

**Batna-2 University**  
**Department of English**  
**Level: Second Year**  
**Module: TTU**  
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## **Lecture 01: Introduction to APA Style**

### **1. Definition**

The American Psychological Association (APA) developed a writing style guide and format that is commonly used in social science papers. The APA format is one of several writing styles now in use for publications, papers, essays, and books. Professionals in psychology and a variety of other fields employ this unique style. It is also one of the most widely taught and used writing styles in colleges and high schools.

### **2. Historical Background**

In July 1892, 31 members of professors were interested in modern psychology. They set up an executive committee council, which elected G. Stanley Hall as the association's first president. Their first meeting was held in 1892 at the Pennsylvania University to examine the emergence of new academic disciplines such as psychology, biochemistry, physiology, political sciences, and economy and their role in setting advanced degrees that served as credentials for the disciplines' participants to be recognized as experts in their fields. Another motive that shaped these members was the aspiration to use competence and expertise to create a more efficient society due to the progressive movement in politics that encouraged such endeavour.

So, this motivated the American Psychological Association to play a pivotal role in training employees to meet the new professional slots generated by Society's aspirations for efficiency. So, the first half of the twentieth century witnessed a considerable increase in the rise of APA membership which was as follows: 1892: 31 members, 1899: 125 members, 1916: 308 members, 1930: 530 members, 1940: 664 members. In addition, associate (non-voting) membership was created to receive more than 2000 associate members in 1940.

The Second World War had a massive impact on the growth of APA. After WWII, psychology grew rapidly, with the most significant rise in membership occurring from 1945 to 1970, marking "the golden age of psychology" (Pickren, 2012). Several factors spurred this expansion. During the war, many returning veterans directly witnessed the dire need for improved psychological assistance. The fields of clinical and applied psychology drew a lot of attention. This led to the emergence of very prominent psychological organizations that raised awareness and interest in clinical psychology. For instance, the GI Bill, the new Veterans Administration Clinical Psychology training program, and the establishment of the National Institute of Mental Health have played a pivotal role in connecting psychological (as science) and clinical psychology (field of practice). This has gained more attention to APA, which benefited from different sources of support and funding and this led to the rapid increase of its membership, which reached 30,839 members in 1970.

Nowadays, with over 121,000 academics, instructors, therapists, advisors, and trainees as members, APA is considered the most prominent scientific and professional association representing psychology in the United States and even worldwide. Moreover, APA has developed 54 divisions in psychology subfields to facilitate the integration of members with their group of particular interest. One may refer to the Society for the Psychology of Women, Society for the History of Psychology, International Psychology, Media Psychology, or the Society for the Study of Men and Masculinity. The APA's primary governing structure was a council with an executive committee. This structure has survived into the twenty-first century with a slight re-organization: the American Psychological Association now has a Council of Representatives and a Board of Directors.

The first edition of APA Style was first issued in 1929 in 7 pages that were directly concerned with encouraging writers to express their ideas and arguments more convincingly, using headings to impose logical structure. The core of the APA Style scientific paper was introduced into three sections: introduction, results, and discussion. Much importance was given to citations and references rather than grammar and writing style. Breitenbach (2016) confirms this in "The origins of APA Style" by stating:

A discussion of what to cite and how to cite a reference is included, as well as space for tables and figures. Other familiar elements are not yet present and will be added over time. For example, there is no guidance on writing style or grammar—beyond the exhortation that those who are incompetent should get help.

Over time, different editions were introduced to add more details for templates related to citing various sources, including books, journals, anthologies, etc. Almost after 90 years, APA style has recently launched its seventh edition giving much importance to language and style. Among the 17 changes that took place compared to the 6th edition is the use of neutral language that is not biased vis à vis any social group. For instance, the adjective "poor" is not allowed for use when describing people as the poor but instead is to state the condition as properly saying: "people living in poverty". This is presented under the argument of what is called "Acknowledge People's Humanity" which attempts to make researchers use bias-free language guidelines (Manual Publication, 2020).

### **3. The Strategic Aims of APA Style**

According to the publication manual of APA (2020), APA style function lies in setting "guidelines for clear and precise scholarly communication that helps authors, both new and experienced, achieve excellence in writing" (p. xvii). In our context, it means that APA style (7th edition, more precisely) functions as a key regulator of the main aspects of documentation and research in social sciences. It regulates the following documentation aspects:

#### **3.1. Style and language**

As mentioned above, it aims to provide a simple language that is understandable and bias-free. Among the guidelines concerned with language and style is students and academics should use clear, concise language, avoid contractions and colloquialisms, and use the generic pronoun

"they" instead of "He/she" and I instead of "editorial we". The past tense verb should be used to refer to events that emerged at a specific point in the past, such as the research's work or experiment. As for numerals, for instance, they should be written in letters when they are under 10 and in numbers when they are above ten. i.e., Nine, but 22.

### **3.2. Document format**

This means the layout of the A4 page as recommended by the style of APA. In this respect, the document format of the academic paper should meet these requirements:

- 1" margins (1-inch equals 2.54 cm) on all sides of a document (default setting)
- Every student paper page should have a page number in the upper right-hand corner (the title page is page 1).
- Use a standard, readable font; Calibri (11 pt.) or Times New Roman (12 pt.) are recommended.
- Double spacing throughout (including title and references pages).

### **3.3.In-text citations**

It provides instructions related to the format of citing a source in the student's text. Like MLA, it focuses on narrative citations versus parenthetical citation and quoting versus paraphrasing and summarizing.

### **3.4. References**

It means the list of documentation sources at the end of the research paper.

## **4. APA Academic Paper Sections**

The structure of the academic paper might be categorized under the label of document format since it is more related to the format of the work. So the general structure of a paper should pertain to the following aspects: title page, abstract, the main body of the paper (Introduction, method, result, and discussion), references, and then appendices.

### **4.1.Title Page**

It should be centered and followed by the student's name and the educational institute in the following line. This title should appear as a running head throughout the paper at the top of each page. It should be less than 50 letters and start on the top left side of each page.

### **4.2.Abstract**

It is the summary of the work. It includes an introduction, method, results and discussion of the findings or conclusion. It should be located on page two and should be less than 150 words presented in a block format (no indentation is needed).

### **4.3.Main Body Structure**

Page three marks the start of the body of the paper. Students should use one-inch margins around their documents. Except at the beginning of each paragraph, which should be indented five to seven spaces (1.27cm), the left-side margin should be flush. Use a familiar typeface, such as Times New Roman, in 12-point type. Your manuscript should be double-spaced throughout. Page numbers should be placed in the upper right corner. Your paper's complete title should be repeated at the start of the main body. The body of the paper includes an introduction that introduces the audience to the research topic (background of the study, the statement of the problem, research questions, and hypothesis). The method indicates the research methodology adopted by the student as they conduct their research. Whereas results state the research findings and discussion provides a state of interpretation to make sense of the findings.

#### **4.4.References**

References generally come immediately after the main body of the work. It includes the reference entries list used when conducting the research.

#### **4.5.Appendices**

It is the last section that should come after references. It includes supplementary information such as graphics, tables, or figures used to elaborate more on the student's research focus.

### **References**

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