

Dissertation

<<Dissertation Topic>>
(**Bold, 16 font, Times New Roman style**)

A REPORT
SUBMITTED TO THE DEPARTMENT OF MANAGEMENT SCIENCES,
VIRTUAL UNIVERSITY OF PAKISTAN
IN PARTIAL FULFILLMENT OF THE REQUIREMENTS FOR
THE DEGREE OF MASTERS IN BUSINESS ADMINISTRATION
(**Bold, 12 font, Times New Roman style**)

Submitted By

<<Student ID>>

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(**Bold, 16 font, Times New Roman style**)



**Department of Management Sciences,
Virtual University of Pakistan**

Letter of Undertaking

You are required to fill in the **Letter of Undertaking** provided in the 'Download' section of the course VULMS and attach here the scanned copy after signing it.

Dedication (*Optional*)

Acknowledgement

Here you will write a brief paragraph to acknowledge the help and support you received throughout your dissertation. You can acknowledge the library staff, teacher, family or any other person who helped you in completion of your work.

Abstract

This is an outline of the entire dissertation. It provides the reader a clear and precise picture of the nature, subject matter, and methodology used in the dissertation. The abstract is written after completing the dissertation and is placed in the beginning of the document. The following points should be considered while writing the abstract:

It should be understandable to the general reader. Readers of summaries will vary widely in expertise, perhaps much more than those who read the report itself. So the whole of the technical data is translated into plain English rather than using complex business terminologies.

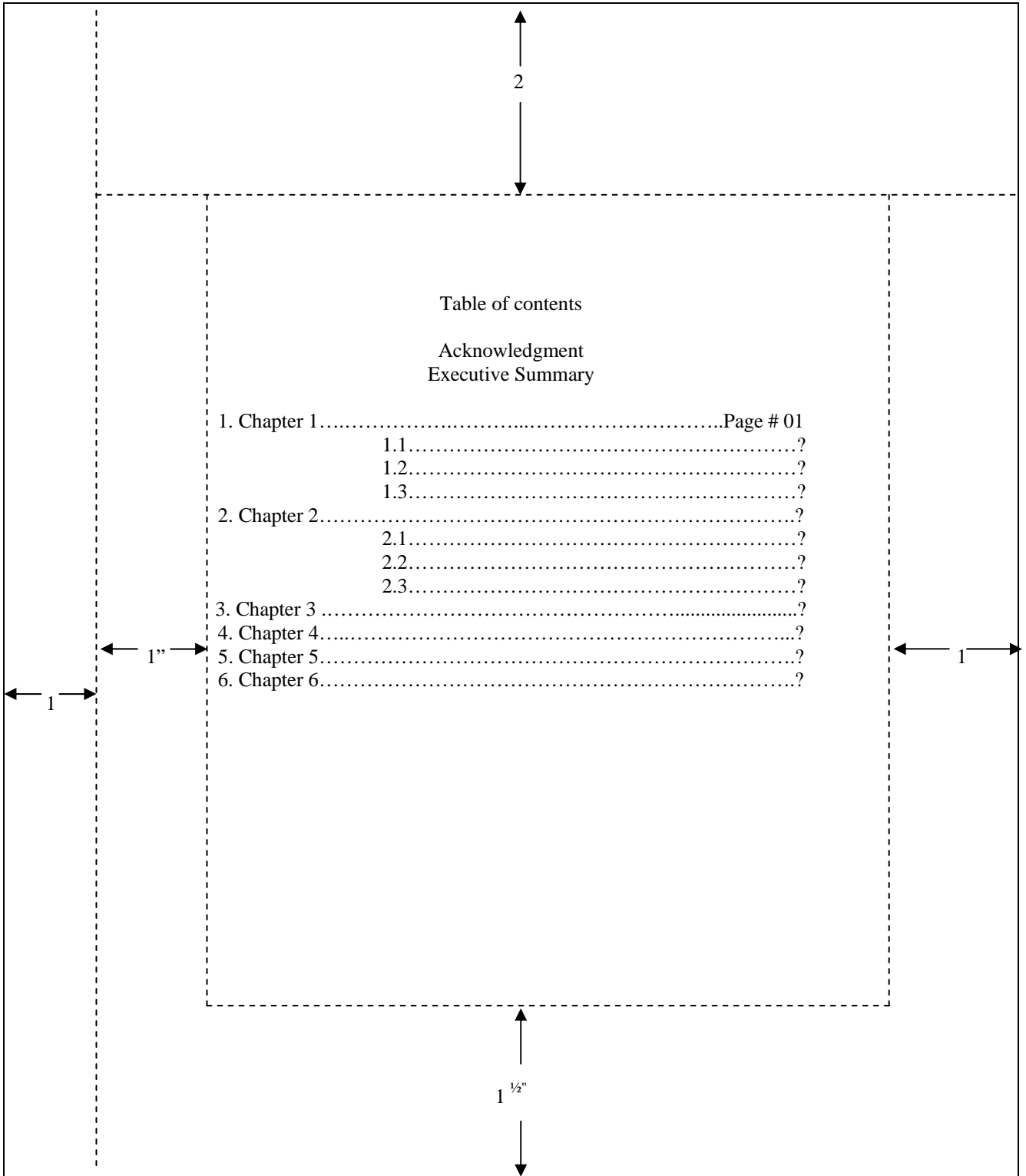
There should be harmony in all the ideas presented in it.

No new information should be added which has not been included in the dissertation and order of the contents of the dissertation should not be disturbed.

Only the key points should be emphasized.

Table of Contents

(You are required to provide a list of chapters and the major headings and sub-headings in all of the chapters.)



Acronyms

If abbreviations have been used in the dissertation, a complete list of words is provided here along with the abbreviations.

Chapter 1: Introduction

1.1 Background

Describe briefly the background i.e. the impact and implication of the topic on the environment (the specific set up in which you are studying the issue). It should be well elaborated. It is advised to include current facts and figures in background. You can also explain it in context with the work already done on the topic. It should provide all the necessary initial information so that the reader can better understand the situation under study.

1.2 Objectives: State the objectives/goals of the research, keeping in mind the following points:

- These should state the purpose of the project
- These must be based on logical facts and figures
- These must be achievable within specified timeframe and parameters
- These should clearly indicate and encompass the issues under study.
- The specified objectives should be clearly phrased in operational terms specifying exactly what you are going to do, where and for what purpose

Note: At the end of the study, objectives must be assessed to see if they have been met/achieved or not.

1.3 Significance: It lays down the importance or potential benefits of your dissertation. It specifies how your study will improve, modify or broaden presented facts in the field under exploration. Make a note that such improvements/ modifications may have significant implications also.

When you are taking into account the importance of your study, pose yourself the following questions:

- What will be the outcomes of this research study?
- Will the results of this research contribute to the solution or development of anything related to it?
- How will results of the study be implemented and what innovations will come out?

1.4 Problem Statement/Research Question: It describes the main issue or area to be investigated. The problem is usually represented by the research questions. Research questions are very crucial because research is about finding out what may not be known. Poorly formulated problem/question will lead to pitiable research that's why researcher must know the question he/she would like to find answer for. The following aspects are important while formulating a problem statement/research question:

- A problem statement/research question should be researchable, clear, logical, specific, precise and brief yet comprehensive statement, fully describing the issue under study.
- The research problem should be grammatically correct and completely convey the main idea to be investigated.

Chapter 2: Literature Review

Literature review is citation/quotation of a comprehensive review and analysis of the published work from secondary sources (journals, research papers, etc.) of data in the areas of specific interest to the researcher according to the problem/issue of research.

The purpose of literature review is to ensure that:

- Important variables that are likely to influence the problem situation are not left out of the study
- A clear idea emerges as to which variables would be the most important to consider.
- The problem statement can be made with precision and accuracy.

Note: It is important to cite at least 20 findings of researchers in literature review.

Chapter 3: Research Process

3.1 Theoretical Framework

A theoretical framework is a conceptual model of how to make a logical sense of the relationships among the several factors that have been identified as important to the problem under consideration. It includes the following:

3.1.1 Inventory of variables

3.1.2 Schematic diagram

3.1.3 Direction of relationships

3.1.4 Explanation of established relationship among variables, and

3.1.5 Inventory of propositions in a sequential order.

3.2 Hypotheses

Hypotheses are the tentative statements that should either be acknowledged or rejected by means of research. Hypotheses give structure and direction to the research. Therefore, care should be taken not to oversimplify and generalize the formulation of hypothesis.

It is not necessary that the research should consist of only one hypothesis. The type of problem area investigated and the extent which encircles the research field are the factors which determine the number of hypotheses to be included in the study.

It is formulated when the researcher is totally aware of the theoretical and empirical background to the problem. There are two types of hypothesis “Null” and “Alternate”. Generally, the null hypothesis is used if theory/literature does not propose a hypothesized connection between the variables under study; the alternative is generally reserved for situations in which theory/research recommends a connection or directional interplay.

3.3 Operationalization

Operationalization is the process of defining a fuzzy concept so as to make the concept measurable in form of variables consisting of specific observations.

Chapter 4: Research Design

4.1 Technical procedures for carrying out the study must be explained in a manner appropriate for the reader. This part of the report should address following topics:

- **Research design:** Is the study exploratory, descriptive, or explanatory? What specific strategy has been used to conduct this study? Why this particular design suite to the study?
- **Data collection methods:**
 - How will the primary data be collected i.e. survey(s), experiment(s), observation(s) etc.?
 - Is it possible to use multiple methods? If yes provide justification.
- **Data Collection Tools/Instruments:**
 - Which tools have been used for data collection (i.e. Questionnaire, Structured Interviews, Observations, etc) according to the need of the dissertation?
 - Why a particular tool is selected?
 - Is it possible to use multiple tools? If yes provide justification.
- **Sample design:**
 - What is the target population?
 - What sampling frame has been used?
 - What type of sampling technique has been used?
 - What selection procedure has been used for sampling?
- **Fieldwork/Data collection:**
 - How the data have been collected?
 - How the quality control has been assured during data collection?
- **Data Processing & Analysis:** (Methods you have used to extract and process the information you gathered)
 - How the analysis has been carried out?
 - Scoring scheme/scale and the statistical methods that have been applied for the analysis of data should be described.
 - Which software package (MS Excel, SPSS, etc.) has been used for data entry and analysis?

4.2 Scaling

Scaling means assigning numeric values to the data so that statistical analysis can be done on the data and final conclusion can be made to provide valuable recommendations.

4.3 Limitations of the Research

Limitations of a dissertation refer to limiting conditions or restrictive factors that may have an effect on the dissertation. Dissertation should be critically analyzed after its completion. A precise list of all the limitations of the study is to be illustrated under this heading. You may consider following points while writing limitations of the study:

- Access to the concerned participants/respondents
- Access to the required information
- Timescale
- Reluctance or hesitation of participants to participate in the study
- Budget constraint
- Scope of study
- Any other limitation

The discussion of limitations should avoid overemphasizing the weaknesses. Its aim should be to provide realistic basis for assessing the results.

Chapter 5: Data Analysis and Interpretation

- It employs the use of descriptive statistics (frequencies, measures of central tendency and measures of dispersion) and inferential statistics to analyze the data that is collected and is processed thereafter.
- Summary tables and charts should be used to aid the discussion.
- Comprehensive or detailed charts should be reserved for the annexure.
- **It should also include hypotheses testing.**

Note: You are also required to attach the raw data files supporting your data analysis along with the dissertation.

Chapter 6: Conclusion and Recommendations

6.1 Conclusion

This section makes last part of your dissertation in which you precisely state the final outcomes of your research work. It is based on the data that is analyzed and interpreted. Conclusions should not be confused with findings/results of the data analysis as findings/results state facts; conclusions represent inferences drawn from findings. Conclusions are short, concise statements of the inferences that you have made based on your research work. It is more appropriate to order them from most to least important.

6.2 Recommendations

Recommendations emerge out of conclusion. These are actually suggestions for action in an applied research. The researcher may present several alternatives with justification to solve the problem under investigation. Recommendations should be clear, specific and based on outcomes of the research. They must be logical and applicable.

Chapter 7: Supplementary Parts

➤ ***Glossary***

The operational definitions of the terms used in dissertation are presented here.

➤ ***References***

All citations used in the study must be given by arranging them alphabetically by the last name of the author. (APA format should be used)

➤ ***Annexure(s)***

The annexure presents the “too ...” material. Any material that is too technical or too detailed to go to the body should appear in appendix. This includes materials of interest only to some readers, or subsidiary materials not directly related to the objectives.

These include:

- Data collection forms (instruments)
- Detailed calculations
- Statistics or measurements
- Maps
- Complex formulas
- Questionnaire, Structured interview questions, Profile of participants of Focus Group Discussion etc. (IF applicable)

