

UGC-CENTRE FOR FEDERAL STUDIES
Jamia Hamdard, New Delhi

February 10, 2015

FORMAT FOR SYNOPSIS WRITING

Contents of Synopsis

1. **A brief statement on the subject of research** - It should be around one to two pages introducing the theme of proposed research.
2. **A note on concepts and theories** - Standard research generally has two sub-sections:
 - a. Available theories/concepts and their respective limitations and possibilities.
 - b. Specific application of definitions, concepts and theories. Researcher has option either to apply existing theory or devise his/her own conceptual framework.
3. **Review of literature** - It should critically examine :
 - a. Hypothesis of book/article
 - b. Conceptual/theoretical framework
 - c. Paradigms and research questions
 - d. Methodology
 - e. Major contents and universe of data
 - f. Major findings
4. **Significance of the research** - It should highlight the relevance of the research from methodological and epistemological perspectives. In other words, researcher should explain how his/her research is distinct from existing system of knowledge. Significance is scaled in terms of distinguishing characteristics of the field of study, methodological, and conceptual/theoretical innovations; exemplifications, refinement and modifications in existing theory/methodology, discourse structure and interpretative

contributions, inter or trans disciplinary relevance, metaphysical and philosophical seminality, and public policy utility.

5. **Hypothesis** – *It should be simple, precise, and plain in construction. There should not be multiple hypotheses. Research usually has one or two hypothesis. It is devised on the basis of probable relationships between two or more variables.*
6. **Research questions/objectives** – *There should be three to five research questions in the thesis. Questions should be focused and related to hypothesis. In other words, it is mostly related to operational characteristics of variables. Researcher is required to have at least one research question for each chapter.*
7. **Working paradigms** – *Technically speaking, it is a pre-theory of tentative propositions having, to some extent, conceptual loads emanating from the operational characteristics of selected variables. Generally, standard research has three to five paradigms.*
8. **A detailed note on the application of methodology** - *Researcher has to justify the specific selection of methodology for his/her research. It can be specific or mixed methodology.*
9. **Scope and limitations of study**- *Scope of research should be clearly stated. Researcher should also highlight what is not included in the framework of his/her research. Reasons for exclusion should also thereof be stated. In addition, proposed research should have defined field and focus of data (quantitative and qualitative).*
10. **Chapter plan** – *Proposed thesis should be tentatively divided into chapters. All major doctoral researches, particularly in social sciences and policy studies, generally have five main chapters excluding introduction, conclusion and bibliography. Generally, the first chapter is on the conceptual/theoretical postulates/underpinnings of the research. Besides, each chapter should have defined research question(s), carefully devised contents, defined universe of data and tentative findings/probable analytical outcomes. A well-devised chapter plan has added*

advantage in exacting research, and in allowing researcher to have guided, and controlled conduct of research.

11. **Conclusion** - *It should highlight theoretical postulates of the projective findings of the chapters, policy options, and future scope of research/studies.*
12. **Bibliography** - *It should have two sections- primary and secondary sources including books and journals.*

Standard length: 15-20 pages

Note:

1. *Researcher may note that Centre promotes interdisciplinary research with substantive applications of the core logic of federal studies and researcher's parent discipline.*
2. *The above framework has been devised for M.Phil /Ph. D students of the Centre. It should not be circulated or published in any form. Researcher has autonomy to improve upon the above framework, subject to approval by the supervisor and DC/BRS of the University.*
3. *Researcher may further note that framework of synopsis is always tentative, subject to change with the progressive unfolding of the research.*

AJAY KUMAR SINGH
Head
Centre for Federal Studies