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How to write an Introduction?

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Objectives of the session

- To know the basic structure for writing an introduction and the importance of each item
- To understand the importance of attracting the attention of readers/ audience/journal editors
- What to do and what not to do ?

Sections of a scientific paper

- Title,
- Authors and Affiliation,
- Abstract,
- Introduction,
- Methods,
- Results,
- Discussion,
- Acknowledgments, and
- References,

The sections appear in a journal style paper in the following prescribed order:

Experimental process	Section of Paper
What did I/We do in a nutshell?	<u>Abstract</u>
What is the problem?	<u>Introduction</u>
How did I/We solve the problem?	<u>Materials and Methods</u>
What did I/We find out?	<u>Results</u>
What does it mean?	<u>Discussion</u>
Who helped me/us out?	<u>Acknowledgments</u> (optional)
Whose work did I/We refer to?	<u>References</u>
Extra Information	<u>Appendices</u> (optional)

Why bother writing a good introduction?

- The opening paragraph of your paper will provide your readers with their initial impressions of your argument, your writing style, and the overall quality of your work
- Your introduction is an important road map for the rest of your paper
- Ideally, your introduction should make your readers want to read your paper

What should an introduction do?

- 3 main things:
 - Get your readers' attention and interest
 - Identify the specific topic of the report/manuscript
 - Conceptualize your argument or discussion

A well written introduction should answer the following questions

- *What is being studied?*
- *Why is it an important question?*
- *What is known about the topic before this study?*
- *How will this study advance knowledge on the question being studied?"*

Skeleton of an introduction

- Background
 - Importance of the topic
 - Global, regional and local data (magnitude)
 - Build up a convincing argument
- Objectives
- Hypothesis
- Rational

Structure:

- **Inverted triangle** - the broadest part at the top representing the most general information and focusing down to the specific problem your studying, finally arriving at your statement of purpose and rationale

Be sure you;

- Know what literature to look for in your review to make your “introduction statement”?
- clearly state the purpose and /or hypothesis that you are investigating
- Provide a clear statement of the rationale for your approach to the problem studied

Introduction

- Make sure that you are aware of earlier studies :
 - Published
 - Unpublished
 - Currently underway (thesis, synopsis)
 - Help from librarians
 - Personal contacts with people who are experts in the subject

Introduction

- Convince your readers of the importance of the question you are answering
- Do not repeat material, which is in all the textbooks
- Giving prevalence figures, data on hospital admissions and the cost to the nation related to the problem may be appropriate
- State the gaps in the literature on the topic you are covering and how you have tried to fill this gap by performing the present study?

Introduction

- Don't baffle your audience
- Avoid introducing, without explanation, material that is completely unfamiliar to the reader or audience
- Avoid abbreviations as far as possible

How to evaluate your introduction draft

- Ask a friend to read it and then tell you what he or she expects the paper will discuss
- If your friend is able to predict the rest of your paper accurately, you probably have a good introduction

Conclusion

While writing introduction-

- Keep in mind your readers/audience
- Keep it short
- Tell readers why you have done the study
- Explain why it is important
- Convince them, using data from previous studies; the advantage or an upper edge of your study to what has been done before
- In the last paragraph of introduction provide the objectives of the research