PROPOSED STRUCTURE OF A MASTER DISSERTATION AND DOCTORAL THESIS

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As a rule a master's dissertation or doctoral thesis should:

- Make a distinct and meaningful contribution to the body of knowledge through original research
- Demonstrate competence in research processes
- Understand appropriate research and statistical techniques
- Be able to report, interpret and integrate findings in a cohesive manner
- Relate findings to the theoretical foundation of the study and draw conclusions from findings
- Indicate implications of the research

TITLE PAGE

ABSTRACT

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

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LIST OF DIAGRAMS/EXHIBITS

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CHAPTER 1 INTRODUCTION

1.1 Introduction
1.2 Background
1.3 Problem statement
1.4 Hypotheses/propositions/objectives
1.5 Importance of the research
1.6 Methodology (sources, population, sample, measuring instrument, data collection, data analysis)
1.7 Demarcation/scope of study (International, national, geographic area)
1.8 Structure of the dissertation/thesis
1.9 Conclusion

CHAPTER 2 THEORETICAL FOUNDATION

2.1 Introduction
2.2 (Base theory of the sub-discipline)
2.3 etc
2.4 Conclusion

CHAPTER 3 RESEARCH PROBLEM THEORY

3.1 Introduction
3.2 (Theoretical frameworks/models, and related research issues)
3.3 etc
3.4 Conclusion

CHAPTER 4 RESEARCH DESIGN AND METHODOLOGY

4.1 Introduction
4.2 Justification for the methodology (population, method of data collection, measuring instrument, operationalisation of variables, qualifying questions)
4.3 (Research procedures including method of analysis, and statistical techniques employed)
4.4 Ethical considerations
4.5 Limitations
4.6 Conclusion

CHAPTER 5 RESEARCH RESULTS

5.1 Introduction
5.2 Description of the sample/respondents (indication of representativeness)
5.3 Analysis of data (supporting tables/figures/exhibits/diagrams etc, use of statistical analysis to interpret findings, validity and reliability of the data).
5.4 Conclusion

CHAPTER 6 CONCLUSIONS AND IMPLICATIONS

6.1 Introduction
6.2 Conclusions on each hypothesis/research issue/proposition (based on the results in chapter 5).
6.3 Conclusions on the research problem
6.4 Relation to theory
6.5 Implications and recommendations (management, academia/scholars)
6.6 Limitations
6.7 Recommendations for future research
6.8 Conclusions

LIST OF REFERENCES

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HINTS

1. Never use first person (I, we, our)
2. Use its in the correct way (many students use it with an apostrophe when the meaning is not it is).
3. Avoid using etc. When you use such as it implies there are more and etc is superfluous.
4. Say in the introduction of each chapter what you are going to do (your objective).
5. In the conclusion at the end of each chapter summarise the main gist of the chapter and link it with the following chapter.
6. Bear in mind that you are in control. Have a logical presentation of your argument and lead the reader in an integrated way to what you want to achieve.
7. You as a student have no opinion in a scientific presentation such as a dissertation/thesis (whatever your experience or knowledge). You can only claim to have an opinion if it is based on original research or an in-depth analysis, for instance, has been made of theory where different authors' viewpoints are contrasted (commonalities and differences), and you make deductions based on that.