



# STUDENT GUIDELINE FOR WRITING THE RESEARCH REPORT

SUPPLEMENTARY DOCUMENT FOR THE LECTURES  
ON RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

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## Student Guideline for Writing the Research Report

### 1. General Instructions:

The research report should be written in the past tense, with no grammatical errors or spelling mistakes.

It is recommended to maintain the academic style of writing throughout the document.

1. Use simple words
2. Avoid complex sentences. Write short, clear sentences
3. Use capital letters appropriately
4. Avoid redundant terms
5. Avoid using “etc”, “/”
6. Do not start the sentences with numeric values. If you need to start sentences with a numeric value, write the number in words.
7. All numbers below ten (1-9) should be written in words in the text.
8. Avoid using unnecessary abbreviations. An abbreviation is recommended only if it is repeated more than three times in the whole report. Only standard abbreviations and acronyms may be used without deciphering. However, it is recommended to describe the abbreviations and acronyms when they first appear in the text and add a list of such abbreviations and acronyms used in the document in the preliminary material (front matter) of the research report.

Students should avoid the repetition of information and plagiarism. The maximum Similarity index tolerated would be 20%. Quoting and paraphrasing are the accepted methods when referring to other authors' work (refer to the lecture note on the literature review).

Label (title) and number tables, and figures (diagrams, charts, and graphs). Table titles should be placed on the top of the table while titles of figures should be placed at the bottom of the respective figure (refer to the examples, table 1 and figure 1 given below). Ensure that they are relevant to the research and add substance to the text rather than just duplicating what you have described in the text.

Table 1: Characteristics of the caregivers in selected child care centres in the Kandy municipality area

Characteristics	Total
	N (%)
<b>Age Category</b>	
18 - 25 years	35(27.1)
26 – 40 years	57(44.2)
≥ 40 years	37(28.7)
<b>Highest Examination passed</b>	
G.C.E. Ordinary Level	29 (22.5)
G.C.E. Advanced level	55 (42.6)
Degree /Diploma	45 (34.9)
<b>Years of Service</b>	
≤ 5 years	67 (52.0)
6 – 10 years	23 (17.8)
> 10 years	39 (30.2)

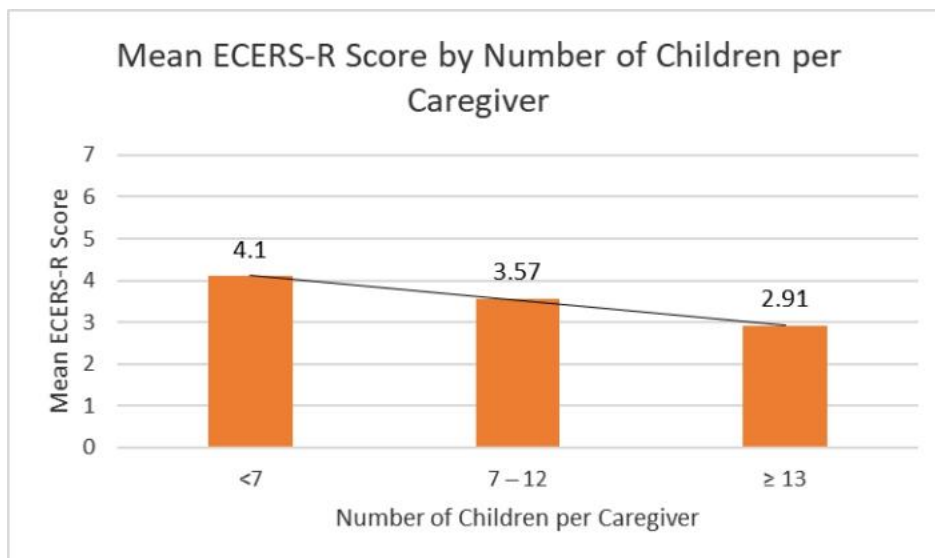


Figure 1: Comparison of mean ECERS\_R scores by the number of children per caregiver

All citations should be written conforming to the Harvard APA style. Use a reference manager to minimise typographical errors. There is free software like Mendeley for this

purpose (refer to the lecture note on referencing). The reference stated in Box one was derived using Harvard author, and date type using EndNote X8.

In-text citation- (Röhrig et al, 2009)

### **REFERENCE LIST**

Röhrig, B., du Prel, J. B., Wachtlin, D. & Blettner, M. (2009) Types of study in medical research: part 3 of a series on evaluation of scientific publications. *Dtsch Arztebl Int*, 106(15), 262-8.

Box 1: Example for an in-text citation and the appearance of the same in the reference list

## **2. Formatting**

### **2.1. Font**

1. The research title on the cover and the title page should be typed in Times New Roman with single spacing, uppercase, and font size 24.
2. The main text of the report should be typed in Times New Roman, with one-and-a-half spacing, single column, justified, and font size 12 on A4 paper with a word count between 5000-8000.
3. The chapter titles should be typed using Times New Roman, uppercase, font size 12, centred, and bold letters.
4. Subheadings should be typed using Times New Roman, font size 12, justified, and bold letters. Different subheading levels should be numbered appropriately.

## **CHAPTER TWO**

### **LITERATURE REVIEW**

#### **2.1 Subheading level one**

##### **2.1.1 Subheading level two**

##### **2.1.2 Subheading level two**

Box 2: Subheading levels

**2.2. Margins:** One inch on all four sides of the A4 paper (since there is a shortage of paper, you may use double-sided printing). It should be loosely bound with a spiral binding.

### 3. Structure of the report

The structure of the research report is below.

#### **Preliminary material (Front matter)**

1. Cover (Refer to the template in Annex1)
2. Title page (Refer to the template in Annex 2)
3. Supervisor's declaration (Refer to the template in Annex 3)
4. Acknowledgments
5. Abstract
6. Table of Contents
7. List of Tables
8. List of Figures
9. List of Annexures
10. List of Symbols and Abbreviations

#### **Body**

Chapter 1: Introduction

- 1.1 Background
- 1.2 Justification
- 1.3 Objectives
  - 1.3.1. General objective
  - 1.3.2. Specific objectives

Chapter 2: Literature Review

Chapter 3: Methodology

Chapter 4: Results

Chapter 5: Discussion (including limitations)

Chapter 6: Conclusions and Recommendations

#### **End material (supplementary documents)**

1. List of References
2. Annexures

Some specific content that should be included in these chapters is given in Table 2 (pages 5-10)

**Table 2: More details on the content that should be included in each chapter**

<b>Chapter</b>	<b>Section</b>	<b>Key content</b>
<b>Preliminary material</b>	<b>Title Page</b>	<p>Title- Indicate the focus of the paper and include important relevant ‘keywords’ to allow identification of the study through electronic searches.</p> <p>When writing the title:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>—be concise, precise, and informative.</li> <li>—it should reflect the general objective and vice-versa.</li> <li>—avoid using a full stop at the end.</li> <li>—avoid acronyms and abbreviations in the title.</li> <li>—do not use phrases such as “A study on...” or “An investigation into...”.</li> </ul> <p>The title should be placed on the top of the page, the research group towards the bottom along with the submission details (to which department, to meet what purpose, etc.). Refer to the template given on page five.</p>
<b>Preliminary material</b>	<b>Declaration</b>	Refer to the template given on page seven for the template of the declaration.
<b>Preliminary material</b>	<b>Acknowledgments</b>	<p>State source of funding and any relevant conflict of interest (if relevant)</p> <p>Acknowledge any person who contributed to the study but who does not qualify as an author</p>

Chapter	Section	Key content
Preliminary material	<b>Table of Contents,</b> <b>List of Tables</b> <b>List of Figures and illustrations</b> <b>List of Abbreviations</b>	All of these are not required at all times. Depending on your study, you may include it as per the requirement.
Preliminary material	<b>Abstract</b>	<p>Include a structured abstract, including key information on the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Background</li> <li>- Objectives (general objective)</li> <li>- Methods (setting, participants, intervention, main outcome measures)</li> <li>- Results</li> <li>- Conclusions</li> </ul> <p>The abstract should be a summary of the work conducted. It must contain a summary of the purpose of the research (general objective), methodology, results, and conclusions. References should be avoided, and non-standard abbreviations should be avoided</p>
<b>Chapter 1</b>	<b>Introduction</b>	<p>Provide the scientific background, give a brief justification as to why you think addressing these questions is important, and explain the research objectives (what questions you were trying to answer).</p> <p>Be brief and relevant to the study: start from a broad context of what is already known, proceed to the specific unknown problems, and finish with clearly stated study objectives.</p>

Chapter	Section	Key content
		<p>The introduction should comprise a description of the background to the problem chosen in terms of the definition of the condition studied, the burden and the nature of the problem, probable causes of the problem, possible solutions, and unanswered questions.</p> <p>The justification should include two aspects, namely the need to do the study and the proposed benefits of the study. Refer to the lecture note on “Writing the Research Proposal” for details.</p> <p>Objectives should be stated as a general objective and a set of specific objectives listed in a logical sequence. They should be written using operational terms and action verbs. Refer to the lecture note on “Setting Objectives” for further information.</p>
<b>Chapter 2</b>	<b>Literature Review</b>	<p>The literature review may be included under the introduction chapter or as a separate chapter. However, to avoid a long introductory chapter it is recommended that the literature review is written as a separate chapter.</p> <p>Include a critical appraisal of all the relevant other research available on the subject. Include global, regional, and local research papers.</p> <p>Reference any material you have used from other sources.</p> <p>Label and number any diagrams, charts, and graphs. Ensure that they are relevant to the research and add substance to the text rather than just duplicating what you have said.</p> <p>Do not include or discuss the results here.</p> <p>Refer to the lecture note on “literature review’ for further information.</p>



Chapter	Section	Key content
<b>Chapter 3</b>	<b>Methods</b>	<p>Describe in a logical sequence how the study was designed, carried out, and analysed.</p> <p>A typical methods section provides key information on the following.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Study design including planned sample size and sampling method (latter for surveys), inclusion/exclusion criteria</li> <li>- Setting, location</li> <li>- Participants (or study units or objects)</li> <li>- Interventions (or exposures)</li> <li>- Outcome variables</li> <li>- Data collection procedure including the development of data collection tools and training of data collectors (for surveys)</li> <li>- All statistical methods used in the analysis</li> <li>- Ethical issues (e.g., consent)</li> </ul> <p>Information should be clear, accurate, and complete (provide enough details to repeat, assess, and compare with other studies)</p> <p>Content should correspond with the Result section</p> <p>It is usually written in a 'passive' voice (e.g., the participants were asked to fill in the questionnaire attached in Appendix 1) rather than an 'active' voice (e.g., I asked the participants to fill in the questionnaire attached in Appendix 1).</p> <p>Reference any material you have used from other sources. Label and number any diagrams, charts, and graphs. Ensure that they are relevant to the research and add substance to the text rather than just duplicating what you have said.</p> <p>You do not include or discuss the results here.</p> <p>Refer to the methods section of the lecture note on “Writing the Research Proposal” for details.</p>

Chapter	Section	Key content
<b>Chapter 4</b>	<b>Results</b>	<p>Report the results of the investigations described in the Methods section (in the same order) using text, tables, figures, and statistics.</p> <p>Label and number any diagrams, charts, and graphs.</p> <p>Be as brief and clear as possible (but don't leave out 'disappointing' results). Insignificant results are also important findings.</p> <p>A typical structure and chronology include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Description of study participants (if relevant, separately for important subgroups)</li> <li>- Presentation of answers to the main questions (starting with primary outcomes, then secondary outcomes, and any other analyses)</li> </ul> <p>Report on harms (adverse effects) as well as benefits, if relevant.</p> <p>Outline any ways in which the study did not follow the pre-specified plan.</p> <p>Pay special attention to the presentation of data and results in tables and figures.</p>
<b>Chapter 5</b>	<b>Discussion</b>	<p>Discuss what your findings mean and where they stand in the context of other studies</p> <p>A typical discussion section structure and chronology include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>—brief presentation of the main findings</li> <li>—assessment of study strengths and weaknesses (limitations)</li> <li>—comparison of findings with previous studies</li> <li>—consideration of clinical and scientific implications</li> <li>—if relevant, suggestions for future research</li> </ul>

Chapter	Section	Key content
Chapter 6	<b>Conclusions and recommendations</b>	<p>This section is not always presented separately in a research article. However, for your research report, it is recommended.</p> <p>Any conclusions and recommendations must be fully <b>supported by the study findings</b>. Hence, do not write any other recommendations you think are appropriate.</p>
End material	<b>References/ Bibliography</b>	<p>All references used in your report or referred to for background information.</p> <p>The Harvard style which uses an author-date style is recommended.</p> <p>Make sure that you have used standard methods when writing in-text citations and the reference list.</p> <p>Refer to the lecture note on referencing.</p>
End material	<b>Appendices</b>	<p>These should add extra information to the report (e.g., information sheets, consent forms, data-collecting tools, etc).</p> <p>If you include appendices they must be referred to in the body of the report and must have a clear purpose for being included.</p> <p>Each appendix must be named and numbered.</p>

**Template for the cover page****RESEARCH TITLE****Group Number**

**2017/18** Batch of Medical Students

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This research report is submitted to the  
Department of Community Medicine under the  
Communication

Learning and Research-5 module in partial  
fulfilment of the requirements of the Bachelor of  
Medicine and Bachelor of Surgery degree.

**2023**

**Template for the title page**

**RESEARCH TITLE**

**Group Number**

List of the names of the students with the registration numbers

Supervisor's name with the affiliation  
(If there is a co-supervisor, add the name and affiliation)

### Template for the Declaration

#### Supervisor's Declaration

I do hereby declare that the work documented in this research report was conducted as an original research project by the students of research group A of 2017/18 batch of medical students under my supervision as a part of their undergraduate research work in partial fulfilment of the requirements of the Bachelor of Medicine and Bachelor of Surgery degree.

.....  
Name

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Signature

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Date

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Official frank