

# HOW TO WRITE A CONCEPT NOTE

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Make today matter



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# Learning outcome

At the end of this lecture, students should be able to start and complete their first draft of a concept note for their research project of interest



# Overview of the lecture

- Defining a concept note
- Significance of the concept note for student research project
- Structure of a concept note
  - Title
  - Background
  - Aim
  - Objectives
  - Methodology
  - References



# Defining a Concept Note

- A concept note is a **brief document** that presents brief summary of the proposed research.
- It is a pre-proposal document with no more than three pages (**preferably two pages**).
- This documents presents key details about the research, such as:
  - the rationale
  - research question
  - aim and objections
  - methodology



# Significance of concept note

- Present a clear indication of the student's research area of interest
- Provide a brief outline of proposed research
- Identification of potential resources necessary for the research
- For example:
  - Human resource
  - Software
  - Data
  - Reagents
  - Samples (tissue/blood/pathogens/proteins.....)



# How to structure of a concept note

- **Study title**
- **Background**
- **Research question**
- **Aim**
- **objectives**
- **Summary of the methodology**
- **Key references**



# Study title

- Brief summary main idea or ideas of your study
- Containing few words that adequately describe the following:
  - Purpose of research
  - Target population
  - Study setting

- Examples of a good study title

- **Example 1:** Impact of COVID-19 on TB diagnostic services at primary healthcare clinics in eThekweni district, South Africa

<https://www.nature.com/articles/s41598-023-43589-7>

- **Example 2:** Prognostic Value of PSMA PET/CT in Prostate Cancer

[https://www.sciencedirect.com/science/article/abs/pii/S0001299823000582?casa\\_token=bV2vbCZZBOAAAAA:csEq48\\_msurc332gYH9DU6U-8w4HPmu2maq5VCqgtmOICORN8PzPKgThe-CfhqC8MohuTWELXA](https://www.sciencedirect.com/science/article/abs/pii/S0001299823000582?casa_token=bV2vbCZZBOAAAAA:csEq48_msurc332gYH9DU6U-8w4HPmu2maq5VCqgtmOICORN8PzPKgThe-CfhqC8MohuTWELXA)



# Background

- 300 words maximum
- Three paragraphs maximum
- Paragraph 1-
  - Provide the context of the study- why is a phenomenon of interest in relation to health service delivery or health outcomes in your region of interest
  - Provide recent background literature evidence on the research phenomenon. What has been studies around this in recent years?
- Paragraph 2:
  - Present gaps in existing knowledge around the phenomenon of interest - if not addressed, this can hinder achievement some of the crucial global and national health goals – refer to relevant SDGs and NDPs.
- Paragraph 3:
  - State the course of the knowledge gap
  - The need to for to gain further insight or conduct a research investigation in this area
  - Who and what is likely to benefit from results of the proposed study





# Research question

- It is the question around which your research is centered
- It must provide enough specifics that one's audience can easily understand its purpose without needing additional explanation
- It must be aligned to the research title
  - Example:1- Title: Impact of COVID-19 on TB diagnostic services at primary healthcare clinics in eThekweni district, South Africa

**Research question: What is the impact of COVID-19 on TB diagnostic services at primary healthcare clinics in eThekweni district, South Africa?**

- Example 2: Title: Nurses' perception on COVID-19 vaccination during the post-pandemic era

**Research question: What are Nurses' perception on COVID-19 vaccination during the post-pandemic era?**

- Example 3- Title: Prognostic value of PSMA PET/CT in Prostate Cancer

**Research question: What is the prognostic value of PSMA PET/CT in Prostate Cancer?**



# Aim

- **One aim for one study**
- Aim must be aligned to the study title
  - Example:1- Title: Impact of COVID-19 on TB diagnostic services at primary healthcare clinics in eThekweni district, South Africa  
**Aim: Determining impact of COVID-19 on TB diagnostic services at primary healthcare clinics in eThekweni district, South Africa**
  - Example 2: Title: Nurses' perceptions on COVID-19 vaccination during the post-pandemic era  
**Aim: Exploring Nurses' perceptions on COVID-19 vaccination during the post-pandemic era**
  - Example 3- Title: Prognostic value of PSMA PET/CT in Prostate Cancer  
**Aim: Investigating prognostic value of PSMA PET/CT in Prostate Cancer**



# Objectives

- There can be more multiple study objectives for one research study
- The objectives' main purpose is to achieve the study aim
- They should always be aligned with the study aim
- The must describe what your research project intends to accomplish

Example of study aim	Example of study objectives
Determining impact of COVID-19 on TB diagnostic services at primary healthcare clinics in eThekweni district, South Africa	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• To determine use of TB diagnostics before and after COVID-19 pandemic</li><li>• To determine efficiency of TB diagnostics before and after COVID-19 pandemic</li></ul>
Exploring Nurses' perceptions on COVID-19 vaccination during the post-pandemic era	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• To determine benefits relating to COVID-19 vaccination during the post-pandemic era from Nurses' perspectives</li><li>• To determine challenges relating to COVID-19 vaccination during the post-pandemic era from Nurses' perspectives</li></ul>
Investigating prognostic value of PSMA PET/CT in prostate cancer	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• To determine prevalence of prostate cancer</li><li>• To determine PSMA PET/CT values in prostate positive cases</li></ul>



# Methodology

- A procedure/s or technique/s employed to identify, select, process, and analyze information to address research objectives
- The selected procedure/ technique must aligned to the study objectives
- Steps of the methodology must be well presented – one must present how one plans to use the procedure/technique to address a given study objective/s



# References

- A reference is a detailed description of the source of information that a researcher gives credit to via a citation
- A reference list in a concept note should not exceed five papers
- A reference list must be presented at the end of the concept note





Kindly submit concept note related questions via link below:

[https://docs.google.com/forms/d/e/1FAIpQLSfr9gvLfaWGIJBQXE2Zsu0L\\_k135yfU2TEAhidQK9\\_Fjaajyg/viewform?vc=0&c=0&w=1&flr=0](https://docs.google.com/forms/d/e/1FAIpQLSfr9gvLfaWGIJBQXE2Zsu0L_k135yfU2TEAhidQK9_Fjaajyg/viewform?vc=0&c=0&w=1&flr=0)



# Thank You

