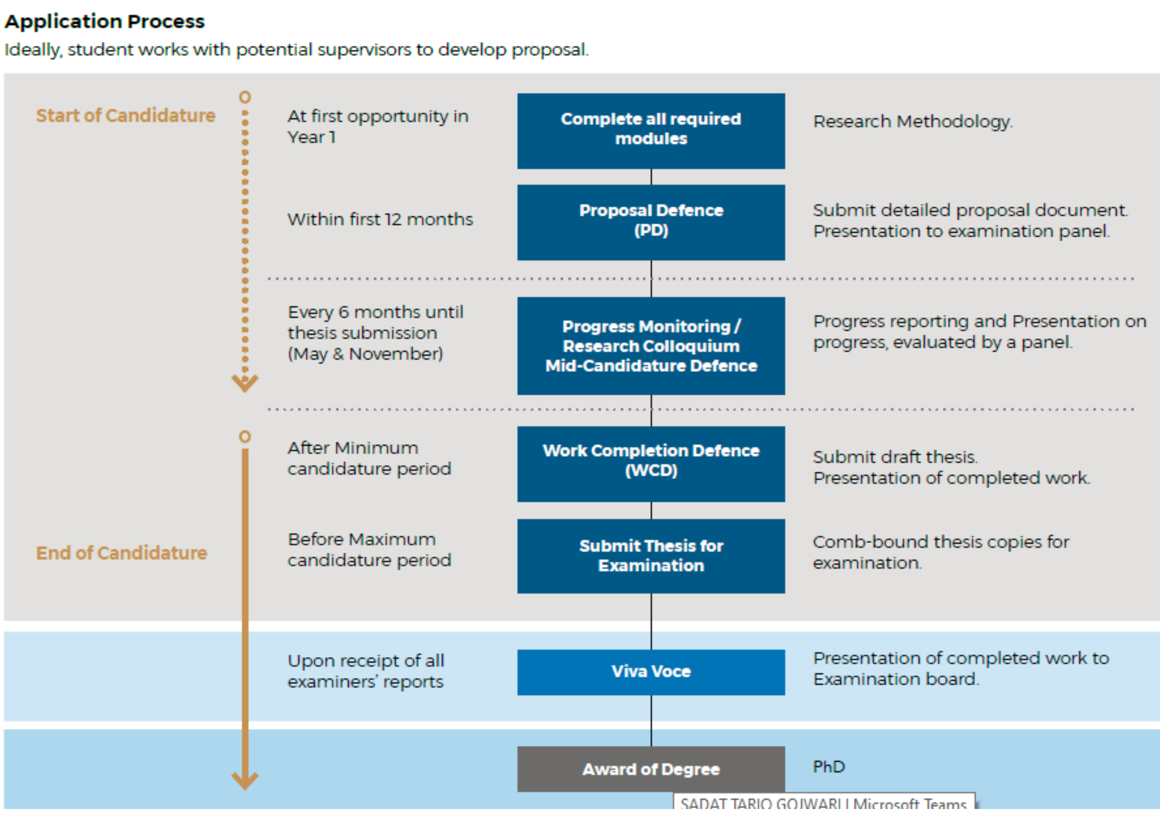
WRITING YOUR THESIS PROPOSAL

QUANTATIVE

GUIDELINES



Prepared by: Dr Jugindar Singh Sept 2022

Guidelines for Quantitative study

Title

A thesis submitted in fulfilment of the

requirements for the award of the degree of

DOCTOR OF PHILOSOPHY IN MANAGEMENT

ASIA PACIFIC UNIVERSITY OF TECHNOLOGY & INNOVATION (APU)

SCHOOL OF BUSINESS STUDIES

APRIL 2022

Prepared by: Dr Jugindar Singh Sept 2022

Guidelines for Quantitative study

FORMAT OF TABLE OF CONTENTS

TABLE OF CONTENTS

Note: The contents depends on the Research design and Methodology

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TITLE

Title

The title (topic) of the proposal should 'accurately' reflect the scope and content of the study in not more than 15 words. The title should be concise, precise and outline Core Issues of study

Example:

Barriers to Digital Banking adoption: A qualitative study among Gen Y customers in Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia

Barriers [focus] to Digitalt banking adoption [area of interest]: A qualitative study [qualitative research design] among Gen Y customers [population] in Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia [situated nature of the study]

ABSTRACT

Guidelines – Use APA style Formatting

Begin a new page. Your abstract page should already include the **page header** (described above). On the first line of the abstract page, centre and bold the word "Abstract" (no italics, underlining, or quotation marks).

Beginning with the next line, write a concise summary of the key points of your research. (Do not indent.) Your abstract should contain at least your research topic, research aim, participants, methods, expected results, and implications. Include possible implications of your research and future work you see connected with your findings. Your abstract should be a single paragraph, double-spaced. Your abstract should typically be no more than 250 words.

You may also want to list keywords from your paper in your abstract. To do this, indent as you would if you were starting a new paragraph, type

Keywords*:* (italicized), and then list your keywords. Listing your keywords will help researchers find your work in databases.

Example:

Abstract

Purpose – The study aims to explore motivators and barriers in business venture creation among potential Latina entrepreneurs. **Design/methodology/approach** – Focus group interviews collected data using Latinas between the ages of 20-30 who expressed interest in starting their own businesses in the near future. Interview participants will be primarily first-generation college students. **Expected Findings** – Findings will reveal major themes based around four dimensions of cultural heritage, motivators, barriers, and preferred resources. **Research implications** – The findings of this study highlight pull factors (i.e., family business background and self-fulfilment) provide better understanding to increase entrepreneurial motivations among Latinas. The present study will illustrate the nuanced but substantive interactions of gender and ethnicity in Latinas' perceptions and attitudes toward new business formation. **Originality/value** – The present study will contribute to the literature by exploring the motivators and barriers that affect business formation among emerging Latina entrepreneurs. Moreover, past research has not explored both motivators and barriers perceived by nascent Latina entrepreneurs. Findings from this study will assist future researchers in developing materials and programs to aid female and ethnic entrepreneurship.

Keywords Entrepreneurship, Latina, Female, Barrier, Motivator

CHAPTER ONE

INTRODUCTION

1.0 Introduction **(1-2 pages)**

At the beginning of the chapter, describe in a paragraph or two, how this chapter is going to be organized. For example:

This chapter explains the background of the study, statement of the problem, research questions, objectives of the study, significance of the study, definitions used in the study, limitations of the study, and the operational definitions of the thesis.

1.1 Background of the Study

The research topic proposed to be studied is introduced in this section. It should help the reader to acquaint with the topic

- Broad overview of the subject matter/ phenomena of interest you intend to study – **Subject matter**
- Describe the broad foundations of your study— the readers understand what you intend to study
- Introduction to key issues you intend to study - **Object**

Example:

The determinants of intention to invest in cryptocurrencies in Malaysia

1.1 BACKGROUND

- General Scenario – Investment in Cryptocurrencies
- Specific Scenario – Investment in Cryptocurrencies in Malaysia
- Highlight the factors/determinants of Intention to invest in cryptocurrencies
- Foundation of this study – This study will examine ……..

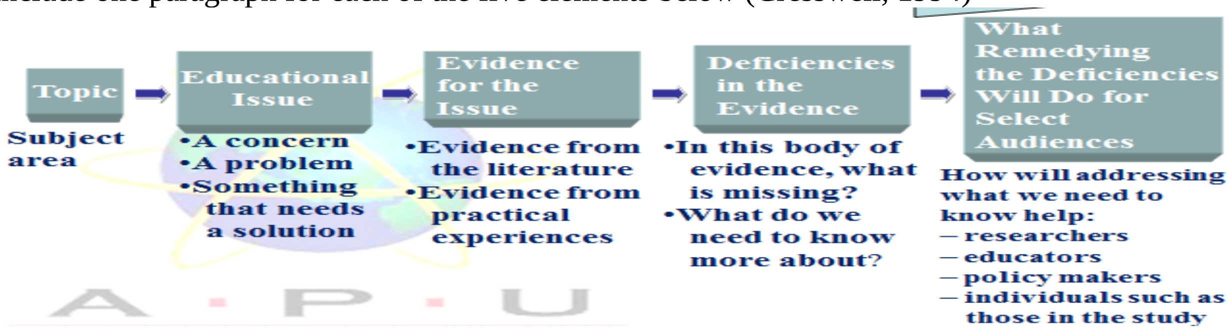
1.2 Problem Statement **(about 1 page)**

A research problem is an educational issue or concern that an investigator presents and justifies in a research study- THE NEED FOR THIS STUDY.

Show that there is an issue that needs to be addressed or a "gap" in the body of knowledge that you want to fill.

Guidelines for Quantitative study

Include one paragraph for each of the five elements below (Cresswell, 1994)



- Identify the **issues or concern. Something that needs to that studied**,
- Identify the **deficiencies in evidence** – theoretical gap.
- What do we still need to know?
- What else do we need to know to improve practice
- This section focuses mainly on theoretical gap. Definition of problem - ***any situation where a gap exists between the actual and the desired ideal states.***
- How to show a Gap
  - Review of past literature/research will reveal to us what have already been done, being researched and being known.
  - Normally the gap between "what is" and "what it should be" forms the basis of this problem statement (Here again the students should not base on what he/ she thinks something "should be" but be based on the findings or information from other writers/researchers).
- The problem statement will provide the basis of your study
- It argues out the rationale for you to carry out this research.

THEREFORE THE 'GAP' IS BETWEEN WHAT IS KNOWN AND WHAT IS NOT KNOWN SAYING SOMETHING NOBODY HAS SAID BEFORE

What constitutes a gap

- CARRYING OUT EMPIRICAL WORK THAT HAS NOT BEEN DONE BEFORE
- MAKING A SYNTHESIS THAT HAS NOT BEEN MADE BEFORE
- USING ALREADY KNOWN MATERIAL BUT WITH A NEW INTERPRETATION
- TRYING OUT SOMETHING IN THIS COUNTRY THAT HAS PREVIOUSLY ONLY BEEN DONE IN OTHER COUNTRIES
- TAKING A PARTICULAR TECHNIQUE AND APPLYING IT IN A NEW AREA

KEYWORDS THAT SIGNIFY 'GAP"

- HOWEVER, THERE IS A PAUCITY OF RESEARCH…….
- HOWEVER, THERE IS A DEARTH OF LITERARTURE
- HOWEVER, THE RELATIONSHIPS ARE STILL UNCLEAR……
- HOWEVER, THERE STILL EXISTS SOME AMBIGUITY……
- HOWEVER, THE EFFECTS HAVE NOT BEEN EMPIRICALLY TESTED…….
- HOWEVERPAST RESEARCH HAS IGNORED……..
- HOWEVER, INCONSISTENCIES IN THE FINDINGS………

Example

RELATIONSHIP AMONG KNOWLEDGE MANAGEMENT, ORGANIZATIONAL CULTURE AND FIRM PERFORMANCE

Previous research has recognized the positive influence of organizational culture on Performance and the KM to performance ( ). However, the impact of OC **has not been empirically tested**. In addition, the specific role that OC may have on firm performance is unclear ( ). Therefore, this research will be carried to empirically test the impact of OC and KM on firm performance.

1.3 Research Questions (about 100-150 words)

Questions about the relationships among variables that the investigator seeks to know.

Research questions (RQs) are refined statements of the specific components of the problem.

Example

RELATIONSHIP AMONG KNOWLEDGE MANAGEMENT, ORGANIZATIONAL CULTURE AND FIRM PERFORMANCE

1. Is there a relationship between KM and firm performance?
2. Is there a relationship between OC and firm performance?

1.4 Objectives of the Study (about 100-150 words)

A specific result that a person or system aims to achieve within a time frame and with available resources.

- A specific result that a person or system aims to achieve within a time frame and with available resources.
- The objectives of the study are given in two forms, first is the general objective and the second is the specific objectives.

Example

RELATIONSHIP AMONG KNOWLEDGE MANAGEMENT, ORGANIZATIONAL CULTURE AND FIRM PERFORMANCE

General Objective:

The general objective of this study is to examine the relationships between knowledge management, organizational culture and firm performance

Specific Objectives:

The specific objectives of the study are:

1. To examine the relationship between KM and firm performance
2. To examine the relationship between OC and firm performance

1.5 Hypothesis **(about 100-150 words)**

A hypothesis (H) is an unproven statement or proposition about a factor or phenomenon that is of interest to the researcher. Often, a hypothesis is a possible answer to the research question.

According to Kerlinger (1973), "A hypothesis is a conjectural statement of the relation between two or more variables. Hypotheses are always in declarative sentence form, and they relate, either generally or specifically, variables to variables"

1. Normally, hypotheses are given after the research model.
2. Hypotheses statements should contain research variables which are measurable or
3. potentially measurable.
4. They should also specify how the variables are related.
5. Hypothesis statements should be developed based on theoretical foundations and findings of past studies.
6. Hypotheses can be stated in terms of relationships between two or more variables.
7. Hypothesis statement can be stated in null form.
   For example: H01: *Organization culture is not related to firm performance.*
8. Hypothesis can be written in alternative form
   For example: H1: *Organization culture is related to firm performance*.
9. Hypothesis statement can also be stated as a "difference" hypothesis.
   For example: *Older employees are more committed to the organization than younger employees.*

Example

RELATIONSHIP AMONG KNOWLEDGE MANAGEMENT, ORGANIZATIONAL CULTURE AND FIRM PERFORMANCE

Hypothesis:

The hypotheses of the study are:

H1: Knowledge management is related to firm performance
H2: Organization culture is related to firm performance

Note: Hypothesis can be written after the Literature Review (Chapter 2) of after the Research Framework (Chapter 3)

1.6 Significance of the Study **(about 100-150 words)**

1. **Practical contribution**: Describing the significance of the study for select audiences. Who will benefit?
   To convey the importance of the problem for different groups that may profit from reading and using the study. Eg: To policymakers, employers etc.
2. **Theoretical Contribution**: Contribute something to theory building and practice in its field as well as policy development in the area – **Theoretical perspective**

1.7 Scope of study **(about 100-150 words)**
This refers to the boundary of your research
Identify the dimensions / population of the subject that you plan to study.
The scope of the study to include:
- The industry/sector which is the focus of study
- The area or region? Why?
- The respondents? Who are they? Why?
- Methodology to be employed in data collection
- Unit of analysis – individual or organization?

1.8 Limitations of the Study **(about 100-150 words)**
Limitations of the study refer to elements which are beyond the control of the researcher.
In this section, the limitations and constraints of the research should be highlighted. Some common limitations faced by researchers are, for example, limitations due to small sample size, measuring instruments, or generalizability of the results.
Some examples:
- Sample size
- Sampling method used (subject to biasness)
- Time available
- Access to study information (e.g., information that requires special clearances).
- Availability of data.
- Variables (there can be other variables)
- Number and type of available scenarios.

1.9 Operational Definitions **(about 100-200 words)**
All variables used in the study should be operationally defined so that we know the bases upon which the research was carried out. The student should state clearly the sources of these definitions if these were taken from somewhere else, or explain how these were developed if these were developed by him/ herself.
- In this context, you should be aware of the distinction between a **constitutive/conceptual** definition and an **operational definition**. A constitutive definition is the dictionary type of definition. This type of definition helps to convey the general meaning of a variable but it is not precise enough for research purposes. You need to define the variables in your study so that readers know exactly what is meant by the terms.
- It is very important to define the constructs well because these definitions become the foundation for finding or developing acceptable measures of those constructs.

	Conceptual Definition	Operational Definition
Brand perception	Brand perception is consumers' ability to identify the brand under different conditions, as reflected by their brand recognition or recall performance (Kotler and Keller, 2006)	Brand perception in this study refers to what people are thinking and saying about a brand. Measurement: six items adopted by Chan and Syuhaily (2011) which was measured using five-point-ordinal scale
Materialism	Materialism was found associated with the sense of insecurity and therefore materialistic people excessively used their possessions as a tool of happiness (Sangkhawasi & Johri, 2007).	In this study, Materialism refers to the importance that a consumer places on the acquisition and possession of material objects Measurement: 7 questions adopted by Aron O'Cass (2009) which was measured using seven-point-ordinal scale

CHAPTER TWO
LITERATURE REVIEW

4-6 pages or around 1500 words

The main purpose of Chapter Two is to critically review the published work in the area of study which the student is undertaking. In doing so, the learner will have to look at the concepts, theoretical development and empirical and non-empirical studies done to explain the phenomenon of interest. The result of the review would indicate the current state of knowledge in the area in terms of its breadth and depth of research, the strengths and weaknesses of previous research and the knowledge gap which needs further explanation and study.

Although books can be used as references, it is preferable that learners use as much of the references as possible from the journals which are well recognized and known in the area. Because the literature review indicates the current state of knowledge in the area, the references used should be as current or most up-to-date as possible.

A literature review is:

- An account of what has been published on a topic by accredited scholars and researchers
- Evaluate and critique the literature - challenge the assumptions and state Disagreements/Controversies/Debates/Arguments
- Summary of the current state of knowledge
- To find out the gaps existing in knowledge

LITERATURE REVIEW (LR) IS A CRITICAL ANALYSIS OF THE THEORETICAL AND EMPIRICAL CONTRIBUTIONS IN THE FIELD OF STUDY
ATTEMPTS SHOULD BE MADE TO CREATE DEBATE AND COMPARE AND CONTRAST DIFFERENT PERSPECTIVES AND CONTRIBUTIONS

A good literature review must:

- Be organized and related to the thesis or research questions
- **Synthesiz**e results around what is known and what is not known
- Identify areas of controversy/disagreement
- Questions that need further research

THE FOLLOWING SUBHEADINGS CAN BE USED TO ILLUSTRATE THE CONTENT OF CHAPTER TWO—THE LITERATURE REVIEW

RELATIONSHIP AMONG KNOWLEDGE MANAGEMENT, ORGANIZATIONAL CULTURE AND FIRM PERFORMANCE

2.1 Introduction

An introduction must tell the reader the following:

- State the purpose of the chapter
- what you are going to cover in the review
- the scope of your research

- how the review ties in with your own research topic.

A good example of an introduction has a topic sentence which indicates what will be covered and also tells the reader the specific focus of the literature review in the concluding sentence.

Example:
This chapter reviews the literature and past research in the area of firm performance, knowledge management and organizational culture. *(Notice how the student has clearly said WHAT she will cover in this review. This is particularly important in a large topic area)*. The chapter will define the concept of firm performance, followed by a review of the factors that affect firm performance, specifically knowledge management and organizational culture. Theories and hypotheses development are also discussed. The results of the literature review will lead to the development of the research model for this thesis. Based on this research model, a set of hypotheses will be formulated and which will be tested in this study.

2.2 Defining the Concept/construct of Firm Performance

- Different approaches in defining the concept
- Different ways of measuring the construct
- Theoretical bases for the development of the concept

2.2.1The Multidimensional Nature of Firm Performance

  - The development of new understanding of the concept.
  - Theoretical bases for the development of the concept
  - Research findings based on the new multidimensional nature of the concept
  - Measurement issues.

2.2 PERFORMANCE
Performance has been used extensively in marketing and management research. However, there is no consensus as to which criteria is the best indicator for organizational performance (Bayyvarapu, 2005). Jaworski and Kohli (1990) suggest for market share, while Deshpande, Farley and Webster (1998) look at relative profitability…………………….

2.3Defining the concept of Knowledge management

- Different approaches in defining the concept
- Different ways of measuring the construct
- Theoretical bases for the development of the concept

2.3 KNOWLEDGE MANAGEMENT
Knowledge management has become increasingly familiar in most business organizations, an improvement from being an emergent concept (Zach et al., 2002). There are numerous definitions of KM (Kakabadse et al., 2009) but it is hard to define is precisely (Rebecca & Philip, 2005) …………………………………….

2.4 Defining the concept/constructs of Organization culture

- Different approaches in defining the concept
- Different ways of measuring the construct
- Theoretical bases for the development of the concept

2.4 ORGANIZATIONAL CULTURE

An organizational culture is a unique and inimitable capability of the organization to create its competitive advantage over the rivals (Barney, 2006; Hall, 2003, Peteraf, 1993). Kilman et al, (1985) define it as the philosophies, assumptions, beliefs, attitudes and norms that bind the organization together. …………………………….

2.5 Relationship between Knowledge Management and Performance

- Discuss the relationship in terms of theoretical as well as empirical results of studies done on the influence (or relationships) of KM and firm performance
- Critically evaluate the studies done and the results reported by these studies.
- What knowledge gap still exists which need further studies in the area.

2.5 KNOWLEDGE MANAGEMENT AND PERFORMANCE

Past studies have examined the relationship between KM and firm performance. McKeen et al. (2012) found significant positive links between high adoption of KM practices and high performance, while Liao and Chuang (2015) pointed that KM resources have positive influence on process capabilities which in turn positively influences firm performance. However, Zaim etl al (2007) argued that although significant relationship was found between KM and performance, it could not be generalized to wider population. Similarly, Zack et al (2015) concurred that it could not be generalized to other geographic, economic and cultures. Thus it is hypothesized that:

H1: There is relationship between KM and performance

2.6 Relationship between Organizational culture and Performance

- Discuss the relationship in terms of theoretical as well as empirical results of studies done on the influence (or relationships) of OC and firm performance
- Critically evaluate the studies done and the results reported by these studies.
- What knowledge gap still exists which need further studies in the area.

2.6 ORGANIZATIONAL CULTURE AND PERFORMANCE

Several empirical studies have supported the positive link between culture and performance (Calori & Sarnin,1991; Kotter & Heskett, 1992). Moreover, studies done by Chatman and Jehn (1994), Denison and Mishra (1995) and Kotter and Heskett (1992), have contributed significantly to the field of culture and performance studies. For example, Denison and Mishra (1995), utilizing a more rigorous methodology, discovered that cultural strength was significantly correlated with short-term financial performance. Thus it is hypothesized that:

H2: There is significant relationship between OC and performance

2.7 Underpinning Theory(ies)

One or more underpinning theories related to the topic

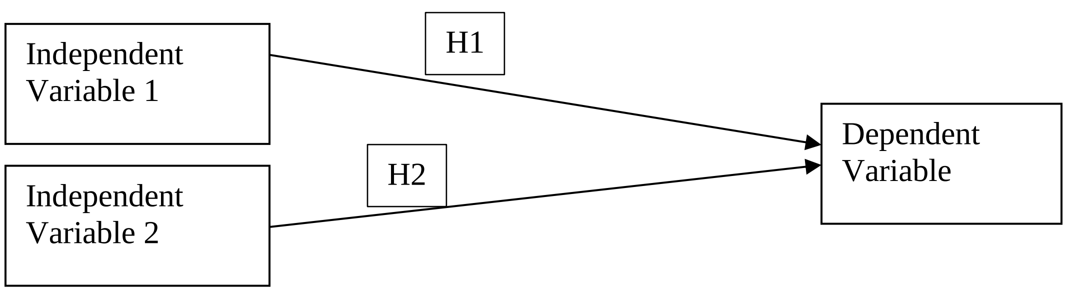
> **2.7 UNDERPINNING THEORIES**
> Resource-based theory (RBT) is a useful lens through which to assess the importance of firm resources because it seeks to identify factors that explain why firms are able to gain and sustain a competitive advantage (Schoemaker, 2003; Barney, 2001; Wernerfelt, 2004).

2.8 Summary

2.9 The Research Model

Identify the various variables investigated in the study. Illustrate how the variables interact with each other as hypothesised in the research by the aid of diagram (s) (if possible).
The research model represents the framework for the research.

- It should indicate the relationships between or among the variables.
- The research model is developed based on the "knowledge Gaps" identified by the above literature review.
- In developing the research model the learner has to rely, once again, on the relevant theories (from within or outside the area of his/her study) and related past research findings.
- Generally, research in organization, management and business fields, the research model can be represented in relational forms like the one given below:



- Depending on fields of study, other forms of research model can be developed. For example, in economics and finance the research model can be represented by mathematical / statistical equations.

CHAPTER THREE

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

4-6 pages or around 1500 words

Chapter Three will describe in sufficient detail how the study will be carried out in order to collect the data to test the hypotheses or answer the research questions. The method of the study should be described clearly so that it can be replicated by other researchers.

Although the specifics of the method of study will be different from one research topic to another or from quantitative research to qualitative research, the main purpose of the chapter is the same for all- to describe how the study will be carried out in order to meet the objective(s) of the study. Generally the chapter will consist of the following subheadings:

3.1 Introduction/Research Design

"Research design is the plan, structure, and strategy of investigation conceived so as to obtain answers to research questions and to control variance…"
(Kerlinger, 1973, p. 300)

In this section, state and justify your choice of type of research design that you are going to use in this study—

- Is it basic or applied research
- Is this a exploratory, descriptive or causal research
- What is the philosophy
- What is the approach i.e. deductive or inductive
- What is the strategy eg survey
- Is this a qualitative, quantitative or mixed choice for data collection
- The population and sampling type

Your justifications must be based on the opinions and findings of other writers published in journals or books. Suggested text is Saunders, Lewis and Thornbill (2012)

Example:
Saunders, Lewis, and Thornhill (2016) explained different steps involved in the development of research design with the help of a Research Onion (Figure. 1). The contours of research design put forth by Saunders, Lewis, and Thornhill (2016) are almost like steps elaborated by other authors (e.g. Kothari, 2004; Creswell, 2014). However, the presentation by Saunders, Lewis, and Thornhill (2016) is more reader friendly. The steps involved in the development of a research design includes research philosophy, approach to theory development, methodological choice, research strategies, time horizon, techniques and procedures, and ethical considerations.

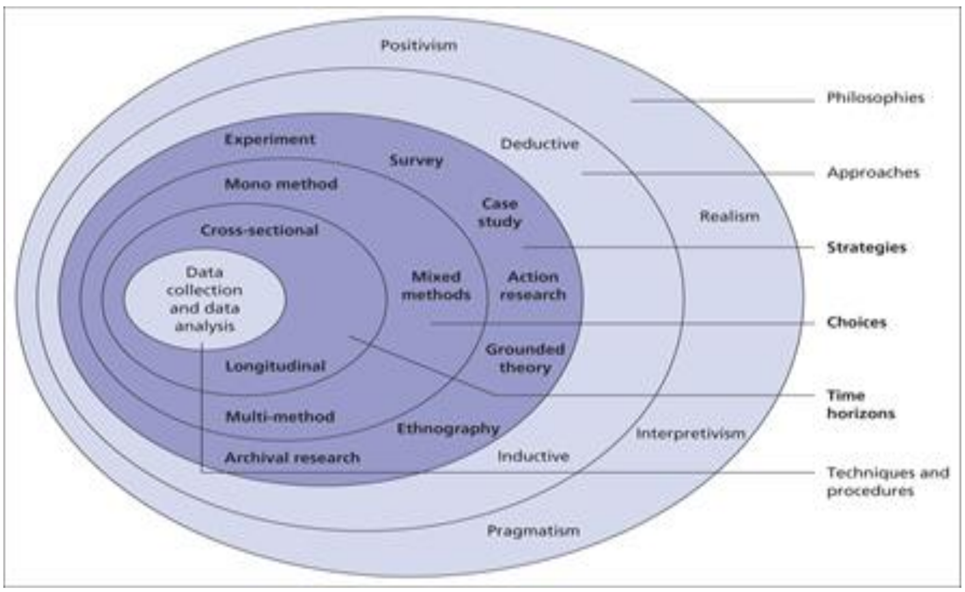


Figure 1 Research Onion

In this research study, the relationship between authentic, ethical and servant leadership styles (independent variables) on organisational commitment (dependent variable) is studied. The study also includes employee engagement as a mediator and perceived supervisor support as a moderator in the relationship. Towards this end, a quantitative study will be undertaken and therefore, positivist philosophy will be adopted. The positivist philosophical approach allows the generalizability of observable social processes (Saunders, Lewis, and Thornhill, 2016). A deductive approach will be used to study the causal relationship between the variables. For data collection, a cross-sectional survey will be conducted using online and self-administered questionnaires. Sekaran and Bougie, (2016) noted that perceptions can be measured using questionnaires. Moreover, cross-sectional surveys are helpful in studying phenomenon and relationships between the variables (Saunders, Lewis and Thornhill, 2016). SPSS will be used for data evaluation.

3.2 Research Philosophy

Philosophy refers to a system of beliefs and assumptions about the development of knowledge. It is precisely what you are doing when embarking on research: developing knowledge in a particular field (See Chapter 4 of book by Saunders et al., 2012)

. Some of research philosophies are:

- Positivism - the stance of the natural scientist
- Realism - direct and critical realism
- Interpretivism – researchers as 'social actors'

Example: Research philosophy is defined as a 'system of beliefs and assumptions about the development of knowledge,' (Saunders, Lewis and Thornhill, 2016, p. 124). Subscribing to the positivist philosophy, this study examines the relationship between authentic, ethical and servant leadership styles and organisational commitment with employee engagement as a mediator and perceived supervisor support as a moderator.

This research is based on positivism philosophy. Positivism relates to the philosophical stance of the natural scientist (Saunders, Lewis & Thornhill, 2012). Based on the positivist philosophy, the only phenomena that the researcher can observe will lead to the production of credible data. To generate a research strategy to collect these data, the researcher is will use existing theory to develop hypotheses. Predictions can be made on the basis of the previously observed and explained realities and their inter-relationships. In this study, these hypotheses will be tested and confirmed, in whole or part, or refuted, leading to the further development of theory which then may be tested by further research (Saunders, Lewis & Thornbill, 2012).

3.3 Research Classification and Approach

1**.** State the classification of research purpose - exploratory, descriptive and explanatory

The research can be classified into

- Exploratory research
- Descriptive studies
- Causal/Explanatory studies

Research Approach is the extent to which you are clear about the theory at the beginning of your research. This is often portrayed as two contrasting approaches to the reasoning you adopt: deductive or inductive.

- Deduction - theory and hypothesis are developed and tested
- Induction – data are collected and a theory developed from the data analysis

Example:
According to Saunders et al. (2012, the classification of research purpose most often used in the research methods' literature is the threefold one of exploratory, descriptive and explanatory. This is an explanatory research and as stated by Saunders et al. (2012), studies that establish causal relationships between variables may be termed explanatory research. The emphasis here is on studying a situation or a problem in order to explain the relationships between variables.

According to Saunders, et al. (2012), research approaches are mainly based on the research philosophies, whereby the deductive approach is commonly used by researchers with traditional natural scientific views (positivism), while inductive approach is usually based on phenomenology (interpretivism). In this study deductive approach is adopted for theory testing. In this approach data is collected to study a phenomenon and based on the findings, theory building is resorted to. In a deductive approach, theory guides the research. Based on the theory, hypotheses are developed, which underline the causal relationship between different variables. To test the hypotheses data will be collected using a survey method from a large sample (Bryman, 2012).

3.4 Research Strategy (Survey/Case study)
1. A strategy is a plan of action to achieve a goal. A research strategy may therefore be defined as a plan of how a researcher will go about answering her or his research question.

The strategies that can be used are:

- experiment;
- survey;
- case study;
- action research;
- grounded theory;
- ethnography;
- Phenomenology
- archival research.

Example:
According to Saunders et al. (2012), your choice of research strategy will be guided by your research question(s) and objectives, the extent of existing knowledge, the amount of time and other resources you have available, as well as your own philosophical underpinnings. . According to Saunders, there are seven research strategies, namely: experiment, survey, case study, action research, grounded theory, ethnography and archival studies (Saunders, Lewis and Thornhill 2007). Considering that the research questions are mainly to collect quantifiable data that will be later analysed, survey strategy is chosen. For this study, survey is most appropriate to describe trends or to determine the relationship among underlying constructs with the intention to generalize the finding (Bhattacherjee 2012; Saunders et al. 2016).
According to Saunders, the survey strategy is usually associated with the deductive approach. It is a popular and common strategy in business and management research and is most frequently used to answer who, what, where, how much and how many questions. Surveys are popular as they allow the collection of a large amount of data from a sizeable population in a highly economical way (Saunders et al. (2012).

P

3.5 Research Methodological Choice (Qualitative/quantitative/mixed)

1. What is the research choice and why? Quantitative research OR qualitative research

There are 3 methods used.

- Qualitative (numerical data)
- Quantitative (non-numerical data
- Mixed (both numerical and non-numerical data)

Example:

Quantitative is predominantly used as a synonym for any data collection technique that generates or uses numerical data. In contrast, qualitative is used predominantly as a synonym for any data collection technique that generates or uses non-numerical data (Saunders et al., 2012). . Based on the discussion above, this research will be mainly quantitative since the data collection and analysis will be in numerical format. This quantitative research relies on deductive reasoning or deduction (Sekaran & Bougie, 2010) and makes use of variety of quantitative analysis techniques that range from providing simple descriptive of the variables involved, to establishing statistical relationships among variables through complex statistical modelling (Saunders et al., 2012). In this quantitative research, involving several variables, the aim of researcher is to study the relationship between an independent (predictor) variable and a dependent (criterion) variable in a population (Hopkins, 2000).

3.6 Time Horizon (longitudinal/cross sectional)

1. Explain the time horizon selected.

There are 2 time horizons applicable:

- The ‘snapshot’ - cross-sectional
- A series of snapshots or the ‘diary’ perspective - longitudinal

Example:

Researches can be classified based on time dimension to cross-sectional and Longitudinal (Saunders, Lewis and Thornhill 2007). Cross-Sectional research is carried out once and studies a particular phenomenon at a specific point in time. Longitudinal research is designed in a way to allow the observation of a particular phenomenon over an extended period of time with the aim of tracking changes in time.

This research tries to explore the relationship between independent and dependant variables. It is aimed to find the relation at the present time so a cross-sectional study is adopted. This is a cross-sectional study that employs the survey strategy. The study is research that is a “snapshot” taken at a particular time seeking to explain how factors are related (Saunders et al. (2012). This cross-sectional research will make use of survey strategy to collect data.

3.7 Data (primary/secondary)

1. Explain the type of data that will be collected and analysed

There are 2 types of data collected:

PRIMARY DATA: Data originated by a researcher for the specific purpose of addressing the research problem.

SECONDARY DATA: Data that is collected from secondary sources such as reports, newspapers etc. Clearly state the sources of data

Example:
According to Saunders et al. (2012), secondary data is data that have already been collected for some other purpose, perhaps processed and subsequently stored. There are three main types of secondary data: documentary, survey and those from multiple sources. Primary data is collected by researchers themselves through observation, interviews and questionnaires (Saunders et al., 2012). For this research, primary data will be collected using questionnaires. Questionnaires tend to be used for descriptive or explanatory research.
For this explanatory research, the data will enable you to examine and explain relationships between variables, in particular cause and- effect relationships (Saunders et al., (2012).

3.8 Instrumentation/ Questionnaire

Questionnaires are a popular means of collecting data, but are difficult to design and often require many rewrites before an acceptable questionnaire is produced.

- Describe the questionnaire used in the study
- Is it original? If any items are taken from existing questionnaire, identify the sources (adopted/adapted)
- The structure and the question categories (demographic/rating questions)
- Describe the scaling methods used and state the reasons for choosing them
- Issues on validity and reliability
- Was Pilot test done to check the clarity and appropriateness of the survey questionnaire

(Attach a sample of the questionnaire)

Example:
A self- administered questionnaire was used to collect data from the target population. The questionnaire was divided into two parts. The Section A of the questionnaire covered demographic information using nominal and ordinal scales. In Section B of the questionnaire, a five-point Likert type scale was used to measure the respondents' attitude or behaviors. Employee engagement in this study refers to a work-related state of mind that is fulfilling and positive, which are characterized by dedication, vigor and absorption (Schaufeli, Bakker and Salanova, 2006). The measurement was based on the scale adapted from Schaufeli and Bakker (2003). To measure supervisor incivility, questions were adapted Cortina, et al (2001) and Martine and Hine (2005). Measurement of co-worker incivility was based on questions adapted from a study by Martine and Hine (2005). Customer Incivility questions were adapted from a study by Wilson and Holmyall (2013).

3.9 Administration of Questionnaire/Sources of Data collection (Interview/internet)
Once your questionnaire is designed, and your sample selected, the questionnaire can be used to collect data via five main types. Describe how the questionnaire was administered and discuss problems encountered

- Internet- or intranet-mediated,
- postal,
- delivery and collection,
- telephone
- interview

State the steps in data collection ie:

- What method was used
- How many questionnaires/respondents
- How was the feedback

If pilot testing was done, state the reliability and validity testing results and what amendments done to questionnaire

Example:
In this study, primary data will be collected using self-administered questionnaires. As a first step meeting with the HR managers of the IT companies, will be organised. Formal permission to conduct the survey among the employees of the company will be obtained and the HR managers will be requested to provide the list of their employees for the conduct of simple random sampling. A list of 3000 to 4000 employees of the IT companies will be compiled. That will constitute a sampling frame. As discussed in para 3.7.5, 385 responses will be required. Working on 50% response rate 800 participants will be selected through draws. They will be served with the questionnaires including online questionnaires. Initially a total of 150 mails will be sent through e-mail. Another 50 questionnaires will be delivered directly through the deliver and call to collect the questionnaire method. The target respondents will be given one month to respond. A multimode approach to e-mail survey administration can enhance response rates (Sheeehan, 2001). In this study, the direct distribute and collect method will be used for respondents that could be reached personally. In addition, follow up through e-mail will be done after one month.

3.10 Sampling (Type, population, frame, size)
1. State the Study Population, sampling frame and units of analysis. What was the sample size and how was it calculated
    - Describe the characteristics of your study population—who are they and where are they situated and how big is this population size?
    - Describe your sample size, how you derive the sample size (state the formula did arrive what
2. State the sampling method (probability or non-probability) and sampling procedure.
    - What was the sampling method (e.g. Convenience sampling)
    - Reasons to support the sampling method

Example:

For all research questions where it would be impracticable for you to collect data from the entire population, you need to select a sample (Saunders et al., 2012. Sampling also saves time, an important consideration when you have tight deadlines, and the organization of data collection is more manageable as fewer people are involved. The target population in this study covers all service employees who have direct contact with the patients and are working in the public healthcare in Mahé, Seychelles. The sampling techniques are divided into two types; probability sampling or representative sampling and non-probability sampling (Saunders, et al., 2012). Non-probability sampling was used in this study as a sampling frame could not be developed. Convenience sampling was used because this is the fastest and easiest method to collect data from qualified respondents. The sample size was based on the formula by Green (1991). According to the formula, the sample size is equal to 50 + 8m (m is the number of variables). Based on the formula by Tabachnick and Fidell (2013), the sample size should be at least 74 respondents. The researcher set the target sample size as 100 respondents.

3.11 Data Preparation/Processing

1. State editing, coding and tabulating the data
2. What program/tool was used? Eg:SPSS

Example:

Data Preparation involves checking or logging the data in; checking the data for accuracy; entering the data into the computer; transforming the data; and developing and documenting a database structure that integrates the various measures (Saunders et al., 2012). After data have been collected from a representative sample of the population, the next step is to analyse them to test the research hypotheses (Sekaran, 2003). Coding is translating answers into numerical values or assigning numbers to the various categories of a variable to be used in data analysis. Data editing is to check for accuracy and the incoming mailed questionnaire data was checked for incompleteness and inconsistencies, if any (Sekaran, 2003). After editing, which ensures that the information on the schedule is accurate and categorized in a suitable form, the data are put together in tables using the Excel spreadsheet so that it may also undergo some other forms of statistical analysis. The data was later downloaded using the SPSS program.

3.12 Data Analysis

1. Discuss the selected Descriptive and Inferential Statistical methods [as in the SPSS] used in analyzing the results. Having selected the variables for your study, you assume that they would either help to define your problem (dependent variable/s) and its different components or that they will be contributory factors to your problem (independent variable).
2. How to test goodness of data (reliability testing, normality testing etc)?
3. How testing of hypothesis was done (inferential)?

Example:
As stated by Sekaran (2003), in data analysis we have three objectives: getting a feel for the data, testing the goodness of data, and testing the hypotheses developed for the research. The feel for the data will give preliminary ideas of how good the scales are, how well the coding and entering of data have been done, and so on. Descriptive statistics was used to acquire a feel for the data by checking the central tendency and the dispersion. The mean, the range, the standard deviation, and the variance in the data will give the researcher a good idea of how the respondents have reacted to the items in the questionnaire and how good the items and measures are (Sekaran, 2003). The reliability of a measure is established by testing for both consistency and stability and this was based on Cronbach‟s alpha which is a reliability coefficient that indicates how well the items in a set are positively correlated to one another. For validity, the testing was through expert review and by submitting the data for factor analysis (Sekaran, 2003). Once the data are ready for analysis, the researcher is ready to test the hypotheses already developed for the study. This was done through inferential testing i.e. Pearson correlation and regression testing. Inferential statistics will investigate questions, models and hypotheses (Zikmund, Babin, Carr & Griffin, 2013). The conclusions from inferential statistics try to infer from the sample data what the population thinks.

3.12 Ethical Considerations

1. What were the research ethics throughout your research?

There are a number of ethical principles that should be taken into account when performing dissertation research. At the core, these ethical principles stress the need to (a) do good (known as beneficence) and (b) do no harm (known as non-malfeasance). In practice, these ethical principles mean that as a researcher, you need to: (a) obtain informed consent from potential research participants; (b) minimize the risk of harm to participants; (c) protect their anonymity and confidentiality; (d) avoid using deceptive practices; and (e) give participants the right to withdraw from your research.

Example:
Research ethics refer to the appropriateness of your behaviour in relation to the rights of those who become the subject of your work or are affected by the work. They also relate to yourself and ensuring no harm comes to you and other researchers (Saunders .et al., 2012). As stated by Saunders et al. (2012) potential ethical issues should be recognised and considered from the outset of your research and are one of the criteria against which your research is judged. In this research, a number of key ethical considerations relates to privacy of possible and actual participants voluntary nature of participation and the right to withdraw partially or completely from the process, consent and possible deception of participants and maintenance of the confidentiality of data provided by individuals or identifiable participants and their anonymity. In this research, nothing will be done that cause physical or emotional harm to the respondents. This could be something as simple as being careful how you word sensitive or difficult questions

Note: For qualitative studies, the detail steps may be different, but the overall expectation of a clear and complete description of study population, instrumentation, data collection and analysis is the same as the quantitative studies.

References

As with any scholarly research paper, you must cite the sources you used in composing your proposal.

This section should testify to the fact that you did enough preparatory work to make sure the project will complement and not duplicate the efforts of other researchers. Cited works should always use a standard format that follows the writing style advised by the discipline of your course.

- References must be provided in the usual scholarly fashion. It helps to convince your reader that your proposal is worth pursuing if you can identify literature in the field and demonstrate that you understand it.
- Use the citation style proposed by the ***APA style Referencing***.
- Make sure that all materials cited in the text are also found in the list of references and vice versa. This will reflect your academic honesty in producing the research report.

APA Style Citations and Referencing

Refer to the guidelines provided by APU Online library. The steps are as follows:

- In APSPACE, select LIBRARY.
- Click OPEN LIBRARY HOMEPAGE
- Click LIBRARY GUIDE
- Select APA REFERENCING

For APA Referencing the following is highlighted:

In-Text Referencing

APA 7th is an 'author/date' system, so you’re in-text references for all formats (book, journal article, web document) consists of the author(s) surname and year of publication.

The basics of an in-text reference in APA:

- Include author or authors and year of publication.
- Use round brackets.

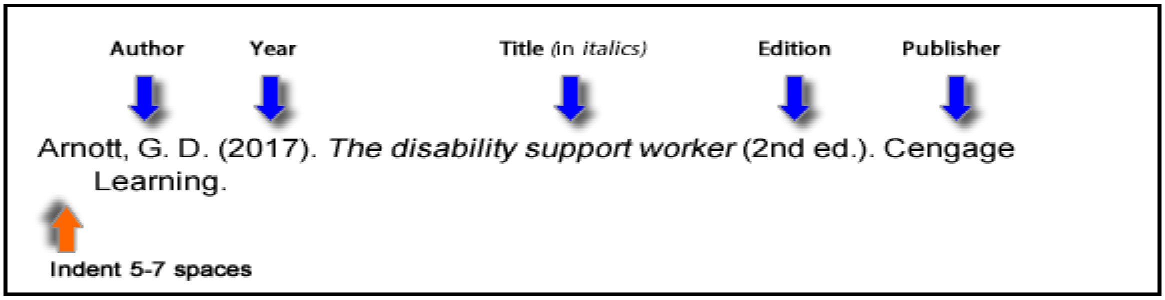
Example: (Smith & Bruce, 2018)

All in-text references should be listed in the reference list at the end of your document. The purpose of the reference list entry is to contain all the information that a reader of your work needs to follow-up on your sources. An important principle in referencing is to be consistent.

Reference List

When compiling your APA Reference List, you should:

- List references on a new page with a centred heading titled: References.
- Include all your references, regardless of format, e.g., books, journal articles, online sources, in one alphabetical listing from A - Z.
- Order entries alphabetically by surname of author(s).
- Indent second and subsequent lines of each entry (5-7 spaces).



Appendices

Include in this section all the relevant support materials especially the research instruments that are to be used in the study. This will indicate to whoever assesses your proposal that you are ready to embark on the intended research.

OTHER GUIDELINES

1. **Language**

   All Investigation reports and Final Year Projects must be in English.

2. **Font size and page margins**

   Manuscripts should be typed, double-spaced, using a word processor. The letters should be in Times New Roman, size 12 points. The same font size should be used throughout with 1" margins on all sides.

3. **Line Spacing**

   The body of the text should be double spaced. Single spacing is only permitted in tables, long quotations, short footnotes, notes, multi-line captions, and references.

4. **Pagination**

   Insert the page number in the right area of the header. The APA Style rules direct authors to start page numbering at "1" on the title page in the top right corner of the page. The page numbers should continue in that position to the last page of the document.

5. **Headings and Levels**

For Headings, follow the APA style. The following applies:

- There are five levels of heading in APA Style. Level 1 is the highest or main level of heading, Level 2 is a subheading of Level 1, Level 3 is a subheading of Level 2, and so on through Levels 4 and 5.
- The number of headings to use in a paper depends on the length and complexity of the work.
    - If only one level of heading is needed, use Level 1.
    - If two levels of heading are needed, use Levels 1 and 2.
    - If three levels of heading are needed, use Levels 1, 2, and 3 (and so on).
- Suggest that students use up to 3 level headings.

6. **Tables and Figures – Use APA Style Referencing**

A table concisely presents information (often numbers) in rows and columns. Number all tables sequentially as you refer to them in the text (Table 1, Table 2, etc.), likewise for figures (Figure 1, Figure 2, etc.). Do not use suffix letters (e.g., Table 3a, 3b, 3c). The table number (e.g., Table 1) appears above the table in bold. In the text, refer to every table by its number. The table title appears one double-spaced line below the table number in italic title. For example, As shown in Table 1, ... (no italics, but with capital T).

Table 1

Compensation for Humiliation, Loss of Dignity and Injury to Feelings, 1992-1999

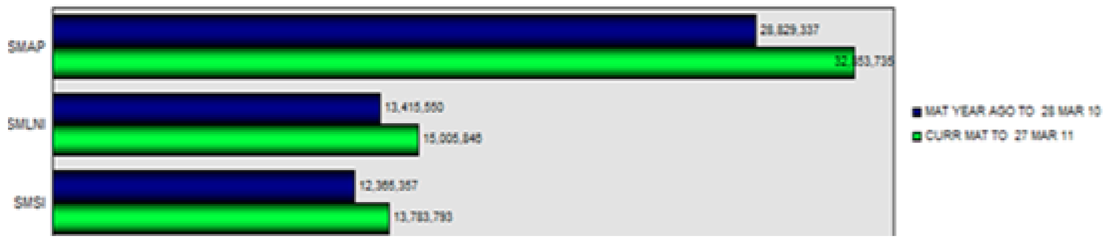
Level of compensation awarded	Frequency	percentages
No compensation awarded	318	16.1
Up to $5000	1147	58.0
Between $5000 and $ 10.000	398	20.1
Over $10,000	115	5.8

Note. Reprinted from *Employment Relations in New Zealand* (2nd ed., p 98) by E. Rasmussen, 2009,

A figure is any other chart, a graph, a photograph, a drawing, or any other illustration or non-textual depiction image or illustration you include in your text. The figure number (e.g., Figure 1) appears above the figure in bold. The figure title appears one double-spaced line below the figure number in Italic. In the text, refer to every figure by its number.

Figure 1

The Market Location and Dollar Sales of Meat Pies in New Zealand



Note. SMAP is the segment of market for the Auckland Province, SMLNI for the Lower North Island,

APA Style Referencing:

1. In Text citation

In-text citations appear in the body of the work (or table, figure etc.). They enable readers to locate the corresponding entry in the reference list.

In-text citations are usually presented in the following two ways:

Parenthetical citation

The author and date appear within parentheses:

sue was described in more detail (Smith, 2020).

Narrative citation

The author appears in the text with the date in parentheses:

(2020) describes the issue in more detail...

2. References List

Books

A reference is the bibliographic information of a work cited. In APA, a reference includes four core elements.

Four elements

Who	When	What	Where	
Author/s. Editor/s. Group author/s.	(Year/date).	*Title of a book.* Title of a chapter of an edited book. Title of a journal article.	Publisher of this book. *Title of the edited book.* *Journal Name, volume*(issue), pp–pp.	DOI or URL

Example:

Lew, A. A., & Cheer, J. M. (Eds.). (2018). *Tourism resilience and adaptation to environmental change: Definitions and frameworks*. Routledge.

Journal Article

Journal articles

Reference format

Who	When	What	Where	
Author, A. A., & Author, B. B. Name of Group. See the section on Reference list, Elements of a reference for more information on author format	(Year).	Title of the article: Subtitle.	*Title of the Journal, Volume number*(Issue number), page–page.	https://doi.org/xxx https://xxxx

Example

Dilke Dikes, E., Savic, M., Carter, A., Kakanovic, R. & Lubman, D. I. (2019). Going online: The affordances of online counseling for families affected by alcohol and other drug issues. *Qualitative Health Research, 29*(14), 2010–2022. https://doi.org/10.1177/1049732319838231

Go to APU Online Library for more information