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**ACADEMIC RESEARCH WRITING: APPROPRIATE METHODOLOGICAL  
APPROACH FOR THE BEGINNERS**

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**Abstract:**

*Methodology refers to developing the strategy and rationale of research and application of the same in drawing the inferences and findings. Research methods used are different in different areas of study. Hence the process of developing the research methodology consists of doing the detailed study of various research methods and then identifying the appropriate research methods which can be used in your field and then applying the principles in order to choose the approach that best matches your objectives. Everyone is capable of being a good writer, even without any innate skill. If a person is an intentional and serious academic writer, he can convert his general writing into research based writing from presenting the research question in context of present information and then drawing inferences from the findings. In this paper author intends to examine various tools and methodology of research and attempts to provide appropriate ways which could be adopted by the new researchers to carry out research work in their fields.*

**Key words:** *Exploratory, Descriptive, Causal, Quantitative, Qualitative, Hypothesis*

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**Objectives of the study**

1. To explain various research methodologies and highlight the suitability of each one in different areas and types of research.
2. To provide vital cues and tips to the new researchers about what research methods should be chosen for writing the academic article, which enables them to correlate them to their research questions /or hypotheses.

**Sources of Data**

The paper is analytical and descriptive in nature and data collected is from secondary sources. The author has collected the information from various sources like research journals, case studies based on research, internet sites and collated the data to arrive at the conclusion.

**Introduction**

Research work is not just about identifying a particular research gap and conducting the research after formulating the hypothesis but also to ensure that correct methodology is adopted for getting accurate results. Incorrect techniques used in research work lead to wrong conclusions rendering the work of the researcher futile. Broadly speaking researchers adopt three types of methodologies to carry out research in their concerned areas namely,

1. Exploratory research methodology
2. Descriptive research methodology
3. Causal research methodology

**Exploratory Research Methodology**

Exploratory research is a methodology approach that investigates research questions that have not previously been studied in depth. Exploratory research is often qualitative in nature. However, a study with a large sample conducted in an exploratory manner can be quantitative as well. Hence application of this methodology in writing the research paper usually leads to leaving room for further research as the issue raised in the paper has many gaps and the matter can be taken up by the future researchers after those gaps are identified with a better conclusive design. For example, **study of changing world order post Covid -19 pandemic.**

**Descriptive Research Methodology**

Descriptive survey research uses surveys to gather data about varying subjects. This data aims to know the extent to which different conditions can be obtained among these subjects. For example, a researcher wants to determine the average income of software professionals in Bangalore or researcher wants to determine average number of dropouts every year among college students in Maharashtra. This type of research methodology is used in case of three types of research papers namely, case studies, naturalistic observation, and surveys.

### Causal Research Methodology

Causal research method is used to determine the cause and effect relationship between two variables. It comes under the league of conclusive research, which attempts to establish a cause-and-effect relationship between two or more variables. This approach is usually used by the firms as it assists in determining the impact of a change in process and existing methods. An advertising firm might want to find out whether print media or electronic media will be more effective to advertising the products.

If the researcher wants to write the paper on impact of domestic violence in family on the development of the child, he can conduct the experiments to study cause and effect relationships adopting casual research methodology. For the beginners, writing the methodology of a research paper can be mind boggling task, as the main problem they come across is selection of suitable research methodology. Some of the steps mentioned below can be adopted by them which can guide them in writing an effective research methodology by helping them gain a clear understanding of a research methodology's structure. It's very important for the beginner to keep in mind that the research work should be such that it is able to establish a certain degree of connect with audience or the readers and they are actually able to perceive what the researcher wants them to convey without much ambiguity.

For this following steps should be taken by the researcher:

**Step 1.** Developing a clear cut understanding about the meaning of methodology in research so as to evolve a systematic method to resolve a research problem through data gathering using various techniques.

**Step 2.** Emphasis has to be laid down on use of appropriate methods in research. Usually, academic researchers often approach research studies through two distinct methods qualitative and quantitative research. Both these approaches play a significant role in determining our data gathering process, especially the methods we are going to use in our research. While quantitative approach seeks to quantify data and generalize results from a sample of a target population and follows a structured data collection process with data output in the form of numbers, qualitative approach to study offers contextualization and interpretation of the data gathered rather than providing predictions and/or causal explanations. While the former approach is used for objective study, later one is subjective and requires a smaller number of carefully chosen respondents.

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### Step 3. Writing research paper methodology

Some tips are given below for writing an effective research methodology:

**Introduce research methods.** Introduce the methodological approach used in investigating research problem (quantitative, qualitative or mixed methods).

**Establish methodological connection.** This means that methodology chosen by the researcher must be appropriate to achieve research paper's objective.

**Introduce research tools.** Indicate the tools going to be used in collecting data and explain how they are going to use them. These tools can be surveys, questionnaires for interviews, observation, etc.

**Discuss analysis.** Explain how you are going to analyse the results of your data gathering process.

**Provide background information.** When using methods that readers may be unfamiliar with, make sure to provide background information about these methods.

**Discuss sampling process.** Explain the reason behind sampling procedure.

**Address research limitations.** Make sure to address possible limitations you may encounter in your research, such as practical limitations that may affect r data gathering process of the researcher.

### Step 4. Work out a schedule and develop clarity of research task to be taken

The beginner should first set a time frame in which he is supposed to finish the assignment. Proper understanding of the assignment, identifying the objectives, length specifications, etc. all need to be clearly understood. Before starting with the actual work, it's important for the beginner to get all doubts and confusion cleared by discussing with the experts and guides of that area.

### Step 5. Choose a research paper topic

Researcher can choose any topic for research based on his own area of interest, subject, discussions with fellow colleagues, work of other researcher etc. He can identify the research gaps in the findings and recommendation section of other research works and take upon the task of pursuing further research in the area. Once a broad subject area has been chosen, narrow it down to choose a specific topic of that area of interest.

### Step 6. Starting own initial research

For the preliminary investigation variety of sources can be used including journals, books and reliable websites, and brainstorming with those who have done research work related to the

area to ensure you do not miss anything glaring. Then the researcher can start formulating some research questions which he wants to address in his work.

#### **Step 7. Develop a thesis statement**

The next stage involves developing the thesis statement which is the essence of the argument. This statement is an answer to the research question formulated earlier and establishes the purpose of the research article.

The thesis statement should be well connected, coherent and precise and should include the evidence which the researcher has to support his study. As further study is undertaken, this statement can be refined and revised but more or less it should serve as a guide throughout the writing process. Each and every paragraph of the paper should be connected with the claim specified in the thesis statement.

#### **Step 8. Create a research paper outline**

Making the outlines of the paper is very helpful for the beginner as it consists of the list of key topics, arguments and evidence which shall be the part of the paper. Along these outlines, the paper can be elaborated. The structured outline facilitates the author to write the paper smoothly without breaking its continuity.

#### **Step 9. Draft of the research paper**

For the beginner the first draft should have content in logical order of paragraphs and sentences and all the ideas should be put in the draft in a clear cut manner. In this the broad outline of the paper which has been formulated earlier is of great help as the draft can be prepared along those outlines. Also the researcher should never forget to cite the sources from where he has taken the information or else he can land himself in trouble of plagiarism case.

#### **Step 10. Introduction of the research paper**

Introduction to the paper addresses what and why the particular research work was taken up, and what tools and techniques were used to interpret the data gathered from various sources. Also introduction should specify the significance of the study and its relevance to the society.

#### **Step 11. Writing of the main text**

This is the most important and cumbersome task for the researcher. By the time this stage arrives, researcher has already gathered the information and done the analysis from the findings of the study. However, organizing the information to be presented in the paper and presenting the findings, inferences and analysis of the paper is a challenging task for the beginner. In this if the researcher goes along with the research outline using it as a map it really is helpful in systematic presentation of the text.

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#### **Step 12 Writing the recommendations and conclusion**

Towards the end, researcher should make some recommendations which consist of likely solution or measure to be taken to address the problem which he has investigated in his research. Conclusion is an equally essential part of the paper marking the end of the study. The writer must give conclusory remarks for his study while summarizing the paper and restating the same point which was mentioned in the introduction. This gives proper connect to the introduction, taking the paper to the finality.

#### **Step 13. Proof reading of the draft**

This should be done to ensure that all the issues investigated have been presented and articulated and arranged systematically with no errors. This reassures the author that the paper looks like how the researcher has actually wanted.

#### **Step 14. Presenting the references in MLA or APA style of citations**

This should be the standard norm to be followed by every academic writer should abide by in providing the citations and references.

#### **Recommendations:**

While conducting the research and writing the research paper, certain things should be avoided and certain things should be complied with. The nature of participation in the research must be voluntary and the individuals involved must have the right to withdraw partially or completely from the process. All participants must provide their consent first. Maintenance of the confidentiality of data provided by individuals as well as identifiable participants' anonymity should be given due importance. Reaction of the participants to the researchers' methods in seeking to collect data should never be overlooked as the success of the work depends upon the response of the reader. The behaviour and objectivity of the researcher is key to successful research. However certain researcher should refrain from following tendencies like matters unrelated to the topic and unnecessary explanations should not be given, methodology section should be simple and straightforward so that readers can clearly understand. Also problems encountered in data collection and the limitations of the study using the chosen methodology for research should not be overlooked.

#### **Conclusion:**

The best researches across the world have been the result of adoption of different combinations of research methodologies by the researchers in their study and writings. In the recent years several breakthroughs have in the areas of

science, technology and humanities for which some of the best methodologies have been adopted by the researchers. The entire global fraternity is the beneficiary of the great research works by the contemporary academic writers which has contributed towards taking the world economies forward and has enabled the mankind to face challenges with greater conviction and knowledge. Challenges like natural calamities like earthquakes, floods, manmade calamities like pandemic have been prevented from becoming disasters due to some of the best research works in the field of technology, science and medicines.

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