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Research and Training Monitoring Department

Dissertation Guidelines for FCPS Part-II Candidates

Submission of Protocol on a chosen topic, its approval from Research and Training Monitoring Department (RTMD) of BCPS and preparing a dissertation acceptable to the College, is mandatory for all candidates aspiring to appear at FCPS-II examination.

Principles:

- A supervisor or guide should be selected by the candidate himself after passing the FCPS part I examination from the institution where he/ she is doing the research or is working. The guide should be a fellow of BCPS or equivalent, having the position of an Associate Professor or Professor above and must agree to supervise the work. Supervisor must be accredited with RTM department of BCPS. In an exceptional (when Professor and Associate Professor not available) case, prior permission from the college should be taken for selection of supervisor.
- Supervisor and trainee must work in the same institute except any special situation.
- An Assistant or Associate Professor (FCPS or Equivalent) of the same Institute may be the co-supervisor (co-guide) of each dissertation in consultation with the supervisor.
- Supervisor and co-supervisor (co-guide) may be changed in case of transfer of the trainee or supervisors or in any special situation with the prior permission of RTMD.
- Protocol should be accepted by the college at least 18 months prior to the date candidate desires to sit for the final FCPS examination.
- Review article will no longer be accepted as dissertation.
- Dissertation must be submitted six months before the date of examination in which the candidate desires to appear.
- Dissertation work (data collection) should be started after the approval of protocol on selected topic during the training period of the candidate. It is desirable that candidate should complete the dissertation during training period
- A supervisor is expected to supervise not more than 8 dissertation for BCPS at any given time.
- For sub-specialties, a trainee should submit a protocol for thesis. The format of this protocol will be similar to those submitted for dissertation. The thesis is required to be defended at the time of examination.
- Dissertation on the same title can not be done within 5 years.

- Ethical clearance from the Institute/BMRC/BCPS should be taken before protocol submission.
- Regarding reference either Harvard or Vancouver (any one) is acceptable.
- If the trainee copies someone else's dissertation, it will be liable for a punitive action which may include debarring him/her from appearing in FCPS examination for lifetime.
- Once the dissertation is submitted, it must not be submitted to any other institution for a postgraduate diploma or degree. Violation of this rule will render the trainee liable to punitive action which may include cancellation of Fellowship.
- Three hard certified copies and one CD of dissertation must be submitted to the RTMD, through the Supervisor for assessment and approval, at least six months before the date of examination in which the candidate desires to appear.
- With dissertation the trainee must submit a copy of protocol acceptance letter, a copy of accepted protocol & congratulation letter of FCPS part-I examination.
- Every trainee (from those who passed FCPS Part-I examination in July 2010) must attend the “**Training Programme on Dissertation Writing**” organized by RTMD, BCPS before submission of protocol.
- Trainee should follow the “**Manual for Writing Dissertation/Thesis**” published by the college.

Selection of Topic

- First step for starting a dissertation is to choose an appropriate topic with the help of the supervisor and confirm that it has not been done within last 5 years.
- The topic must be selected in consultation with the supervisor.
- The dissertation will be candidate's own work. It should be an original research work done by the candidate. It can be carried out any time after passing FCPS part I examination during training.
- To get a guideline of the dissertation topics, one can seek help from a list of previous topics by candidates of the same discipline (www.bcpsbd.org).

Dissertation Protocol

- The candidate needs to write a protocol which should contain title, name of the guide, short introduction, hypothesis, rationale, objectives and methodology with references.
- Before writing proposal an extensive literature search should be done by the candidate.
- The candidates are advised to collect the ‘Manual for Writing Dissertation/Thesis’ published by BCPS and go through the manual and note the important points.
- Within 60 days of its receipt, the college will inform the candidate of its acceptance or otherwise about the proposal.

- Any significant change of the title after acceptance of the proposal will have to be communicated to the college with justification within 6 months after acceptance of the Protocol. BCPS may or may not accept the change of title

Steps of Dissertation Writing

Format of Dissertation

- The format of the dissertation should be similar to that of any research paper e.g. title, name of the investigator and guide, abstract, introduction, literature review, hypothesis rationale of the study, objectives, methodology, result, discussion, conclusion, references and appendix.
- The dissertation must be of good literary presentation in English according to the standard practice of dissertation writing.
- Three hard copies and one soft copy of dissertation shall be submitted, spiral bound and should not exceed more than 150 pages.
- Font size & type: Arial font 12 point is suggested for all the textual material of the dissertation.
- The supervisor shall have to certify that the work was done under his supervision and that it is up to his satisfaction.

Writing dissertation

- In writing the dissertation, the candidates are advised to follow the instructions given in the manual.
- Either Vancouver style or Harvard style should be followed in referencing (any one)
- Sequence of the references should be consistent with the text.
- In the text it is advisable to write acronym before putting abbreviation e.g. Acronym-Acute Lymphoblastic Leukemia :Abbreviation (ALL)

Title Page

It is the very first page of dissertation. The title is a concise statement identifying actual variables or theoretical issues under investigation and the relation between them. A title should be in minimum possible words that adequately describes the contents of research work/study. All the words in the title are to be chosen with great care and the association with one another properly sequenced. This is also important for indexing the study. The title should not contain any abbreviation, chemical formulae, proprietary names and jargons etc. The title should be written on the top in bold letters followed by full name of trainee in the order of first, middle, initial and last name alongwith the highest academic degree. Then full name of Supervisor is mentioned under whom the entire research work/study has been completed together with his/her highest academic degree. At the bottom the name of department and institution is to be given, where

research work has been conducted. The date of submission of Dissertation is to be written at the lowest end of the title page.

Supervisor's Certificate

It is placed after the acknowledgement in a separate Page.

Dedication

It is an optional section in which trainees normally dedicate their dissertation to their parents, brother, sister, teachers, friends, spouses and/or children. The dedication is written in the center of a separate page in one or two lines and page numbered in Roman numerals.

Acknowledgement

This section is designed to offer thanks or appreciation to the efforts of individuals or organizations for help, advice or financial and material assistance extended by them during the research work/study. The trainees should not forget to mention the names of their colleagues, statisticians,

the computer operator and spouse, if applicable, as well as the supervisor. This is the best place to show gratitude and appreciation. Technical help and other contributions like financial and material support are acknowledged in a separate paragraph. This section is placed after the dedication on a separate page and numbered in Roman numerals.

Table of Contents

It is an important section of part I that contains the main headings of the text in the dissertation, annexes and page numbers in Arabic and Roman numerals. Sub-headings are also used where necessary. Table of contents is written on separate page(s) and numbered in Roman numerals.

List of Tables

All the tables of dissertation are listed together with titles and page numbers in this section. It is written on separate page(s) and numbered in Roman numerals.

List of Figures / Graphs / Illustrations

All the figures, graphs and illustrations drawn for the dissertation are listed with titles and page numbers in this section. It is written on a separate page and duly numbered in Roman numerals.

List of Abbreviations

A list of all the abbreviations used in the dissertation along with full words is written on separate page(s) and numbered in Roman numerals. Only standard abbreviations are used in the dissertation.

Structured Abstract

It is the first section of the dissertation. The abstract is a brief account of the dissertation, summarizing the information given in each major section. It is different from the conclusion and identifies the basic contents of the dissertation. It is written in past tense, emphasizing on important aspects of the dissertation. The abstract is around 250 words written under the following headings: introduction, objectives, methodology, results, and conclusions. At the end of abstract, three to ten (3-10) key words are identified and written.

Introduction

It should be brief and must state the problem under study. The contents of introduction include the statement of the problem undertaken for the work. Candidate may also include information, data, definition and any other essential relevant description that candidate consider useful in understanding the topic and the importance of the work. There is no need of extensive discussion on background knowledge and no need of inclusion of chapters written in books and journals. Only pertinent references are cited but not extensively reviewed in this section.

Literature review

Review the current knowledge in the field relevant to the topic. Describe the characteristics of previous studies in the areas. Citation of those references that are essential to justify the proposed study should be done.

Rationale

It is the section that describes and particularly focuses on the importance of the problem and shows why the work is justified.

Research question: It is the unanswered question/s that has stimulated you to undertake the research.

Hypothesis:

A hypothesis is a statement showing expected relation between two variables. A hypothesis is needed in the following study designs:

- i. All interventional studies
- ii. Cohort
- iii. Case control
- iv. Comparative cross sectional.

Objectives

It is the summary of the expected benefits of the study. In writing objectives, use action verbs such as 'To assess.....' 'To describe.....' 'To determine.....' 'To find out.....' etc.

- i) General objective/s or aim/s: it is the broad statement of your intention.
- ii) Specific objectives- State each task that will be undertaken during the research work.(Every research work involve several tasks)

Material and Methods:

This section is the most important part of the study. It describes the procedure in sufficient details so that a scientific reader can fully understand, judge the work and can repeat the same in future. The content of the materials and methods can be arranged more or less according to the following sequences:

- a. Study design
- b. Study population
- c. Place of the study/ study setting
- d. Period of the study
- e. Method of estimating sample size and the detailed sampling technique
- f. Inclusion criteria
- g. Exclusion criteria
- h. Operational definitions
- i. Data gathering instrument/s
- j. Procedures with laboratory tests
- k. Study plan with flow chart and timetable
- l. Ethical issues
- m. Method of data processing and statistical analysis, computer program and statistical significance

Results

The function of this results section is to present the findings of the research work. However, not every finding that is obtained from the observation needs to be reported in this chapter. It should report only the data pertinent to the research question or the objectives. Data are facts, expressed in numbers or words obtained from observation. Text, table and figures are the usual components of the results chapter. These should be:

- a) Data should be reported in sufficient detail to justify the conclusions.
- b) Reported in the past tense.
- c) Described without comment.
- d)Supplemented by concise textual description of the data by avoiding unnecessary detail.
- e) Presented either in table or figure avoiding duplication
- f) Statistical test/tests that has been used throughout the manuscript, should be clearly stated in the methods section.

* During preparation of table following principles should be followed:

- Table should be simple
- Each table should have a title, which is a phrase but not a sentence
- The title should be self explanatory and placed above the table
- The table or figure- should be numbered consecutively
- Use footnotes to explain items in the title, column headings or body of a table, abbreviation and symbols
- Avoid making either too large or too small table by omitting unnecessary information
- Indicate statistical significance wherever applicable

Discussion: This chapter should be organized in the following order:

- General consideration: Includes a short recapitulation of the objectives and result of the study
- Discussion on the result: Here the results of the present study are discussed as compared to the results of other studies. It is necessary to state, support, and explain the study and also other important matter directly related to the issues. The length of this section should not be more than one third of the total length of the dissertation.

Limitations of the present study: What makes this study difficult?

Conclusions and recommendations:

This is the last section of the text in which conclusions or inferences drawn on the basis of the results of study are described. The conclusions should be linked with the objectives of the study. Recommendations for further research may be included when appropriate. It is important to be careful that the conclusions should not go beyond data and should be based on the study results.

References: Vancouver or Harvard style (any one) should be followed for referencing.

Appendices: This is a supplementary section that contain material related to the text but not suitable for inclusion in it.

Appendices include:

- a) Copies of the blank data collection form e.g. questionnaire or interview schedule
- b) The informed consent
- c) Procedural explanation
- d) Approval from ethical committee etc.

Adnexee: If any.

Undertaking: The candidate should provide a written undertaking that this is his original work and done with personal initiatives and has not been published or submitted as thesis of any other course. The undertaking should be mention at the beginning of the publication.