

Research Paper Outline Template

I. INTRODUCTION

- a. Overview of an issue you are examining – include your main assertion or argument (thesis statement)
- b. Offer a short justification - why your readers or target audience should care about your research paper (study importance)
- c. Brief explanation of paper's scope and planned method to be used in examining your issue

II. ISSUE

- a. History behind the issue
- b. How this issue impacts society
- c. Critical factors impacting this issue
- d. Possible solutions to be explored in your study

III. LITERATURE REVIEW

- a. Theories, constructs and concepts (journal articles, textbooks and relevant publications)
 - i. Describe related theories used to explain issue or theories used to propose a solution to the issue
 - ii. How were concepts or theoretical constructs defined?
 - iii. Describe relevance of major theories used to explain the issue
- b. Empirical literature (journal articles)
 - i. Overview of relevant empirical studies done to date
 - ii. Summary of methodology
 - iii. What were the major findings of your study?
 - iv. What were limitations raised regarding findings of the study?
- c. Your pathway – based on what you discovered in literature review
 - i. Whose concept(s) and definition(s) are you going to borrow or use in your own research (if applicable)?
 - ii. Describe unique aspect(s) of issue that you will be examining
 - iii. Based on what you read so far, describe method that suits best for your own research

IV. METHOD

- a. State specific research questions that you are examining
- b. Describe research method – data and information collection process
- c. Justify or provide a rationale - why you chose this specific method

V. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

- a. Describe or list major findings
- b. Use tables, charts and graphical illustration to help explain findings
- c. Discuss relevance of findings in light of previous studies
- d. Did any results surprise you? Was there anything that supported previous finding(s)?
- e. What was the main limitation of your study?

VI. CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATION

- a. A brief recap of issue examined, method used and major finding(s)
- b. Briefly remind readers about original goal of this study and what you accomplished in your research work
- c. Describe how future researchers can expand or build on your work