



Unit- IV: Types of Information Services

TOPIC

Abstracting & Indexing Services

Define: Index & Abstract



- **INDEX-** index is a systematically arranged list giving enough information about each item to make able to identify and locate.
- **ABSTRACT-** abstract means abbreviated accurate presentation of a work. Abstract is a summary of a documents/articles. Its always preceded by the bibliographic details.

Definitions



- According to Librarian's Glossary, it is "a form of current bibliography in which sometimes books, but mainly contributions to periodicals are summarized. They are accompanied by adequate bibliographical descriptions to enable the publications or articles to be traced and are frequently arranged in classified order."

- According to Maizell "An abstract, simply defined is a condensation that presents succinctly, the objectives, scope and findings of a document. This information is usually conveyed together with an indexing system, which further helps to identify document content. An abstract as a rule, is aimed at a specific group of users who either may not have easy access to the original document."

Definitions



- Encyclopaedia Britannica (1964) defines an abstract as a complete citation, condensation and summary of essential facts of theories and opinions presented in an article or book.
- An abstract is, therefore, a brief summary, generally from 100 to 200 words, of the contents of a document such as a research paper, journal, article, thesis, review, conference proceeding, and other academic or legal document. A reader can decide what to read and what not to read. An abstract, together with an index can then be described as a key finding aid of information in today's overabundance of information.

Definitions



- In simple words, an abstract is a summary of document along with adequate bibliographical details so that one can trace the document. The concerned document may be a book, an article from a periodical or some other form of recorded knowledge, but mainly the contributions to periodicals are listed. The abstracts are arranged in some systematic order, mostly in classified order.

- Like other bibliographies, the abstracts may be selective or comprehensive, and may be prepared by an individual or an organization or it may be a project some commercial organization supplied regularly against subscription., Often, the special libraries prepare abstracts in limited field for use of its own clientele, to keep them aware of current progress in their subject of interest,

Abstract: Goals



1. Help readers decide if it is necessary to read the entire document.
2. Assist information users to remember the important findings on a topic.
3. Assist Information users understand a write-up serving as a pre-read
4. Allow index write-ups achieve quick recovery and cross-referencing
5. Allow readers/decision makers make efficient judgement without bordering about details.

Abstracting: Need



- Information Explosion
- Varied need of users
- Scattering of Information
- Language Barriers
- Geographical Barriers

Abstracting: Need

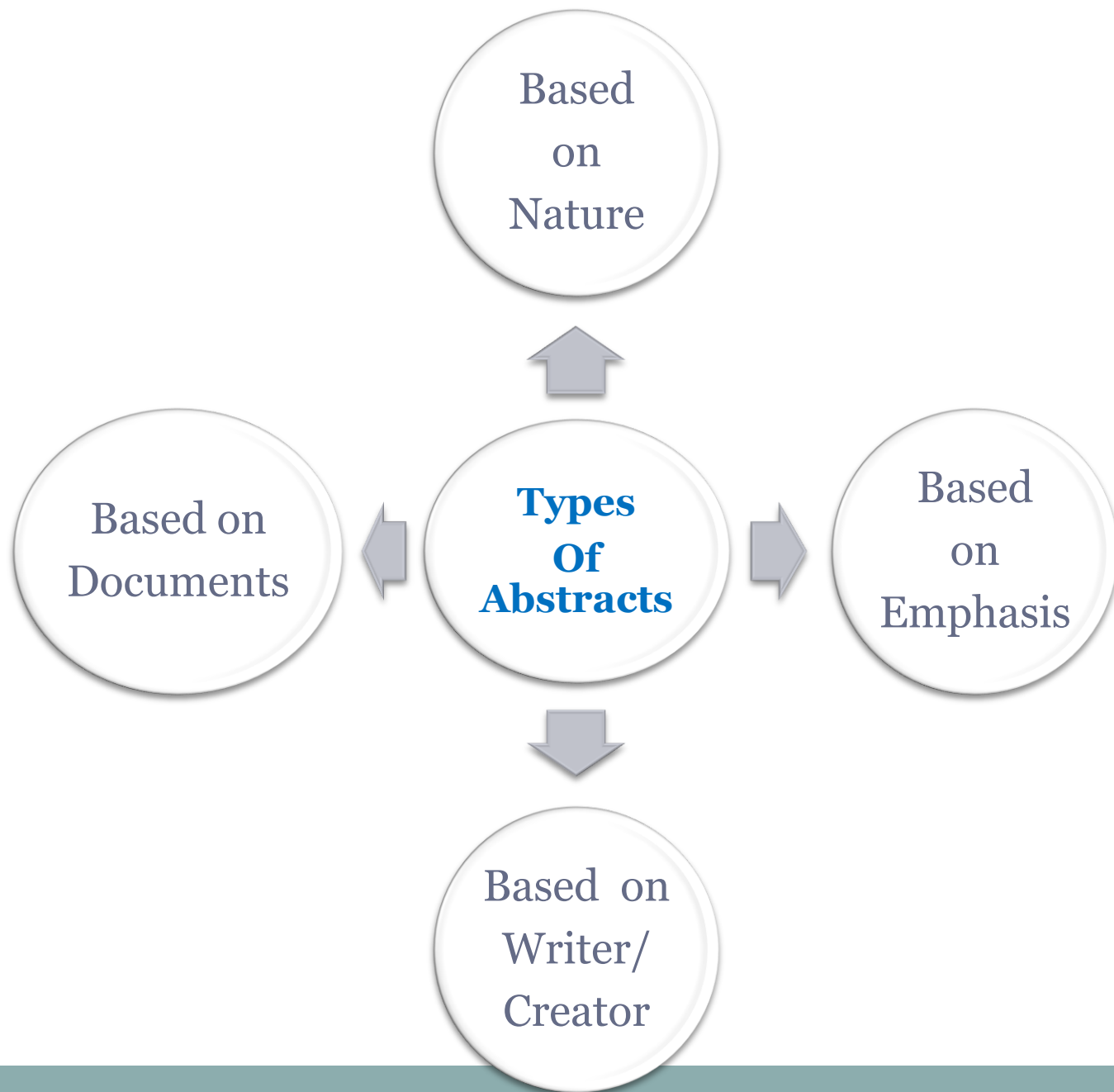


- ❖ Abstract have become important tools today because of the paradigm shift of the world from collection to access.
- ❖ Abstracts have a pride of place in scientific literature, it is read much more times by people than those who hear or read the entire document or paper.
- ❖ Though writing an abstract may be tedious, it is enticing to readers who seek the information in abstracts thereby repaying the writer with increased impact.
- ❖ Abstract use keywords, which a vital to information retrieval in today's electronic documented scholarly environment.

Abstracting: Need



- ❖ They are useful for current awareness services in libraries and information centres.
- ❖ Abstract can help meet the needs of information seekers as it help in inquiry answering and desk research.
- ❖ Abstract can be useful in the preparation of briefing and writing of reports.
- ❖ Abstracts are significant ingredient for the creation of databases worldwide.
- ❖ Abstracts are important to managers or chief executives who need to assimilate documents rapidly and review them in reports





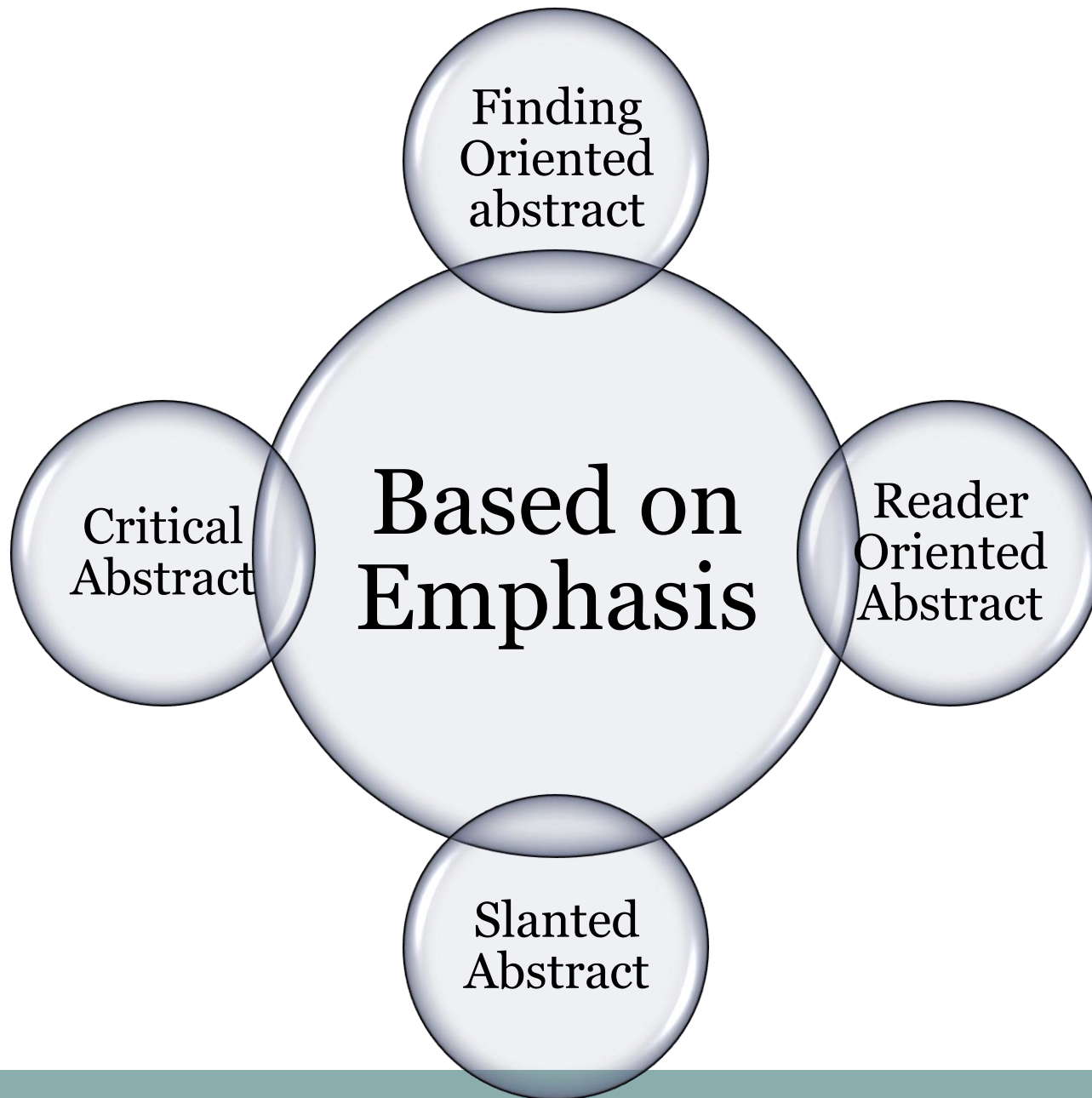
Based on
Nature

- Indicative Abstract
- Informative Abstract



Based on
Writer/ Creator

- Authors Abstract
- Specialists Abstract



Article
Abstract

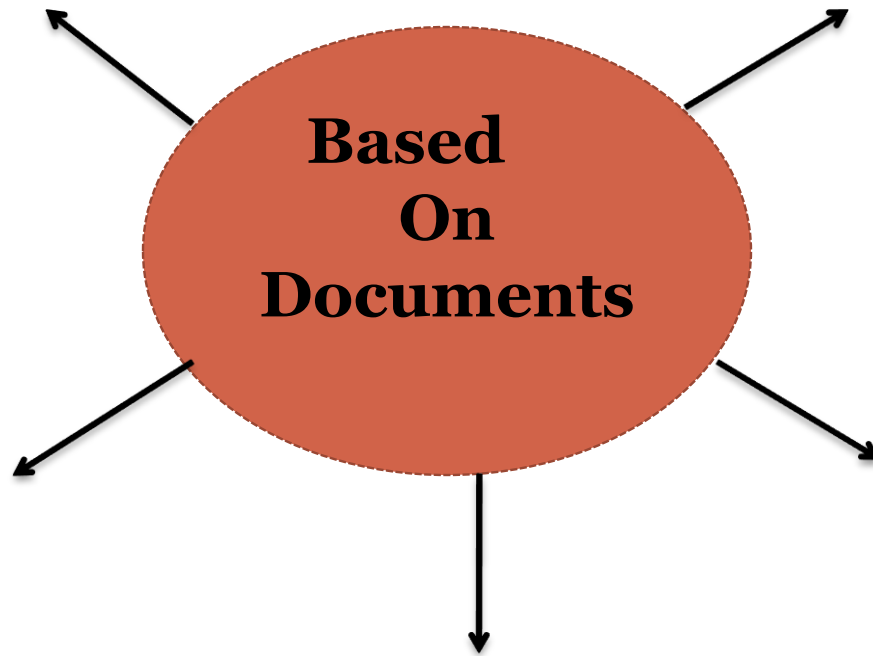
Summary
Abstract

**Based
On
Documents**

Dissertation
Abstract

Patent
Abstract

Standard
Abstract



Indicative Abstracts



- As it names implies, indicative abstracts merely indicates, usually short and objective with the aim of alerting the user or reader of the existence of documents. Indicative abstracts describe the type and form of the work abstracted, indicating the major topics covered in the work and providing a brief description of the treatment of the facts and issues. It does not summarise the content or evaluate its quality.
- What an indicative abstract does is that, it indicates the type of document being abstracted. In most cases abstracts are short, written in general terms and do not provide the reader a step by step account of the document's development. Indicative abstract outlines topics covered in a document so the reader can decide whether to read the document or not.

Indicative Abstracts



- In several ways, the indicative abstract is similar to table of contents in a paragraph form. Unlike an informative abstract, reading an indicative abstract cannot substitute for reading the real document as it does not capture the content of the document or paper. And because indicative abstracts fail to meet the other main objectives of abstracts as well as informative abstracts do, they are less common.
- Indicative abstracts seldom provide the real content of documents and therefore they cannot be used as surrogate of the original document. They only inform the user what they can find in documents and not the real data or information contained in them.

Informative abstracts



- This is an abstract that summarises as much of the essential content of a document as possible within the limitation of a paragraph. Informative abstracts attempt to convey the message of the original document, indicating all the important data including observations and conclusions. It captures all the essential details of a document presenting the actual information contained in the original document. This enables the user of the abstract to have adequate knowledge of the content of the original document. It is a surrogate of the original document unlike indicative abstracts.

Informative abstracts



- Informative abstracts attempt to provide as much quantitative and qualitative data as possible, providing a useful guide to documents reporting an experimental investigation. They are a type of abridgement of the original document with the major ideas and fact well captured such that the users' needs not look for the original document or paper. An informative abstract should cover four essential points:
- Objective and Scope of the document
- Methods used
- Results
- Conclusion

Critical Abstracts



- Critical abstracts are prepared with the purpose of making a value judgement on document. It may also be an editorial comment on the paper. Critical abstract reflect the content of document, indicating its depth and also commenting on the different aspects of the document. The abstractor is therefore a subject specialist who has a good grasp of the document's content. Although some abstractor are of the opinion that a good abstract should stay clear of the bias and critical comments that characterise critical abstracts, it is nonetheless a useful and powerful tool.

Critical Abstracts



- Critical Abstracts's strong point is that the abstractor is sufficiently knowledgeable of the subject areas of paper or document, its methodologies and other critical areas such that he is capable of making value judgements.
- Critical abstract according to Cleveland and Cleveland (2001) is generally used on general papers with broad overviews, on reviews and also on monographs but can also be used for single papers. It is important to say that the type of material or document and the users are the basis for deciding which type of abstract should be used.

Abstracts Classified by Use



Abstracts can also be grouped according to the purpose of their use. These abstracts are

- Discipline oriented,
- Mission oriented and
- Slanted abstracts.

They are either informative, indicative or critical in their preparation or internal make up.

Discipline and Mission-Oriented Abstracts



- A discipline oriented abstract is produced on a specific area of knowledge or discipline; they are concerned with abstracting documents of a particular subject area. E.g. (*Chemical Abstracts, Library and Information Science Abstracts LISA*) Chemical abstract is devoted to the discipline of Chemistry while the Library and Information Science Abstract is for the field of Library and Information Science.
- A mission-oriented abstract is produced to support a particular project or assignment which may or may not be interdisciplinary in nature. This type of abstract focuses on an assignment rather than a subject area or discipline. The document being abstracted may be interdisciplinary but it is usually devoted to support application activities aimed at addressing a problem. E.g. *child abuse, environmental degradation etc.*

Slanted Abstracts



- Slanted abstracts are often seen as a form of mission-oriented abstract, instead of focusing on the entire document being abstracted, it highlights a selected portion of document's subject content. It focuses on a particular section of the document which may be of interest to users.
- *For instance, a paper that discusses Primary Education, Secondary Education and Tertiary Education in Nigeria may have the abstractor abstracting only the area of tertiary education if the user's interest is this area of the Educational System. The other sections of Primary and Secondary Education will not be captured in the abstract.*

Abstracts Classified by Authors



There are three categories of people who may produce abstracts. They are the

- authors of documents or papers,
- subject experts and
- professional abstractors.

Abstracts in this category are author abstracts, professional abstracts and subject specialist abstracts.

Author Abstract



- Author abstracts are prepared by authors who are experts in their discipline and so they are capable of distilling the essential point in the document. The author(s) probably has many years of training and experience in writing of abstracts. Authors being experts in their subject areas should write good abstracts, however they do not necessarily make good abstractors especially because many of them are not skilled in the art of writing high quality abstracts. Despite the foregoing, author abstracts are produced on time; they come with the manuscript and are less costly because no additional cost is needed if the author abstract is used.
- Authors are generally not likely to produce good abstracts. They are very close to their manuscript to do an objective abstracting work. They fail to note that what they think is important may not necessarily be what users want in the document. Some use their abstract as a promotional tool for their papers neglecting the importance of users. For these, and also because authors may not be well skilled in the techniques, procedures and methods of abstract writing, they lack the experience required to do a good job, they are usually not good abstractors.

Professional Abstract



- Professional abstracts are written by full-time professional abstractors. Although this group of people may not necessarily be experts in the subject areas, they are known to produce high quality abstracts especially when they work in disciplines they are very familiar with. They spend more time working on abstracts and can cover areas subject expert may not capture.
- Abstracts produced by *subject specialist* are of high quality, this is because although they are professional abstractors, they are experts and professionals in their subject areas, and this qualifies them to write abstracts. This is the case with many abstracting journals that rely on subject specialist to produce their abstracts. In spite of these, a subject specialist may not be entirely an expert in all the areas of a wide subject area. He may also super-impose his thoughts and be reluctant to accept a new thought especially from an upcoming author.

Structured Abstracts



- A structured abstract follow a set of sub-headings and the writer of the abstract fill in the blanks. It is believed that structured abstracts contain more cogent information and are of high quality and facilitate peer-review.
- Structured abstracts are being adopted in the medical field and other disciplines today because of the inaccuracy of many abstract. It is a kind of bibliographic control device for abstracting. Scientists now think that the publishing, storage and retrieval of their papers are integral part of their activities, they rely on tools like structured abstract to achieve retrieval of their documents.

Structured abstracts



- Structured abstracts provide headings under which the abstracts must be produced such as: *Background, Aim, Method, Results, and Conclusion*. Some journals require that author submit structured abstract of their paper, this is to ensure that the important areas of the paper dealing with purpose, methodology and results are captured in an organised form. One weakness of this type of abstract is that it may not be about the user's interest. E. G. Abstracts in *Emerald insight articles*

Other Types



Annotated Abstract: A clause or a sentence is added to amplify the title of an article. Annotated and indicative abstracts differ only in length.

Auto-Abstract: It is produced by a computer analysis of the frequency of use of significant use words in a document and of the frequency with which these high-use words appear in the same sentence. The high frequency words are then traced back to the sentence in which they occurred and their position noted. A score is then assigned to each sentence based on the number and position of the high frequency words it contains. The resultant auto-abstract is a collection of typical sentences forms the original document.

Telegraphic Abstract: It is a detailed index to a graphic record, which is composed of

- Significant words selected from the document.
- Coded symbols called role indicators which supply a context for the selected words,



- **Graphic Abstract:** In the field of Chemistry where a precise language of communication is available, a new type of abstract has been introduced by the “current abstracts of chemistry and index chemicus” make full use of this language. This has been named graphic abstract. Instead of naming the substances and compounds and their treatments a graphic abstract indicates them by molecular and structural formulae. A chemist finds it easier to get the essence from such an abstract.
- **Mini – Abstract:** This gives a broader view of the title of the work
- **Highlight Abstract:** This appears in or adjacent to the table of contents of some primary journals.

Qualities of Abstract



- Authoritative
- Brevity/concise
- Unified
- Coherent
- Precision
- Objectivity
- Intelligibility
- Ability to stand alone

Qualities of a Good Abstract



- **It can stand on its own.** A well-written abstract can stand on its own merits. When someone reads through it, they'll understand exactly what the piece is about – no more and no less. Of course, it should be readable, so put it through a good [English grammar software](#).
- **It follows the report's chronology and structure.** Abstracts should follow the order of the report, from the introduction to the body down to the conclusion. It makes it read more like the report, effectively preparing the reader for what to expect.
- **It strictly summarizes the report, adding no new information.** The abstract is a preview of the report, not a real part of it. As such, all information included in it should be drawn directly from the material, with no unwarranted extras.
- **It provides all important topics, with logical connections.** While you obviously can't make it as detailed as the real report, your abstract should feature all the major topics it covers, leaving no pertinent details out.

Qualities of a Good Abstract

- First and foremost, a Good abstract should be complete, it should be a concise description of the original work. It should entice readers to obtain the full-text or the original document.
- It should be fully self-contained, it should be a capsule description of the original document. This is important because the abstract as a stand-alone document should be understood without reading the original work.
- A good abstract should follow strictly the standard checklist of the steps or method of abstract preparation. It should use the introduction, methods, results, conclusion and recommendations structure which presents an article's, paper or a report's purpose, results, conclusion and recommendations in that sequence. This is crucial to the marketability of your abstracts, to serve the need of the users.

Qualities of a Good Abstract



- It must be clearly written and logical; it should be well developed and the scientific methods should be merged with summarization to repackage a multi-page document into a paragraph. This is necessary for readability.
- A good abstract should extract they details and ideas or opinions from works and reproduce them accurately without ambiguity.
- A good abstract should use the same level of technical language found in the document or article.
- It should help reader decide whether to read the real document or not.
- It should help readers understand the original paper. It should act as a good pre-reading outline of the key points in the paper.

Structure of Abstract



Basically the abstract is having three parts:

- Searching mechanism – keyword, subject, title, author that represents the original document and used a tool for search
- Citation – brief information of the document that facilitates identification of the original document
- Abstract – a brief summary of the original article

For effective Abstract



- Uses one or more well-developed paragraphs, which are *unified, coherent, concise, and able to stand alone*
- Uses an *introduction-body-conclusion structure* in which the parts of the research paper are discussed in order: purpose of the paper, what you learned, conclusions you have come to
- Follows the *chronology (order of events)* of the research paper
- Provides *logical connections* between material included
- Adds no new information that isn't in the paper; instead, it summarizes the paper

Abstracting: Steps

- ❖ Selection of documents
- ❖ Relevancy
- ❖ Bibliographic Details
- ❖ Preparation of abstracts
- ❖ Identification of Subject headings
- ❖ Classifying the entries according to scheme
- ❖ Giving the serial no. to every entry
- ❖ Preparing the Author, Subject & Alphabetical Index
- ❖ Published

Abstracting: Steps



- To write an effective abstract,
 1. Reread your research paper with the purpose of summarizing in mind.
 2. Write a rough draft of your abstract without looking back at your research paper.
 3. Consider the main parts of the abstract listed above.
 4. Do not just copy key sentences from your research paper.
 3. Revise your rough draft to:
 - a. *Correct weaknesses in organization and coherence,*
 - b. *Cut unnecessary information,*
 - c. *Add important information originally left out,*
 - d. *Eliminate wordiness, and*
 - e. *Correct errors in grammar and mechanics.*
 4. Carefully proofread your final copy.

Elements of Abstract



- Purpose
- Scope
- Method
- Data
- Result
- Conclusion
- Special Information
- Collateral Information
- Additional Information

Index :Types

- Alphabetical Indexes
- Classified Indexes
- Author Indexes
- Periodical Indexes
- Cumulative Indexes
- Faceted Indexes
- Internet and Multimedia Indexes
- Word Indexes
- **Subject Indexes**

Subject Indexes

- Coordinate Indexes
- Citation Indexes
- Permuted Title Indexes
- Sting Indexes

Principles of Indexing



- (i). **Correctness or accuracy:** This has to do with correct spelling and correct presentation of information in the index:
- (ii). **Uniformity or consistency:** Since indexing systems vary, indexer must adopt informing in indexing;
- (iii). **Completeness:** This simply complete bibliographic data
- (iv). **Clarity:** There should be specific and concise subject heading
- (v). **Consideration:** This must use the language the user can easily understand.

Indexing Goals/Advantages



- To help users to become familiar with a text or document such that those who intend to exploit the text can do so easily.
- To act as a kind of summary to text or document serving as a selection guide to the content.
- To serve as a tool for document analysis.
- To serve as a vital link between the originator of information or writers of text/document and its ultimate users or consumer
- To help reduce the time and energy a user expends in accessing or finding a topic of interest in a given document or set of documents stored in a collection.
- To maximize the searching success of the user of a document.
- To create or generate terms or descriptors that serves the purpose of describing the intellectual content of documents.
- To serve as an information retrieval tools for libraries, archives, information centres or documentation centres.
- To assist users choose the best terms or words that will match their language, having a system that achieves an accurate and complete cross-reference to related information.
- To help increase usage of document.

Uses of Abstracts and Indexes



- Users of abstracts and indexes are basically information finders. The use and importance of abstracts and indexes will continue to increase as information explosion deepens; as the cyberspace becomes the more filled with information and as people need to access information.
- Indexes are used to point to possible, important information while abstract allow the user to judge if the information will be relevant for use. Both tools are consulted by users to cut down what they need to know leading to finding the required information.

Uses of Abstracts and Indexes



Other uses of abstracts and indexes according to Cleveland and Cleveland (2001) are the follows:

- To assist users locate information items given to them by a reference or a colleague.
- To find application of some new procedures or discovery in their field.
- To find recent trends or ideas in the field.
- To provide a comprehensive overview of a field, sub-field or concept.
- To discover the background of a problem.
- To locate other works by an author recently discovered by users
- To find out a piece of data that may be in an abstract or a document.

Uses of Abstracts and Indexes



- The above stated uses are general to abstracts and indexes. Both tools can complement each other. Abstracts are representative of documents and by summarising information contents they help the objective of indexing.
- To make effective use of abstracts, they need to be indexed. There is always a meeting point in the use of abstracts and indexes, though they cannot fully represent the original document, they remain a useful surrogate.

Requisite of a Good Abstractor



- A good abstractor should be skilful in writing and reading all type of documents.
- He should have the ability to effectively summarise documents. The skills to sign post and skim read.
- Abstractors should be good in scanning of documents, having little signposting. He should be capable of explaining what the document is all about.
- He also needs the skill to cut through the document identifying the essentials in it.
- He should be able to read through or tackle documents that offer a few clues. He needs rapid reading skills to do this effectively.
- Good abstractors should make his abstract not only stylish but also comprehensive.

Requisites of a Good Indexer



- (i). Subject knowledge
- (ii). Experience
- (iii). Concentration or orderly mind
- (iv). Reading ability
- (v). Comprehension
- (vi). Passion for Accuracy
- (vii). Legible hand writing.
- (viii). Knowledge of user needs

Examples:

Abstracts

(LISA)
LISTA
Lib Lit & Inf Sc

Chemical Abstract
Physics Abstract

Indexes

Social Science
Index
Education Index

Applied Science &
Indexing
Atom Index



Abstracts Examples

1. Indian Science abstract. INSDOC, Delhi. 1965—Semi monthly
2. Econlit. American Economic Association. 1969—.
3. LISA- Library and Information Science Abstract. Library Association, London. 1950—monthly
(*Available through Proquest*)
4. Biological Abstract. Biosciences Information Services, Philadelphia. 1926-semi monthly.
5. Chemical Abstract. American Chemical Society. Columbus. Ohio. 1907—Weekly.
6. Dissertation Abstract International. Michigan University Microfilm. Ann Arbor. 1938—Monthly.

Index Examples

1. British Humanities Index. Library Association. London. 1962—Quarterly(Cumulated Annually)
2. Social Sciences Index Retrospective: 1907-1983 • ARCHIVE. H.W. Wilson, New York, 1974—Quarterly. (*Available through Ebscohost*).
3. Humanities International Index. H.W.Wilson. New York.1974.Q.*Available through Ebscohost*
4. Library Literature and Information Science. H.W.Wilson, New York. 1921—Bimonthly.
5. Index India. Rajasthan University Library, Jaipur.1967—Quarterly.
6. Guide to Indian Periodical Literature. Indian Documentation Service. Gurgaon. 1964--. Quarterly
7. PAIS Index. Public Affairs Information Service. New York. 1915—(Cumulated Annually). *Available through Proquest*

Assignments

(all the abstracts and Indexes are available online)



- **Group 1** : LISA- Library and Information Science Abstract. Library Association, London. 1950—monthly
Available through Proquest
- **Group 2** Humanities International Index. H.W.Wilson. New York.1974.Q.*Available through Ebscohost*
- **Group 3** :Library Literature and Information Science. H. W. Wilson, New York. 1921—Bimonthly. York.1974.Q.*Available through Ebscohost*
- **Group 4** PAIS Index. Public Affairs Information Service. New York. 1915—(Cumulated Annually).
Available through Proquest
- **Group 5**: Econlit. American Economic Association. 1969—. York.1974.Q.*Available through Ebscohost*

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- IGNOU.“Abstracting and Indexing Periodical.” <http://egyankosh.ac.in/bitstream/123456789/33138/1/Unit-4.pdf>. Accessed 20 March 2020.

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Jane. “Qualities Of An Effective Abstract.” [https://www.Writeenglish. Org /improve-english-writing/qualities-of-an-effective-abstract/.](https://www.Writeenglish.Org/improve-english-writing/qualities-of-an-effective-abstract/) Accessed 20 March 2020.

