

Institute of Distance Education

University of Madras,
Chepauk, Chennai – 600 005

General Instructions to the Students of M.A. Sociology Programme (Batch – A22) For Research Dissertation & Viva-Voce.

The research dissertation is a mandatory component of M.A. Sociology Degree Programme offered by the Institute of Distance Education, University of Madras. The Students of M.A Sociology Programme are suggested to conduct an independent research in the specialization fields of Sociology and contribute to the discipline. Please read the guidelines given below for each section for formatting the research dissertation.

1. Introduction

- **Objective:** The introduction should set the stage for the research, providing a clear understanding of the topic and its significance.
- **Key Elements:**
 - **Background of the Research Topic:** Begin by introducing the topic and its relevance to the field of sociology. Explain why this research is important.
 - **Research Problem:** Clearly define the research problem the researcher intend to address. What gap in existing knowledge does the study aim to fill?
 - **Objectives of the Study:** List the primary objectives of the research. What the researcher is trying to achieve through this study?
 - **Research Questions / Hypotheses:** Formulate specific research questions or hypotheses that guide the investigation.
 - **Scope and Limitations:** Define the scope of the study, including the Socio-economic, political, demographic boundaries and so on. Also, It may acknowledge the limitations of the research.

2. Review of Literature

This section involves a critical review of existing research related to the topic. It helps to Contextualize the study within the existing body of knowledge. (**Minimum – 30 Reviews**)

- **Key Elements:**
 - **Thematic Review:** Organize the literature review thematically, focusing on major themes, debates, and findings relevant to the research.
 - **Critical Analysis:** Critique the existing studies, identifying strengths, weaknesses, and areas lacking in research.
 - **Theoretical Framework:** Introduce the Sociological perspectives or framework that underpins the Research study.

3. Research Methodology

This section details the methods used to conduct the research. It should be clear, precise, and replicable.

- **Key Elements:**
 - **Research Design:** Explain whether the study is qualitative, quantitative, or mixed methods and justify the choice.
 - **Sampling:** Detail the sampling method, sample size, and criteria for selecting participants or data sources.
 - **Data Collection Methods:** Describe the tools and techniques (e.g., surveys, interviews, Observations etc.) used to gather data.
 - **Data Analysis Procedures:** Explain the methods used to analyse the data, such as Statistical analysis, thematic coding, etc. (Use SPSS/ STATA / MS Excel and Graphical representation for the Analysis)
 - **Ethical Considerations:** Discuss any ethical issues related to the research, including consent, confidentiality, and the potential impact on participants.

4. Data Analysis and Interpretation

Present the research findings in a structured manner, supported by data analysis, and provide Interpretations that justify / support the research objectives.

- **Key Elements:**
 - **Presentation of Data:** Use tables, graphs, and charts to display the data in a clear and accessible way including the Source of Data.
 - **Analysis:** Offer a detailed analysis of the data, explaining patterns, trends, and correlations.
 - **Interpretation:** Interpret the results in the context of the research questions, objectives and the literature reviewed for the Study. Highlight the inferences of the analysis based on the variables selected for the study.

5. Findings, Conclusion, and Suggestions

Summarize the key findings, provide a conclusion that addresses the research objectives, and recommendations for the social problem taken for the study and suggest scope for future research in the field.

- **Key Elements:**
 - **Summary of Findings:** Recap the key findings of the study, focusing on how they address the research questions.
 - **Conclusions:** Based on the findings of the study, the researcher has to provide conclusion.
 - **Suggestions / Recommendations:** Practical suggestions or recommendations to be provided based on the research findings. These could be aimed at policymakers, practitioners, or future researchers.

6. References

The references section lists all the sources cited in the dissertation.

- **Key Elements:**
 - **Citation Style:** Follow the appropriate citation style (APA format)
 - **Completeness:** Ensure that all sources cited in the research report are included in the reference list and that the information is accurate and complete.

7. Supportive Annexures

Include additional materials that support the research, such as Questionnaire, Interview Schedule, Consent Form, Field Photos or Supplementary Information, if any.

- **Final Tips:**
 - **Consistency:** Maintain a consistent tone, style, and formatting throughout the dissertation (Font Style – Times New Roman, Font Size – 16 for the Chapter Headings (BOLD), 14 for Headings inside each Chapter (BOLD) and 12 for the rest of the content with 1.5 Line Spacing.
 - **Proof reading:** Thoroughly proof read the research report for grammatical errors, typos, and formatting issues.
 - **Originality:** Ensure the research is original and properly cited to avoid plagiarism.
 - **Guidance:** Seek regular feedback from the supervisor to ensure the completion of dissertation on time.

Following are the broad research areas that can be selected for the dissertation:

- Rural Sociology
- Sociology of Development
- Urbanization and Urban Sociology
- Sociology of Health
- Sociology of Disaster Management
- Criminology and Deviance
- Environmental Sociology
- Sociology of Mass Media
- Political Sociology
- Sociology of Aging
- Gender Studies
- Sociology of Tourism
- Sociology of Religion
- Social Inequality and Stratification
- Sociology of Family and Marriage
- Youth and Adolescence Studies
- Migration and Diaspora Studies
- Sociology of Work and Employment
- Sociology of Media and Communication
- Globalization and Social Change
- Sociology of Science and Technology
- Human Rights and Social Justice
- Sociology of Marginalised Communities

Please Note: The Last date to submit the completed and hard bonded Research Dissertation to the Institute of Distance Education, UNOM on or before **15th November 2024 (Friday), 04:00 P.M. by Post / Courier or in Person.**

Steps to be followed for completion of the M.A. Sociology Programme
IV Semester - Research Dissertation and Viva Voce.

1. Students are suggested to attend the Orientation Programme.
2. Consult with the concern Research Supervisor for the Selection and approval of the Research Topic.
3. Have a periodical reporting with the Research Supervisor on the progress of the Research Dissertation.
4. Before submission of the Report, get the certification from the concern Research Supervisor and Course Coordinator.
5. Submit the Research Dissertation on time.
6. Attend the Research Dissertation Viva–Voce in Offline Mode.