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TIPS FOR THESIS WRITING AND PREPARING RESEARCH PAPERS

Initial parts of a manuscript

Choice of TITLE

Providing AUTHORSHIP credits

Selection of KEY WORDS

Structure of the ABSTRACT

Main body of the report

Contents of INTRODUCTION

Describing the METHODS

Stating RESULTS

Writing DISCUSSION

End features of a report

Ethics of ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

Framing KEY MESSAGES

Writing REFERENCES

Need of a BIBLIOGRAPHY

Contents of APPENDIX

For an updated version, see
Basic Methods of Medical Research, Fourth Edition
by A. Indrayan (<http://indrayan.weebly.com>)
AITBS Publishers, Delhi
(Phones: 011-22009084) (available also at amazon.com)
email: aitbsindia@gmail.com, aitbs@bol.net.in

Contents of INTRODUCTION

No problem arises in thin air. Begin your manuscript by describing how the problem arose: what was the context or the background? This could be extension of a previous work, difficulties faced in managing a public health problem, clinical experience of managing a specific type of patients, deficiency noted at the time of teaching, bottleneck observed in carrying out a research, or any such context. In other words, include information about epidemiology, clinical relevance, and current practices regarding the topic. Focus on local area but do not ignore international perspective. Emphasise if the research concerns a neglected topic.

Quote important literature if needed to expose any lacunae in knowledge, but do not include a full review. For citing, either use author/s, year in parentheses (as in this text), or use

numbers in sequence beginning with 1 either in parentheses or as superscript. In the case of latter, there is no need to give the name/s of author/s. Reserve full review for Discussion section but ensure that up-to-date information is given. Demonstrate that the work being reported is new, and it is needed. Explain its significance and rationale. Build a logical case and specify the conceptual framework. Then specify the questions under investigation and explain their importance. The problem should be clearly articulated. State the objectives in precise and evaluable terms. They should be worded in a very specific and focused manner.

Identify the important antecedent and outcome variables, and the relationship under investigation. State any hypothesis under test. State also that this was a preplanned hypothesis or was formulated during or after collection of data. Do not make sweeping claims. Describe the general research strategy but not the details. Specify your subjects of study. In short, the Introduction should contain a convincing statement about issues and should be able to formulate rationale for these issues. This should convince the reader that you have thought about the topic thoroughly well and have presented a tight case.

It is sometimes helpful to give a preview of the principal results that can guide the reader through the paper. Do not give data or full result as that will be in the Results section. A short Introduction is preferred in a paper than a lengthy discourse. But Introduction chapter in a thesis or dissertation can be long just as every other chapter.

If you find difficulty in starting with Introduction, try to write Results first and then come back to Introduction part.

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