Research Proposal

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THE RESEARCH PROCESS – THE EIGHT STEP MODEL
(Adapted from Kumar, 2005, p. 19)

Formulating a research problem: considerations & steps

Research design:
- The design itself
- logistical arrangement
- measurement procedure
- Sampling
- frame of analysis
- time frame

Methods and tools of data collection

Sampling theory & design

How?
- Interview, questionnaire
- observation

Methods used for data analysis. What software & statistical tool to use – descriptive, correlational, t-test

Principles of scientific writing

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**Formulate Research Problem**

**STEP 1**

- Develop objectives
- Identify variables (definitions & typology)
- Significance of study
- Developing hypothesis

**Conceptualize Research Design**

**STEP 2**

- Selecting study design

**Develop Instrument for Data Collection**

**STEP 3**

- Validity & reliability of research instrument

**Select Sample**

**STEP 4**

- Pre-test the research instrument

**Writing Research Proposal**

**STEP 5**

- Contents of a research proposal

**Data Collection**

**STEP 6**

- Editing/cleaning data
- Coding, Transforming Data

**Data Analysis**

**STEP 7**

- Develop codebook

**Research Report**

**STEP 8**

Deductive reasoning
Research Proposal

• Is a document or blueprint prepared prior to conducting a research
• The purpose – to justify the rational for the research and planning for the design, budgeting, and resource utilization.
Why research is carried out?

Research is carried out in order to:

1. Get result with scientific methods objectively, not subjectively
2. Solve problems, verify the application of theories, and lead on to new insights
3. Enlighten both researcher and any interested readers
Why do Research?

1. To get exploratory / information from those involve
2. Built-up policies
3. To get documentation that is valuable, credibility
4. To know the changes cause and effect
Title

• Descriptive; communicates clearly
• Not a paragraph
• Avoid using method in a title: eg. A case study of....; A Qualitative approach of...
• Most important words first, the keywords
• Should highlight the important variables to be investigate
• Use format specified in guidelines
Identifying the Problem

Three categories when selecting a research problem

- Those who know precisely what they want to do and have a well conceived problem
- Those who have many interest areas and are having difficulty deciding exactly what they want to study
- Those who do not have any idea about a worthwhile research problem
Problem Statement

The introduction and problem statement should have the following characteristics:-

1. It should be written in clear, nontechnical language, avoiding jargon. Try to stimulate the reader’s interest.
2. The problem should be sufficiently limited in scope to be manageable thesis or dissertation problem.
3. The problem should be carefully fitted into the broader context of current theory and relevant research. Avoid making assumptions or unsupported claims or statements.
4. The significance of the problem should be addressed; that is, does it explore an important question, meet a recognized need, or make a useful contribution to knowledge?
5. The problem should be clearly and logically related to the hypotheses that follow.
How the Problem Differs from Other Parts of Research

- **General**
  - **Topic**
    - The broad subject matter being address in a study.
    - E.g. Distance learning

- **Specific**
  - **Research Problem**
    - An issue/problem in the study.
    - E.g. Lack of students in distance classes
  - **Purpose statement**
    - The major intent/objective of the study.
    - E.g. To study why students do not attend distance education classes at a community college
  - **Research question**
    - Researcher would like answered / addressed in the study.
    - E.g. Does the use of Web site tech. in the classroom deter students from enrolling in a distance education class?
Five Elements of a ‘Problem Statement’

FLOW OF IDEAS

Subject area

1. Topic
   - A concern
   - A problem
   - Something that needs a solution

2. The problem
   - Evidence from the literature
   - Evidence from practical experiences

3. Evidence for the issue
   - In this body of evidence, what is missing?
   - What do we need to know more about?

4. Deficiencies in the evidence

5. What remedying the deficiencies will do for select audiences
   - How will addressing what we need to know help:
     - Researchers
     - Educators
     - Policy makers
     - Individuals such as those in the study
Research Questions

• Some say research questions are a summary of the problem stated in question form.
• Research questions provide research with the width, depth and boundary of the problem.
• Research questions are normally used to formulate the specific objectives of the study.
Formulation of Research Objectives
How Research Objective is Formulated

Common research problem:
- lack of research
- Some of the phenomena is still unexplained
- Inconsistencies in findings
- Methodological problem in mist research

By getting answer to those research questions, the study goals are met and a contribution towards solving the problem is made (Leedy & Ormrod, 2005)
The Formulation of Objectives

Objectives = Goals set to attain your study

Guide the research process

Inform reader what you want to achieve through your study.

2 types of objectives:

- General/main objective
  - Overall statement of the purpose of study

- Sub-objective/specific objective
  - Specific aspect that you want to study
General Objective

• A statement for the main trust/focus of a study.
• Usually represent the whole specific objectives consist of variables of the study, the subjects and organization where the study is conducted.
• The objectives should start with the words such as: “to determine”, “to find out”, “to ascertain”, “to measure”,

• For Qualitative - “to explore”, to understand, to look at, etc.
Specific Objective (Quantitative)

- Specific aspect that the researcher topic of study.
- Should be numerically listed.
- Should be clearly worded.

- Use action-oriented words/verbs such as: (For Quantitative)
  - To identify –
  - To determine –
  - To describe – provide detailed account/report the characteristics/population/sample/phenomenon.
Specific Objective (Qualitative)

- Specific aspect that the researcher topic of study.
- Should be numerically listed.
- Should be clearly worded.

- Use action-oriented words/verbs such as: (For Qualitative)
  - **To explore** – develop an initial rough description/understanding of the phenomenon of study. (new area)
  - **To explain** – to establish the factors/elements that are responsible for producing the state of the phenomenon.
  - **To understand** – to establish reasons for the occurrence of an event.
  - **To evaluate** – to monitor social phenomenon/program – to assess whether have achieve the desired outcome.
Elements of a Quantitative Purpose Statement

- A **quantitative purpose statement** identifies the variables, their relationship, and the participants and site for research.

- Guidelines for writing:
  - use a single sentence
  - use wording such as “The purpose of this study…”
  - use quantitative words (e.g. “relate”, “compare”, “describe”) to describe the relationships between variables.
Elements of a Qualitative Purpose Statement

- A single statement
- A statement such as “The purpose of this study...”
- The central phenomenon
- A statement identifying the type of qualitative design
- Qualitative words (e.g. “explore”, “understand”, “discover”)
- The participants
- The research site
Explaining/Predicting Variables (Quantitative study) vs. Exploring/Understanding a Central Phenomenon (Qualitative study)

Quantitative Explaining/Predicting Variables

Communication Satisfaction (IV) \rightarrow Career Success (DV)

Qualitative Understanding/Exploring a Central Phenomenon

In-depth understanding of Y; external forces shape and are shaped by Y

The independent variable (X) influences a dependent variable (Y)
Research Objectives (eg)

• General Objectives
  To determine relationship between Internet usage and digital reading practices among rural youth community.

• Specific Objectives
  1. To identify the level of internet usage among rural youth communities
  2. To identify the reading practices of rural youth communities
  3. To determine the rural youth communities’ attitude towards digital reading
  4. To define relationship between demographic group which gender, age, education level and profession with their digital reading practices
  5. To define relationship between internet usage and their digital reading practices
Significance of the Study

Answers questions like..........

- Why was the study done?
- Who will care about the results of the study?
- How will business, education, government, the country, and so on benefit from the study?
Significant of the Study (eg)

It is hope that this study may contribute to:

• **Practical**
  – Help rural community to assist and provide better facilities with suitable ICT policy.

• **Policy**
  - Provide information and help the government in formulating policy on ICT and rural advancement

• **Theory**
  – Contribute to the new variables of the theory - Technology Acceptance Model (TAM), UTAUT, and to strengthen the theory

• **Method**
  – Contribute to new methods in the procedure of data collection and also in conducting a research
Limitations of the study

• Admit limitations in your study; it is always better for you to identify and admit limitations than to have referees do so or to have the study critiqued publicly because you did not acknowledge.

• Provide the reader with the proper cautions to use in interpreting the results

• Omit limitations that go with every research study using the paradigm you used (e.g., case study)
Limitations of the study

- Summarize limitation brought about by the procedures of the study.
- Describe the procedural limitations in detail in the appropriate section; just summarize here.
Definitions of Keywords

• The final section of the introduction provides the reader with definitions of technical terms
• The words being defined should be arranged alphabetically.
• When quotes or ideas are used from other sources, appropriate references must be provided.
Definition of Keywords

- Define term in the context where they will be used – provide operational definitions as well as constitutive definitions.
- Include a list of definitions for terms and concepts that have significant meaning for the study.
- Constructed in listing form – like a dictionary, not prose form.
- Do not define generally understood concepts, principles and concern, e.g., vocational education, secondary education, adult-education.
- Much of the specific information about the term will be presented in other appropriate sections of the proposal.
Literature Review
The Purpose of Literature Review

• Literature review have different purposes depending on the nature of the inquiry.
• If the purpose of the inquiry is to advance a position about the current state of knowledge on a topic, then you are doing basic literature review.
• If the purpose of the inquiry is to uncover a research problem for further study, then you are doing an advanced literature review.
Where to look for sources?

Books

Hardcopies or Electronic database

Journal

Empirical Paper

Concept Paper

What you need to do with the sources?

Read the abstract

A brief description of a research study that appears at the beginning of a journal article.

Choose the papers that you wish to read further

Review the paper in depth to understand the concept, definitions, theory, past research referred, methodology, types of analysis, result & discussion.
The Literature Review Process

**Figure I.3** The Literature Review Model

1. **Step 1. Select a topic**
   - Specifies and frames
   - Explores and catalogs

2. **Step 2. Search the literature**
   - Organizes and forms
   - Documents and discovers

3. **Step 3. Develop the argument**
   - Advocates and defines

4. **Step 4. Survey the literature**
   - The literature review process

5. **Step 5. Critique the literature**
   - Addresses

6. **Step 6. Write the review**
Types of The Paradigm of Enquiry

Paradigm – Frames of reference we use to organize our observation and reasoning.

(a) Deductive reasoning
(Quantitative)

(b) Inductive reasoning
(Qualitative)
A literature review has a number of functions:

- It provides a theoretical background to your study.
- It helps you to refine your research methodology.
- Your findings contributed to the existing body of knowledge in your profession.
- It enables you to contextualize your findings.
It also helps you to:

1. Bring clarity and focus to your research problem
2. Improve your methodology
3. Broaden your knowledge base in your research area.
4. Contextualize your findings
Four steps involved in conducting a literature review (Kumar, 2005):

1. Search for existing literature in your area of study,

2. Review the literature selected,

3. Developed a theoretical framework,

4. Developed a conceptual framework
Sources of literature review

• Scholarly journals published by professional associations, societies, universities etc.
• Scholarly (texts) books, yearbook series
• Scholarly conference papers, proceedings
• Dissertations, theses, academic projects
• Reports of governments, NGOs, society etc.
• Indexes and abstracts – hard copy, on-line
• Periodicals such as trade magazines, newspapers
What to look for in literature review?

• Statement of research problem, research questions, objectives and hypotheses
• Operational definitions of variables and measurements used
• Respondents of study, sample size, unit of analysis and data collection method
• Research findings and suggestions
• Author, title of article, name of publication, page numbers, publisher and year
What to look for in literature review?

• Recency – is the information the most recent available? Less than 10 years, better within the last 5 years
• Relevancy – is the information suitable and directly related to research? In what manner – methodology, theory, variables?
• Comparative quality – is it scholarly or meant for general public?
• Follow quotation and referencing requirements or styles for academic writing
The Contribution of Theory to the Research

**Theory** – a set of interrelated concepts, definitions and proposition that are advanced to explain and predict phenomenon of study.

- Explain the cause and effect, why a certain relationship exist.
- To explain, support phenomenon of study.
- Form basis for hypothesis development.
- Theories as “Bridges” between IVs and DV.
Research Framework (eg)

**Independent Variable**

INTERNET USAGE
MCMC Household Use of the Internet Survey (2011)
Access device
Intensity of use
Place of use
Purpose of use

**Moderating Variables**

DEMOGRAPHIC FACTOR
Gender, Age, Education Level, Profession, Income, State

**Dependent Variables**

DIGITAL READING PRACTICES
READING HABITS
(TAM and UTAUT construct)
Perceived Usefulness
Perceived Ease of Use
Social influence
Facilitating conditions
Behavioural intention

READING ATTITUDE
(Adult Survey of Reading Attitude (ASRA) Smith, 1991)
Enjoyment
Anxiety

Figure 1: Research Conceptual Framework
Hypotheses

• Stated only if statistical test is used
• Sole purpose is to establish a statement that can be rejected or accepted
• Should be a separate null hypothesis for each statistical test that will be performed
• Often, today, not stated in articles (or even reports) but implied
Hypotheses

Function:
i) Provides a study with focus.
ii) Tells you what data to collect and what not to collect.
iii) Enhances objectivity in a study.
iv) Enable you to conclude specifically what is true or false.
Use of software for LR

- Mendeley
- Atlas.ti
- Nvivo

Checking for similarity:
- Turn-it-in
- Viper
Methodology
METHODOLOGY

• Research design
• Location and subjects of the study
• Population and sampling procedures
• Research instruments, pre-testing and organization
• Operationalization of the variables
• Validity and reliability of the instrument
• Data collection procedure
• Data analysis and statistical significant
Research Design

• A design or a structure before data collection or analysis can commence.
• A research design is not just a work plan.
• The function of a research design is to ensure that the evidence obtained enables us to answer the initial question.
• Explain method that intend to use in this study eg. Quantitative methods or Qualitative methods
Location & subject of the study

• Indicate where the research will be conducted
• Why select that location,
• Need justification based on facts, figure, past research experience but not personnel reason
Population and sampling procedures

• Population is the entire group being observed
• Almost always assumed to be infinite in size, too large and difficult to measure
• The total collection of all cases in which the researcher is interested and wishes to understand
• Sometime known as universe
FIRST STAGE SAMPLING
A state in Peninsular Malaysia will be randomly selected as the location of the study to represent each zone in the Northern Region of Peninsular Malaysia (Kedah, Penang and Perlis), South Zone (Johor, Malacca and N. Sembilan), Central Zone (Perak and Selangor) and East Coast Zone (Pahang, Terengganu and Kelantan).

SECOND STAGE SAMPLING
The list of districts in each state will be developed. At this stage, the district will be selected at random from lists that have been established.

THIRD STAGE SAMPLING
Community Broadband Library (CBL) and 1Malaysia Internet Centres (1MIC) list for the area will be developed. After the list is formed, two CBL and two 1MIC will be selected at random to represent. This means that each selected district will be represented by four community centers.

FORTH STAGE SAMPLING
Each community center will be represented by 25 respondents.

4 States x 1 District X 4 Community Center X 25 Respondents = 400 Respondents
## Operationalization of the Variables (eg)

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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Variables</th>
<th>Operational Measurement</th>
<th>Types of Data</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Demographic</td>
<td>Gender, Age, Education Level, Profession, Income, State</td>
<td>Nominal</td>
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<tr>
<td>Level of Internet Usage</td>
<td>Access device, Intensity of use, place of use, purpose of use</td>
<td>Ordinal, Lickert Scale</td>
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<td>Reading Practices</td>
<td>Type of information, Type of reading material, Time spend on reading, Sources of the reading material, Time for reading, Type of reading during leisure time</td>
<td>Ratio, Lickert Scale</td>
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<td>Digital Reading Habits</td>
<td>Perceived Usefulness, Perceived Ease of Use, Social influence, Facilitating conditions, Behavioural intention</td>
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<td>Digital Reading Attitude</td>
<td>Enjoyment, Anxiety</td>
<td>Ratio, Lickert Scale</td>
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Techniques of data collection

• Also known as research design
• How data is going to be collected after the sample had been determined and research question had been developed
• Always conduct pre-test or pilot study of the research instrument before actual data collection
• Pre-test is conducted to fulfill the followings:
  - check the Research Instrument in terms of organization, flow, numbering, timing, understanding, etc.
  - will get the actual data?
  - the respondents must be similar to sample
  - the number of respondents around 30
  - do analysis to see results
Techniques of data collection

• Content Analysis
• Survey
• Experimental
• Focus Group
• Observation
Reliability and validity

• Reliability refers to the likelihood that a given measurement procedure will yield the same description of a given phenomenon if the measurement is repeated

• A particular technique applied repeatedly to the same object would yield the same result each time
Validity

• Validity refers to the extent to which a specific measurement provides data that relate to accepted meaning of a particular concept being studied

• It is the extent to which an empirical measure adequately reflects what is meant and is being measured
Validity & Reliability

Reliable but not valid

Valid but not reliable

Reliable and valid
Data Collection Procedure (eg)

- Get the permission from related agencies (MCMC/PNM/ Broadband Library (CBL)/ 1Malaysia Internet Centres (1MIC)/ Head of Villagers)

- Identified time and selected Broadband Library (CBL) and 1Malaysia Internet Centres (1MIC) - appointment

- Data Collection Procedure by convenience sampling - several group activities
References and Appendices

• REFERENCES
  – Use APA style or other style of referencing

• APPENDICES
  – Gantt Chart
  – Milestones
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- Literature review
  - Instrument development
  - FGD
  - Pre test
  - Data collections
  - Data analysis
  - Report writing
  - Results dissemination
## Gantt Chart and Milestone (2 yrs)

### Project activities (months)

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### Project (Milestone) (months)

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# Budget

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>No</th>
<th>Items</th>
<th>RM</th>
<th>Sub-Total RM</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>Salary and Wages</td>
<td></td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Research Assistant (1 x RM1500.00 x 24 months)</td>
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<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>Travel Expenses and Transportation</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Mileage (10,000 km x 0.70¢)</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Flight tickets – return (RM500.00 x 2 researchers)</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Lodging (RM200.00 x 2 researchers x 2 trips x 3 nights)</td>
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<td></td>
<td>• Foods (RM35.00 x 2 researchers x 16 days)</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Car rental (RM200.00 x 4 days)</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Toll and parking (lump sum)</td>
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<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>Rentals</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Room Rentals for Focus Group Discussion (1 room x 4 sessions x RM250.00)</td>
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## Budget (cont...)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>No</th>
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<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td><strong>Research Materials</strong></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Papers A4 (20 rim x RMxxx)</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Tonner (6 pieces x RMxxx)</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Stationaries (lump sum) = RMxxx</td>
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<td></td>
<td>• Thumbdrives (2 pieces x RMxxx)</td>
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<td></td>
<td>• Communication cost (lump sum) = RMxxx</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Printing – Interim and Final Reports (20 units x RMxxx)</td>
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<td></td>
<td>• External Hard Disk (1 units x RMxxx)</td>
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<td></td>
<td>• Photocopy Questionnaires (450 x RMxxx)</td>
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<td></td>
<td>• Souvenirs for respondents - including qualitative respondents (500 respondents x RMxxx)</td>
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<td></td>
<td>• Books</td>
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<td>Professional Services, Hospitality and Other Services</td>
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<td></td>
<td>• Data Collection – for Quantitative (450 set x RM25.00)</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Data Management for Quantitative Data: Data cleaning and key-in data (450 set x RM5.00)</td>
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<td></td>
<td>• Data Management for Qualitative Data: Transcribing FGD (250 pages x RM5.00)</td>
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<td></td>
<td>• Workshop for instrument development and Workshop for data analysis and report writing (2 Workshops x RMxxx)</td>
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<td></td>
<td>• Conference (presenting papers &amp; fees – lump sum)</td>
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<td>6</td>
<td>Equipment and Accessories</td>
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<td></td>
<td>• Software Altas.T – for qualitative data analysis</td>
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Budget (cont...)
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<thead>
<tr>
<th>No</th>
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<td>7</td>
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<td>Contingency (10%)</td>
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<td>8</td>
<td>Honorarium (if any)</td>
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<tr>
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<td>• Prof Dr xxx</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Prof Dr xxx</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Dr xxx</td>
<td>xxx</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Mr xxx</td>
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<td>UPM Consultation Fees</td>
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<td></td>
<td>• UPM Consultation Fee (15% x RMxxx)</td>
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OVERALL TOTAL COST

65
Thank You