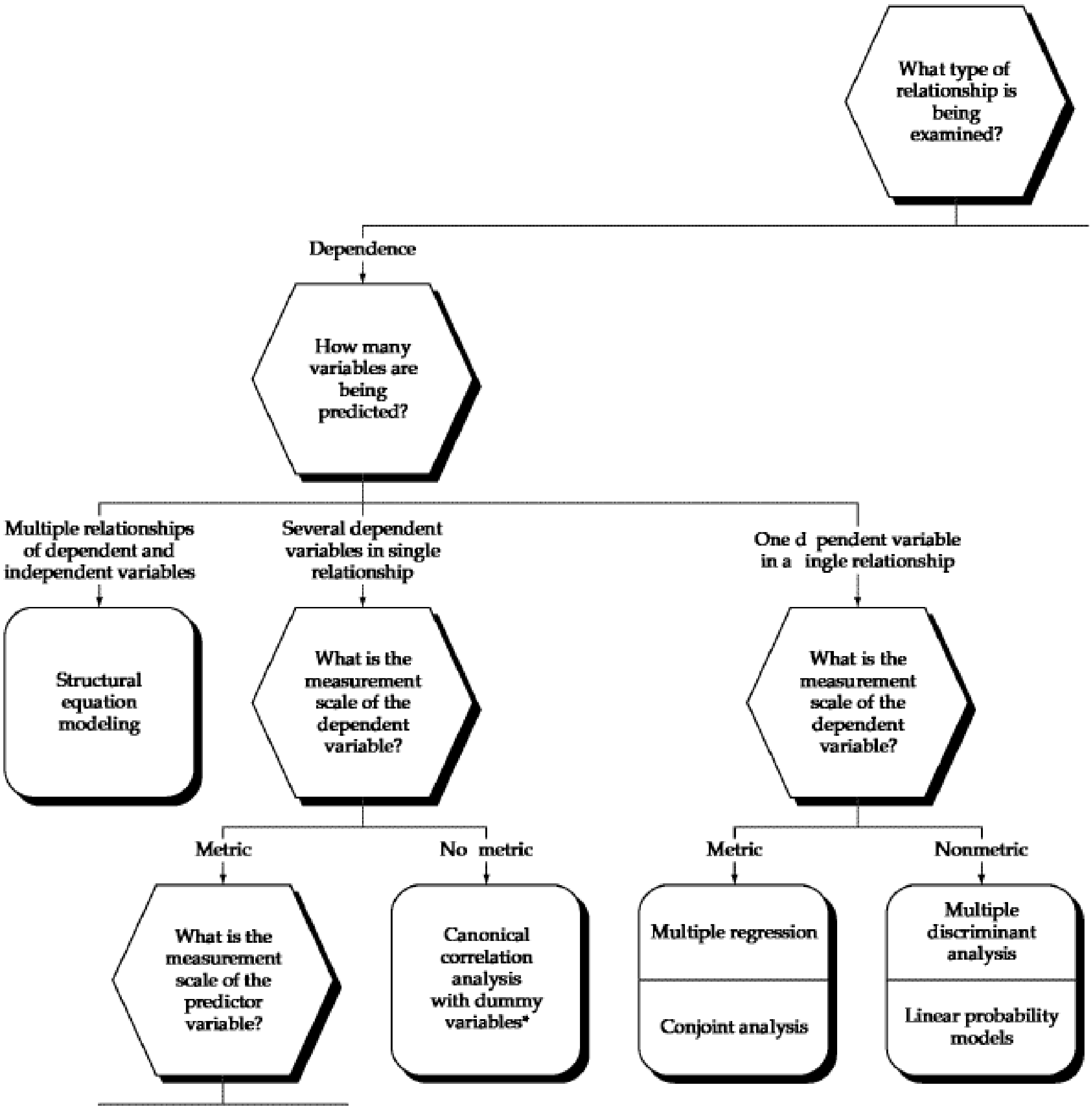


Figure 8.1 : Overview of Multivariate Analysis (I); Source: Multivariate Analysis (J F Hair Jr. et al., 2019)

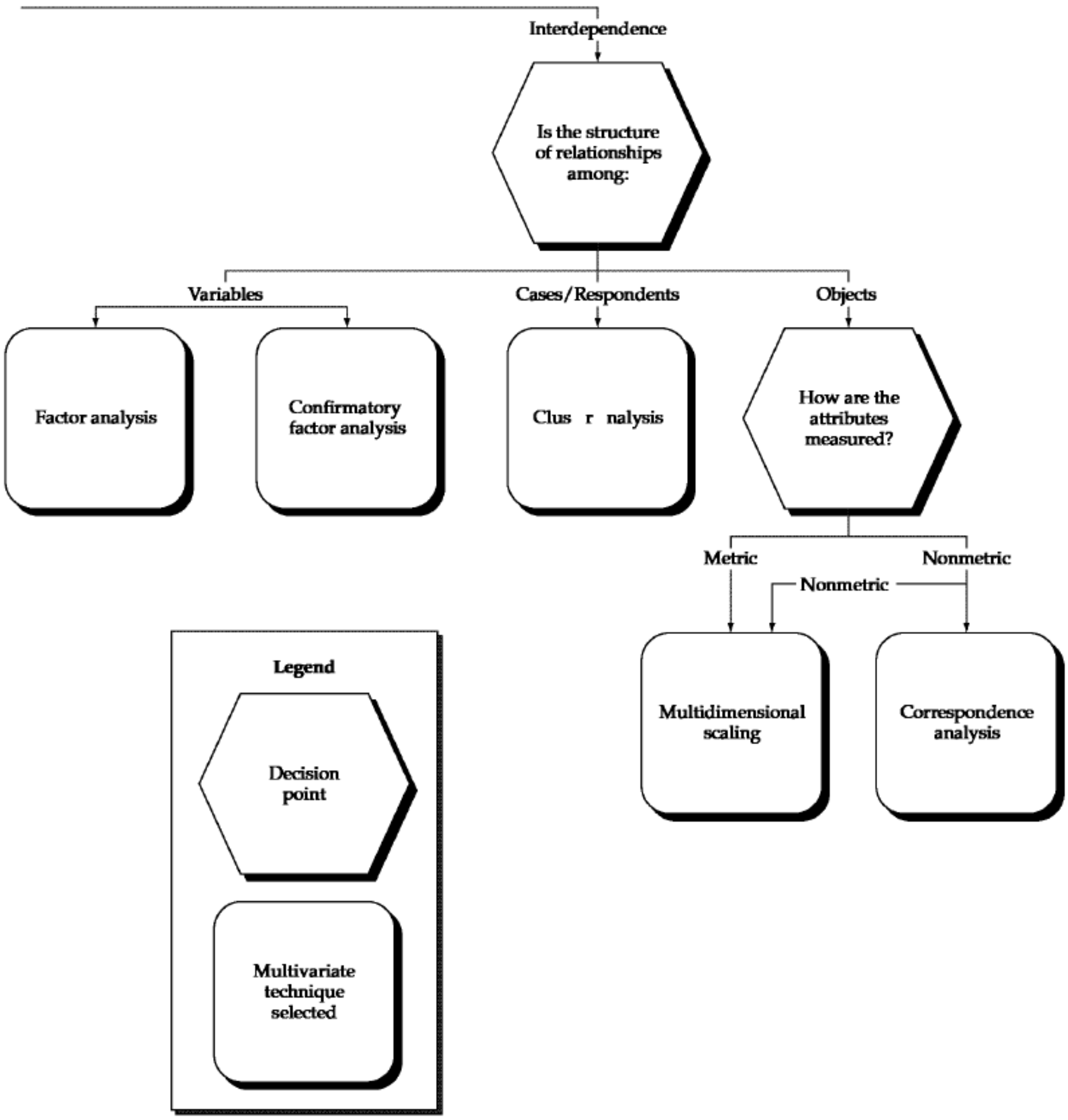


Figure 8.2 : Overview of Multivariate Analysis (II); Source: Multivariate Analysis (J F Hair Jr. et al, 2019)

CHAPTER 9

PLAGIARISM AND MISCONDUCT

As the adage goes 'prevention is better than cure' it is important for scholars to learn and adhere to the rules of academic integrity rather than be caught unawares at a crucial stage in their academic career. Bad techniques of citing original source of literature, erroneous attributions and sometimes as simple acts as omitting citations either deliberately or due to an oversight can all lead to questionable academic integrity. Digital availability of research literature in abundance is both a boon and bane. Boon because it helps scholars access vast research that was heretofore confined only to some physical libraries and bane because content produced by scholars can be cross-checked for originality and plagiarism, if any, can be easily detected.

We are of the firm opinion that academic scholars never intentionally plagiarize. No scholar would wish to deliberately stake her academic career and reputation for the sake of a few academic points. No one wishes their academic integrity to be questioned. Most plagiarism that we observe is largely due to lack of understanding of what is construed as plagiarism in the academic world. Only if researchers knew where to draw the line between others' work and their own work, plagiarism can be easily avoided.

You have engaged in plagiarism when[29] –

i. You have submitted someone's work as your own.
ii. You have submitted a collaborative work as your own without declaring that the work is a result of collaboration and has been co-produced. This is known as credit stealing in academic jargon.

---

[29] The list is not exhaustive. There could be many more ways of transgression that indicate plagiarism. The purpose of this list is to educate the scholars on what is commonly considered plagiarism in the IP world.

iii. You have copied chunks of 'word-for-word' content from others' research in your research work.
iv. You have passed off others' ideas and concepts as your own.
v. You have copied others' ideas without acknowledging the source.
vi. You have reproduced, paraphrased, re-worded or repurposed another researcher's work without acknowledgement.
vii. You have embedded excerpts/extracts from another researcher's work in your work without crediting the original author and/or without using the quotation marks.
viii. You have copy-pasted content from digital sources without pointing at the URL of the source.
ix. You have copy-pasted content from digital sources without acknowledging the author/s work in quotation marks.
x. You have copied a framework, image, exhibit, figure, table, data or creative work from another person's work without any acknowledgement.
xi. You have adapted a framework, image, exhibit, figure, table, data or creative work of another person's work to either re-create your own framework, image, exhibit, figure, table, data or creative work without giving due credit to the original author and source.
xii. You have access to documents at your work place that you have used verbatim in your work.
xiii. You have translated someone else's research and used the content in your work without due acknowledgement or without crediting the original author.

Essentially, plagiarism is supposed to have taken place when the scholar presents someone else's work as her own, either intentionally or unintentionally.[30] As mentioned earlier, scholars engage in plagiarism unintentionally to begin with but when such transgressions are not

[30] Plagiarism is nothing short of lying, cheating, stealing and deception. Good scholars should take care adequate care not to be castigated as cheats.

signalled in time, they tend to get repeated and are eventually normalized in their scholarly endeavours. Such acts if not corrected can dent not just their research credibility but can also adversely impact the reputation of the university they are affiliated with.

Plagiarism happens due to one or more reasons as listed below ---

i. Researchers do not take notes while reading research papers.
ii. Researchers take notes but employ a sub-standard approach to note taking.
iii. Researchers tend to forget the actual source from where they picked their work's content or context.
iv. Researchers tend to believe that they themselves are the source of an idea or concept. This is quite common as researchers internalize content that they get constant exposure to and begin to believe that they are the owners of the original idea.

Follow the tips laid out in Chapter 6 under the section 'Writing Initial Notes' to learn how the original source has to be captured in your notes.

1. As far as possible, frame your own original sentences. That is the gold standard of writing.
2. If the original idea or concept or research or research finding used in the writing is not yours but some other scholar's, ensure to give credit for the idea/concept/research/finding to the original author/s. There are multiple ways in which the original author's work can be cited in your thesis/article/write-up by giving due credit to their work.

   See some examples below–

   Example 1: Two decades hence, Friedman (1970) argued that the social responsibility of business is to increase profits and therefore firms should not be unduly weighed down by the burden of non-pecuniary societal demands.

<u>Example 2:</u> Be it the *entrenchment hypothesis* that argues that higher equity ownership negatively impacts firm performance (Morck et al, 1988; Jarrell and Poulsen, 1987; Holderness and Sheehan, 1988; Agarwal and Mandelkar 1990) or the *cost of capital argument* that claims higher equity concentration increases the cost of capital thereby stunting firm performance (Fama and Jensen, 1983), or the *takeover premium argument* that managers are motivated to perform well to make hostile takeovers costlier (Stulz, 1988; Stulz, Walkling and Song, 1990) researchers have tried to build varied perspectives into our understanding of the dominant CG issues of the time.

<u>Example 3:</u> Inefficiencies persistent in SOEs, it is argued, could be best addressed through privatization (Sheshinski and Lopez-Calva 2003; and Omran 2004).

<u>Example 4:</u> However, examining Japanese firms, Constand and Pace (1998) find no evidence of relationship between ownership concentration and profitability.

<u>Example 5:</u> Demsetz and Lehn (1985) study 511 large corporations and find no significant relation between ownership concentration and accounting returns.

<u>Example 6:</u> No significant differences in performance between concentrated and diffusely held firms were observed in studies by Elliott (1972), Holl (1975), and Holderness and Sheehan (1988).

<u>Example 7:</u> Government financing guarantees either directly or through financial institutions controlled by it at favorable or no interest rates help SOEs recapitalize when their equity erodes (Capobianco and Christiansen, 2011).

Example 8: Managers of SOEs can ascribe bad performance not to their incompetence or inefficiency but to the pursuit of multiple objectives (Stiglitz, 1989, p. 32).

Always ensure that all the in-text citations in your write-up show up as full references in the References section.

3. Even when you reproduce, paraphrase or repurpose someone else's content, you are required to cite the original source of the content as explained in the examples above.

Pro-Tip

If you are citing an author's work from his/her book, always mention the Page Number from which the content has been used. Note that in Example 8, the in-text citation is written as Stiglitz, 1989, p.32. When you write the page number after the year of publication it becomes evident to the reader that you are making reference of a book.

4. At times, the researcher may wish to copy the original author's text in verbatim to add emphasis to her work. While it is recommended that the researcher rephrase the content and acknowledge the original source, however if 'exact' copying is unavoidable the below format is considered acceptable.[31]

Example 1: The institutions-as-rules approach has its roots in the seminal contribution of Douglass North's 1990 book, Institutions, Institutional Change and Economic Performance. North's institutional approach is stated in the opening paragraphs:

[31] All the three examples have been sourced from the book "The Cognitive Basis of Institutions: A Synthesis of Behavioral and Institutional Economics " by Shinji Teraji (2018).

Institutions are the rules of the game of society or, more formally, the humanly devised constraints that shape human interactions. In consequence they structure incentives in human exchange, whether political, social, or economic . . .. Institutions reduce uncertainty by providing a structure to everyday life. They are a guide to human interaction, so that when we wish to greet friends on the street, drive an automobile, buy oranges, borrow money, form a business, bury our dead, or whatever, we know (or can learn easily) how to perform these tasks.

(North, 1990, pp. 3-4)

<u>Example 2:</u> As North (1990) suggests:
Economic (and political) models are specific to particular constellations of institutional constraints that vary radically both through time and cross sectionally in different economies. The models are institution specific and in many cases high sensitive to altered institutional constraints.

(North, 1990, p. 110)

<u>Example 3:</u> There is a link between institutions and individual agents. North (2005) summarizes this relationship as follows:
There is an intimate relationship between belief systems and the institutional framework. Belief systems embody the internal representation of the human landscape. Institutions are structure that humans impose on that landscape in order to produce the desired outcome. Belief systems therefore are the internal representation and institutions the external manifestation of that representation.

(North, 2005, p. 49)

This essentially means that the author has copied the content exactly word-for-word from the original source, i.e., for Examples 1 and 2 from Reference 1 (pages 3-4 for

Example 1 and page 110 for Example 2) and for Example 3 from Reference 2 (page 49). By following this format of acknowledging the original source of the content, especially when you have copied the content from another source, you can meet the requirements of academic integrity.

<u>Note:</u> All the three examples above have the following structure in common –

i. The author writes a few words of context-setting introduction before she quotes the original author's text in an as-is format.
ii. The copied text is in *italics* indicating that the cited author is the original creator of the content. If you wish you can tuck the italicised content in quotes.
iii. Under the copied text, the original author is right tabbed and cited viz., last name, year of publication and page number/s from where the verbatim content is copied are mentioned. A full-length reference of the in-text citation (e.g., North, 1990, pp. 3-4) should then be mentioned in the References section.

When the reader scrolls through to the References section, she should find the following two references for the examples cited above.

i. North, D.C., 1990. Institutions, Institutional Change and Economic Performance. Cambridge University Press, Cambridge, MA.
ii. North, D.C., 2005. Understanding the Process of Economic Change. Princeton University Press, Princeton, NJ.

Pro-Tip

Excessive use of word-for-word copying, even if it meets acceptable standards of academic integrity is not advisable.

As a thumb rule, there should be no more than 5 such instances in a doctoral dissertation and no more than one such instance in a research paper.

5. If you are inspired by a framework or a model or image from another source and wish to use it in your research, you can do so but with due acknowledgement to the original source and author. However, care must be taken that your research is not filled with others' frameworks/models/images. Your research as we have mentioned in Chapter 2 (refer TUCA framework) will be assessed on your original contribution to the extant body of knowledge and therefore it is important that while you get inspired by other authors' work, you need to carefully craft your own unique and original framework.

6. If you are inspired by a framework/model/image/creative work from another source and wish to use it in your research but with *some modifications*, you can do so but with due acknowledgement to the original source and author. An acceptable format of such acknowledgement is to write "Adapted from" and mention the full source of the research including author name, year of publication, title of the paper and publisher right below the framework/model/image/creative work. Also, the full-length reference should be mentioned in the References or Bibliography section towards the end of your dissertation.

See Exhibit 9.1 below.[32] Frank T Rothermael, author of Strategic Management modified Michael Porter's framework of Competitive Strategy to suit the learning needs of his target audience. The image from Rothermael's framework as can be seen in the screenshot below indicates two things –

i. He has adapted Porter's framework and has clearly stated so in the source citation.
ii. He cites the full source of the reference from where he has adapted the framework.

Exhibit 9.1

[32] Source: Rothermael F T (2017), Strategic Management, 3rd Edition, McGraw Hill Education, New York, p. 179

7. If you have collaborated with other researchers to write a research paper, decide the order of authorship based on the quantum of contribution made by each author. The author that does the most work gets first authorship and the author with the least contribution gets the last authorship. You will never go wrong with this method. This method is not only ethical but also motivates authors to contribute to the joint work proactively.

8. You have collaborated with other researchers to write a research paper and right before submission to a journal one of your co-authors has left the team or the university. What do you do? Drop her name from the authors list or retain her? The answer is obvious. If she has contributed to the joint research work, she deserves to be on the author's list in the sequence based on her quantum of contribution.

In a nutshell, you are advised to give credit where it is due and avoid passing off others' work as yours either intentionally or unintentionally. While the above suggestions if followed diligently would hold you good during your doctoral journey, you can look up for reference books related to plagiarism in Suggested Readings toward the end of this handbook.

SOME MORE TIPS

1. Form a small group of like-minded scholars both within and outside the university and take turns in presenting your research every week.

2. Do not feel dejected if you have not progressed enough during the week. What matters is your commitment to be part of research discussions. Listen to what other scholars have to say about their research.

3. Discuss your research work with anyone who cares to listen. It is important that you keep thinking and talking about your research, no matter how silly you may sound.

4. Form a Telegram or WhatsApp group of scholars, discipline notwithstanding, and keep sharing information related to local, regional and national conferences. Attend the conferences and present a paper or a poster if possible. Remember, every conference counts. Every opportunity to speak in front of a learned audience counts. Every academic professional that you come in contact with in the conferences counts.

5. Once in a quarter, along with your scholar friends, arrange to visit an industry cluster. Meet up industry professionals. Request them if your group could be of any help in solving their most pressing problems.

6. Planning to submit your research work to a journal for publication? Always check if the journal or its publisher is listed on https://beallslist.net/. If the answer is in the affirmative, **DO NOT** submit your work to that journal/publisher. Publishing research work in journals that figure in Beall's List is akin to committing academic suicide.

Before you submit your dissertation to the evaluation committee ask yourself the following questions –

1. Is my research work TUCA compliant?
2. Can I summarize my research work in two sentences if my evaluation committee asks me to?
3. Is my research problem worth a scholarly pursuit?
4. What are the main issues in my research?
5. What are the main findings of my research work?
6. Are the findings in consonance or contravention of existing literature?
7. Can I recall 2-3 seminal papers/research works that have shaped the debates in the area of my research?
8. Who are the most influential authors in my research area?
9. Do I know the history of my research topic? For e.g., how did the topic emerge and become mainstream in literature?
10. What are the most recent developments in my area of research?
11. Does my work contribute to the recent developments in literature or practice?
12. What research methodology did I use? Why do I think the methodology was appropriate for my study?
13. Could there have been an alternate research approach to my work. If yes, what could that be?
14. On a scale of 1-10 how would I rate my work if I were a blind evaluator?
15. Will my research findings have long term implications? Or did I work on a passing fad?

16. Who will benefit from my study and its findings?
17. Will my findings help the relevant stakeholders (government, economists, academicians, business professionals, industry, NGOs, multilateral agencies, institutions and so on and so forth) make an informed decision and benefit from such a decision?
18. What advice would I give to scholars joining my university to pursue doctoral studies research in my area of research?
19. Did my research work change my views on the topic? Has it changed my world view? If yes, how? If no, why not?
20. Based on the knowledge I have acquired during my research journey am I capable to guide and mentor future doctoral scholars?

SUGGESTED READINGS

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About the Author

Dr. Praveen Bhasa Malla works at the intersection of industry and academia. He has 23 years of cross-functional experience in various industries like IT, Higher Education, Media and Entertainment, Training and Development, Management Consulting and Research. He has received his PhD degree from Indian Institute of Technology Bombay for his thesis on Corporate Governance. He was the recipient of the Junior/Senior Research Fellowship award by the University Grants Commission of India to pursue his doctoral studies. He also holds four master's degrees viz., MBA, MA (English Literature), MA (Philosophy) and MA (Psychology). In addition, he also holds a Law degree.

For about a decade now he has been a strategy and innovation consultant and takes pride in deconstructing complex things in simple and understandable terms. Currently, he heads a strategy and innovation advisory firm based in India and is currently associated with Samarkand Branch of Tashkent State University of Economics as a Professor. In addition, he is a visiting/adjunct professor at various universities. Earlier, he was a professor at Samarkand Institute of Economics and Service which is where the idea of this book was conceived.

Dr. Malla has published a book on Corporate Governance published by Taylor and Franics (Routledge). He has also authored multiple research papers, articles and essays, editorials and conference papers.

Prof. (Dr.) Praveen Bhasa Malla

Handbook of Doctoral Research:
A Quick Guide for PhD Scholars
(1st Edition)

Editor: Bobodustov Z.N.
Edited by: Xamrayev D.

The study guide was discussed at the 3rd meeting of the SamIES Council on 24.10. 2023 recommended to be printed and used inthe educational process.

ISBN: 978-9910-9986-0-7

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