

# WRITING AN ACADEMIC PAPER

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Training session

# MAIN TYPES OF ACADEMIC PAPERS

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Essay

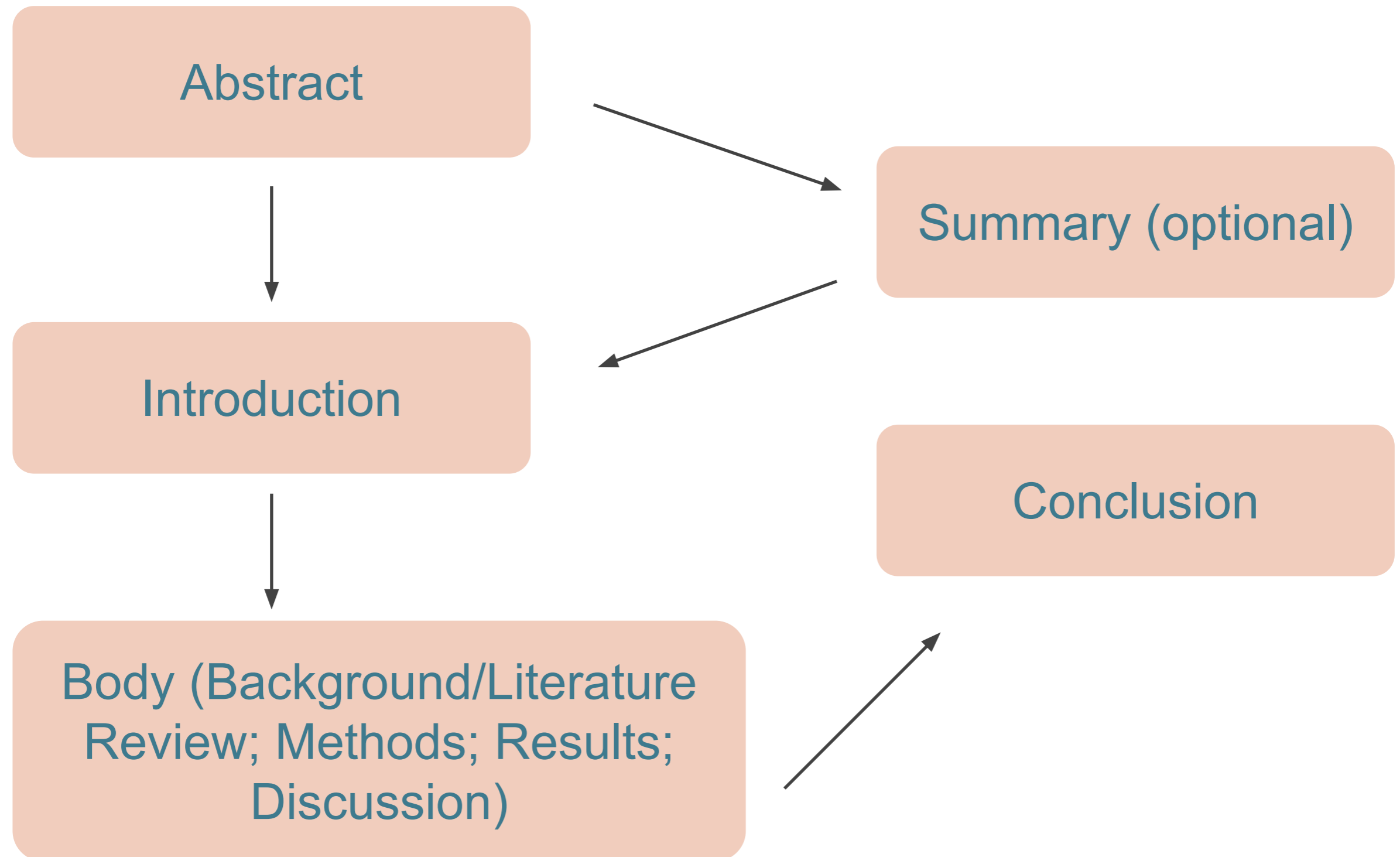
Research paper

- expository;
- persuasive;
- analytical;
- argumentative;
- contrast/comparison essays;
- personal experience/personal opinion essays.

# RESEARCH PAPER

# RESEARCH PAPER: STRUCTURE

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# ABSTRACT

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- In a very short and concise manner you have to provide your:
  - topic
  - problem
  - methods used for research
  - samples chosen
  - results
  - interpretation.
- Should not be longer than 1\2 page.
- Abstract is being written after you have finished your paper, because you have to provide clear results and conclusion in it.
- Sometimes an Abstract has to have key words.

# EXAMPLE OF AN ABSTRACT

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- **Example:** Economical discrimination against women in one of the most acute and timely issues in Middle Eastern countries in the 21st century. To improve social and financial wellbeing of women in these countries, the governments have to support schools for girls financially. In this realm, more than 67% of adult women have low-paid jobs, and only about 50% have finished school. It has been suggested that if about 90% of girls finish school, more than 60% of women will be able to find better-paid jobs. **Methods:** quantitative analysis of data on girls who received education and women who has well-paid jobs. **Sample:** 1000 girls aged 11-14 and 1000 women aged 18-24 in 20 towns in India and Pakistan. **Period of observation –** 10 years (2006-2016). **Results:** from 50% of girls who finished school successfully 37% managed to find a well-paid job; from 83% of young women who managed to finish college

# ABSTRACT

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- The more *complex* the research and research paper is, the more **exact** data should the Abstract contain.
- Abstract for *simpler* research or sociological research shall not contain numbers and shall be shorter.
- If the Client has any particular instructions about the Abstract, they should be followed.
- Please remember that Abstract *is not* included into general word count.

# SUMMARY

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- Summary contains a more expanded information about the research.
- Usually it *does not* contain numbers and exact data.
- Can contain some background and logical chain of argument during the research.
- It presents interpretation of results in more detail.



# INTRODUCTION

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- Introduces:
  - topic of research
  - main problems
  - sometimes main studies used
- Introduction also contains hypothesis or research question.
- You are *allowed to include references* in the Introduction when you provide some facts that are not common knowledge or some exact data.
- Avoid direct quotations in this section.

# INTRODUCTION

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- Avoid generic information.
- Avoid starting the Introduction by approaching the topic from very far with sentences like:

“Gender discrimination is a serious problem in Middle Eastern countries”.
- Get straight to the point:

“Scientific research in the field of sociology shows that financial well-being of women in India depends on level of their education”.

# BODY: BACKGROUND/LITERATURE REVIEW

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- **Background** usually contains history of the issue, or explanation on the importance of the issue.
- Literature review contains main *approaches, results and interpretations* provided in current and timely books and articles.
- This is not Annotated Bibliography where the Writer simply mentions the topic and credibility of the source.
- In **Literature Review**, the Writer has to *introduce* not the source, but its *content in connection to the problem* under research.

# BODY: METHODS AND RESULTS

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- **Methods** are usually offered by the Client or should be chosen using common sense.
- Please note that if you use *some very specific or rare method* you have to *provide reference* for it.
- **Results** section presents pure results: your *calculations or any other data* and findings you received during your research.

# DISCUSSION

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- Discussion explains and interprets the Results, basically *turning “numbers into words”*.
- Writer has to explain:
  - How numbers are related to problem under research and its solution
  - Indicate strengths, weaknesses
  - Indicate lacks of the present research
  - Sometimes provide Recommendations for further research

# RECOMMENDATIONS AND CONCLUSION

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- **Recommendations** are given concerning the research, not for solution of the problem that has been under research.
- In **Conclusion**, some concluding thoughts are given.
- If there was no summary for the paper, then the research is summarized shortly.
- *In-text references are not used* in Conclusion, because no new information should be provided in this section at all.

ESSAY

# ESSAYS: STRUCTURE

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Introduction



Body paragraphs



Conclusion



# INTRODUCTION

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- Introduction *presents the issue discussed and offers a thesis statement* at the end of it.
- **Thesis statement** is usually the last (or one before the last) sentence in the Introduction.
- Please do not make Introduction 10-15% of the word count
- Please pay attention whether you need background in your Body of the paper. *If yes*, please do not use Introduction for providing background information. *If your paper is too short* and you need to include background information, please add it into the Introduction.

# INTRODUCTION

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- Unless it is a self-reflection paper, please *DO NOT self-reflect on writing the current essay* in the Introduction.
- Please do not demonstrate the fact that you are writing an essay  
  
(like: For writing this essay I have chosen the following issues to address...).
- Write about the topic you have to analyze and *get straight to the point*.
- If you have a very short paper, *it is OK to have 2-3 introducing sentences*.
- You *DO NOT need Introduction* for papers that answer a *list of questions or require several essays* on different topics UNLESS required otherwise by the Client.

# BODY

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- Please DO NOT write simply “Body” or “Body of the paper” as a subheading.
- You have to *provide comprehensive headings* here (make them simple if you are not sure)
- In the Body of the paper you:
  - discuss the topic of the paper,
  - prove your thesis statement,
  - compare and contrast issues;
  - analyze and do whatever the task is to do.
- In the Body of the paper, it is important to *provide comprehensive paragraphs*.

# PARAGRAPH STRUCTURE

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- The paragraph structure is generally as follows:
  - Topic sentence;
  - Discussion/Quotations;
  - Conclusive sentence.
- Please *do not start* paragraphs with “Firstly, secondly, thirdly”, even in short papers.
- Please *do not start* paragraphs with direct quotations.

# TOPIC SENTENCE

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- *Topic sentences* should be clear and comprehensive;
- By reading topic sentences of each paragraph only, the reader has to be able to understand what the discussion is about and to what conclusions, supposedly, it leads.

~~The first step necessary for future financial well-being of Middle Eastern girls is school education.~~

School education is the first step necessary for future financial well-being of Middle Eastern girls.

# PARAGRAPH STRUCTURE

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- The middle part of a paragraph contains:
  - the discussion/analysis itself
  - includes direct quotations
  - interpretations
  - main ideas, etc.
- *ONE IDEA is discussed in ONE paragraph.*
- If you compare, then *one aspect of comparison is discussed in one paragraph.*

# PARAGRAPH STRUCTURE

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- A paragraph ends with a *concluding sentence*.
- Try to avoid using quotation as concluding sentence, because quotations usually provoke even more questions or need additional interpretation.
- It is *OK to add reference* (Smith, 2007)/(Smith, 253) at the end of a paragraph.

# EXAMPLE: BODY PARAGRAPH

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- College education is the next step in future financial well-being of Middle Eastern girls. As Smith states, “90% of those who finished college successfully are satisfied with their financial situation” (Smith, 2007). It means that almost every young woman who managed to finish college was able to provide herself fully when being adult. This data suggests that education plays a key role in financial well-being of Middle Eastern women overall.



# CONCLUSION

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- Conclusion is an important part of the essay because it has to *put a full stop to the discussion or analysis.*
- The main task of the Conclusion is to *restate the thesis statement, and to summarize the interpretation/discussion/analysis.*
  - no new information should be provided in Conclusion:
  - no direct quotes,
  - no new statements,
  - nothing that has not been discussed in the essay previously.
- Conclusion should be strong and well-developed to leave a positive impression on the reader.

# CONCLUSION

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- Structure of Conclusion is as follows:

discuss/restate/summarize  
from more specific issues



proceed to more  
general issue

- Please mind that you usually *do not need Conclusion* for:
  - lists of questions
  - essays on different topics written in one document
- *1-2-3 sentences of Conclusion are OK* for very short papers.

# EXAMPLE: CONCLUSION

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- If you talk about financial well-being of girls in Middle Eastern Countries, you talk about schools and colleges of India first, then about general policies of India on education for women and only then about the issue of gender discrimination against women in India and Middle East in general.