Genre Analysis of Islamiyat Research Article Abstracts

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Abstract

This paper aims to investigate at micro and macro level the generic trends of Research Article (hence forth R.A) abstracts in the subject of Islamiyat (Islamic religious studies) written in Pakistani research context. Moreover, the paper also evaluates how far these generic trends follow the conventions set by international research community for abstract writing. This study has adopted mix method approach for the purpose of analysis. The corpus of this study consists of 40 abstracts selected from Islamiyat Research Articles published by Government College University Faisalabad's research journal Zia –E–Tehqiq. The analysis shows that abstracts under study do not fulfil the criteria of informative abstracts however; they have a closer affinity with the rhetorical structure of descriptive abstracts. Certain culture and discipline specific traits have also been found both at micro and macro structure level. The structural parts are not well sequenced. Moreover, certain breaches to the set pattern of

descriptive abstracts have also been noticed. This study has reiterated the fact that genres are discipline specific and experts in the field can innovate new aspects in the already existing genre structures. Moreover, it is impossible to have universality in generic structures. This research may prove valuable for novice learners, researchers and scholars, who want to assist, guide and assess the learners in the relevant field.

Keywords: R.A abstracts, generic trends, Micro and micro structure, Informative and Descriptive Abstract, Cross cultural and cross disciplinary studies.

1. Introduction

With the inception of English for Specific Purposes in 1980s, a great deal of interest evolved among genre analysts in Research Writing. The pioneering works in this field include Swales' analysis of research article introductions (Swales 1981, 1990, 2002, 2004), Dudley Evans's (196 ,1988) work on introduction and discussion section of dissertations. This convention heralded an enormous body of research work on generic conventions of research writing not only in then Anglophonic research community but also in other research communities. The latest works in this regard include cross-cultural and cross-disciplinary studies of different research genres. Hu and Liu (2018), Sanjaya (2016), Bhatti, Mustafa and Azher (2019), Khurshied and Mehmood et.al (2016) are a few examples of discipline specific, cross cultural and non-anglophonic studies on the generic analysis of having academic research as subject matter. R. A abstracts though a belatedly investigated research genre, owes great significance since research world with an information explosion is publishing millions of research articles on yearly basis. This supply of excessive content has made the readers choosier in the selection of research articles and R.A abstracts have proved a skimmed version of the articles that facilitate the selection of an article.

 Almost three decades ago research articles had been written without any abstracts. Initially, abstracts were added to medical research articles in 1960s. The term 'abstract' with its origin in Latin "abstractum" implies a snapshot of a longer piece. In the research community it refers to an autonomous piece of writing that entails a research article. It is no more considered a part of research article, since it stands on its own and is often read in isolation and this very feature distinguishes it from R.A introduction that is considered a functional part of an article. Huckin (2001) is of the view that abstracts are mini texts that provide a briefing about article's topic, method and findings. They are the screening devices used by the readers to determine if the rest of the article should be read or not. By providing a preview of the full article they give a road map for further reading. Editors, professional writers and reviewers get indexing assistance from abstracts. Indicative or Descriptive Abstracts provide a statement about the research background and a content list of the annexed paper. They accompany larger academic works like articles, book reviews, and research papers in

humanities. On the other hand, informative abstracts contain research background, research methodology, results and discussion of results. Being a specified overview of the paper, such an abstract proves more useful in information sharing and has relevance in natural and social sciences. A comparatively recent development in abstract writing is the structured abstracts, Hartley (2004) points out that they not only provide detailed information but also present that information in a more systematic way and supplement rapid search and information seeking process. Such more informative abstracts may attract wider readership, higher citation rates and greater journal impact and all such factors are desired by both authors and editors. Such abstracts force research writers to think and present their material more systematically.

2. Literature Review

Keeping in view the immense significance of research article abstracts in the field of ESP, the linguists and genre analysts are taking great interest in the micro and macro structure of this sub-genre from almost last three decades. The pioneering work on macro structure was done by Swales in (1981) with the formation of structural moves for R.A introduction section. Later he revised the model and termed it as CARS (Create A Research Space) model. In 1996, Swales introduced a structural model for R.A abstracts consisting of five moves i.e., Situating the research, Presenting the research, Describing methodology, Summarizing the findings, Discussing the findings. Each of these moves has been identified by Santos (1996) both on Semantic and Linguistic basis. This model has been used to analyze the move structure of both R.A and theses abstracts by. (Doro 2013, Lon et al in 2012, Tseng in 2011 and Pho in 2013). Tseng, Pho and Santos all the three made a distinction between obligatory and non-obligatory moves of abstracts. They found that move 2, 3 and 4 are obligatory moves in the writing of an abstract. For Santos (1996) a move gains the status of an obligatory move if it is present in 80% of article abstracts. Later on Swales (1990) Bhatia (1993) and Lores (2004) introduced a model of rhetorical structure consisting of 4 moves i.e. IMRD model. These moves can be enumerated as Introduction, Methodology, Result and Discussion. As far as the micro structure and language choice of R.A abstracts is concerned expert members of research community have also investigated these features of abstracts. Hyland (2005, 9-12) observed that the use of meta discourse features enhances coherence, generate an environment of friendliness by providing guidance and proves a source of involvement in the text. Lexical items like nouns and verb phrases also serve as research promoting agents. Not only these markers but rhetorical moves and structures also serve information contributing functions. In certain cases, these moves also serve persuasive purpose for the readers. The significant studies conducted on genre analysis of abstract in the communities where English is second language are outlined here;

Suntara and Usaha (2013) conducted a study on R.A abstract structure in linguistics and applied linguistics. For the purpose of study, the authors investigated 200 abstracts that were published from the year 2009 to 2012. Theoretical framework for the study was provided by Hyland's (2000) five move structural model. The results showed that the abstracts written in the field of linguistics had 3 conventional moves being obligatory. These are purpose move (79%) occurrence rate, Method move with 80% occurrence rate and Product move with 92% occurrence. While 2 moves were found non obligatory e.g. introduction having only 45% occurrence and conclusion section having 57% occurrence rate. As far as moves in Applied Linguistics is concerned four moves were considered to be obligatory. Since they have 83% (Purpose move), 86% (Method move), 87% (Product move) and 69% (conclusion move) occurrence rate. However, Introduction move was found only in 44% of Applied Linguistics abstracts.

Bonn and Swales (2007) conducted an exploratory study based on rhetorical structure analysis of English and French journal abstracts. Two corpora from the language sciences have been depicted. Corpus A consisted of R.A abstracts from French linguistics journal and an English journal of linguistics. While Corpus B consisted of paired French and English abstracts from bilingual journals. The research found a three level difference; the first difference being that of voice is ascribed to general difference between two languages. The use of personal pronoun, sentence length and choice of transition words, is dependent upon appropriate research style. The difference of style in situating the research can be attributed to the difference of discourse community size and expectations.

Alhuqbani (2013) conducted a research on the R.A abstracts in Arabic language. He selected the corpus form five unrelated areas i.e. Arabic, Law, Linguistics, Medicine and police in order to investigate the rhetorical structure. The analytical framework for the study was provided by Bhatia's (1993) four move model and Hyland's (2000) five move model. It was found that the medical abstracts had a close resemblance to Bhatia's and Hyland's move structure. No definite move structure has been observed in other four disciplines. Moreover, it was found that researchers used present tense while writing Introduction, purpose and conclusion moves and past for writing Result and Method moves. Ninety English and Persian abstracts written in the field of literature were analyzed by Marefet and Mohammadzadeh (2012) in order to find cross linguistic and cross cultural dimensions. The analysis was done on the basis of IMRD and CARS models. The study revealed that there had been greater tendency to include Introduction and Result move. However, Method and Discussion move were rather ignored. The abstracts under study had a greater tendency towards CARS model. A comparative study of move structure was done by Ahmadi (2009) in the field of biological sciences R.A abstracts written by Persian and English researchers. Bhatia's (1993) model was used to analyze 60 R.A abstracts belonging to both groups of corpus. The findings displayed that Iranian had greater focus on methodology and

procedure and least concern was shown towards result section. On the other hand, English part of corpus was found to be well structured.

Talebzadeh et al (2014) investigated the effects of cultural and disciplinary variation upon the academic discourse. In order to find out such effects on discourse, an analysis was made of the generic structure of soft science abstracts written by Iranian students and their International counterparts. A body of 100 R.A abstracts was selected from distinguished Iranian and International journals. The analysis was made both of micro and macro structures. The results revealed that some agreement was found on the introduction, method and result section. However, purpose and discussion section were missing in Iranian section of corpus. Furthermore, no specification was found regarding move boundaries. The researcher has suggested a three dimensional model for the evaluation of such cross cultural aspects. A study was conducted by |Li (2011) on Chinese and English abstracts in the subjects of Chemistry and Linguists. The study was carried out on a body of forty R.A abstracts. The data was analyzed by using Hyland's (2000) model consisting of five moves. The analysis revealed that Linguistics abstracts in both languages were well structured from rhetorical point of view. A significant variation was observed in the use of 1st Person Pronoun and the Passive voice. The result indicated that abstracts had varying rhetorical structures and linguistic content due to disciplinary and cultural variations. A cross disciplinary move analytical study of abstracts was done by Darabad (2016). This study aimed at interrogating rhetorical structure of abstracts in the subjects of Applied Linguistics, Applied Chemistry and Applied Mathematics. The author's use of verb, voice and mention of self in different moves was also scrutinized. The analysis revealed that as far as abstracts in the area of Applied Linguistics were concerned, certain level of uniformity had been observed. The abstracts belonging to the field of Applied Mathematics and Applied Chemistry were more heterogeneous. Moreover, differences were observed in move patterns, number of moves employed, repetition of steps and moves. More than half of the abstracts belonging to the field of Linguistics and Mathematics had reference to the author's self by means of using personal and possessive pronouns as I, we, our etc. But in abstracts of Applied Chemistry there had been least mention of the writer's self.

2.1 Works done in Pakistan in the field of Genre Analysis of Research and Academic Writing:

There is no denial to the fact that in current academic situation, Pakistan is lagging far behind in the field of research. Though during the last few years, solid steps have been taken to enhance the research oriented studies in all the disciplines. The lack of genre analytical work particularly in academic and research field is a natural outcome of the above mentioned factor. Hence only few works are available in the field of genre analysis. The few that are available are outlined here: An interesting study has been

conducted by Waseema (2006) on the introduction section of Computer Science Research Articles.Another genre analytical study was conducted by Imtiaz and Mehmood (2014) on the rhetorical structure of argumentative essays written by Pakistani EFL learners. Another interesting study done in Pakistani context was the rhetorical analysis of Preface section of text books. This study was conducted by Asghar and Mahmood (2015). A significant study done on research genre was outlining the statement of research purpose and listing research questions in academic papers. This study was conducted by Waseema (2015). Aslam and Mehmood (2014) analyzed generically the rhetorical structure of conclusion section of research articles written in Pakistan. This study has investigated the macro structure of conclusion section of research articles written in Pakistan in the field of Social and Natural Sciences. Another interesting study from the genre analytical perspective was done by Rofess and Mehmood (2015) on the rhetorical structure of Pakistani Doctoral Thesis Acknowledgements. A remarkable work done in the field of academic genre analysis in Pakistani context is done by Khan & Tin (2012). The work aims to investigate the generic structure of Application lettesr. Shahzad and Abbas (2016) conducted a study on the generic structure of introduction section of M.Phil thesis in the discipline of Linguistics & Literature.Quratul-Ain , Mehmood and Qasim (2015) evaluated the generic structure and lexico grammatical features of Job Application Letters received by different educational institutes of Faisalabad (Pakistan) in English Language. A glance at these works reveals that only a few works are available on the structural evaluation of research articles. No significant work has been found on the genre analysis of research article abstracts in any discipline, particularly in humanities and ideology and culture specific subjects like Islamiyat. Hence it was deemed befitting to analyze generic trends in abstract writing in Islamiyat to evaluate the micro and macro structures of these abstracts and how far these rhetorical trends are following the international abstract writing conventions.

3. Research Methodology

This exploratory study aims at investigating the micro and macro structure of Research article abstracts in the subject of Islamiyat written in Pakistani context. The data collected by means of application of Swales and Feak's (2009) model has been analysed quantitatively in order to find the frequencies of generic structure and micro pattern. Then a qualitative approach is adopted to explain the reasons for non-applicability of Swales and Feak's (2009) generic model. Again an investigation of micro structural is done and a qualitative interpretation of logic underlying this internal pattern.

3.1. Data Collection
The Corpus for this study was selected from GCUF research journal of Islamic Studies, Zia-e-Tehqiq, Volume 9, December to June 2014 addition, Volume 8, January

to June addition, volume 7 June to December 2013 addition and volume 6 January to December 2013 addition. The body of corpus consisted of 40 abstracts. The selection of abstracts was made on stratified random sampling basis. Abstracts were numerically coded without taking into consideration the titles and various sub sections of relevant articles. The reason behind it is that abstracts are conventionally considered as a genre that can stand on its own. (The similar stance has been adopted by the researchers as Santos (1996), Pho (2008), Hirano (2009) and Doro (2013). The abstracts were taken from the recently published works since the study aims at investigating the latest trends in R.A abstract writing. The text of the abstracts has been written in English language per requirement of publishing body's instructions, though the rest of the articles were written in Urdu. The relevant research journal had instructed about the size of abstracts but not the structure and content. The corpus had been selected electronically from the online available prints of research journals. The subject matter of these abstracts is culture specific, belong to humanities and has a specific national and religious context. The articles selected were written by students and co-authored by faculty members of the universities, the only mandatory factor being Pakistani writers. Sheldon (2011) is of the view that subjectivity may influence the division of moves particularly in the cases where no linguistic indicators are used by the authors to separate the boundaries of the moves. Hence a double rating of the moves was done by an interval of one month.

3.2. Data Analysis

Following steps have been followed during the data analysis procedure:

Table1: Data analysis steps

Level1	Level2	Level3	Level4
Move analysis on the basis of Swales and Feak (2009) model.	Move analysis on the basis of indicative abstract model. Writingcenter@adelaide.edu.au	Micro structure analysis on the basis of Swales and Feak's (2009) categories.	Qualitative interpretation of the micro and macro structure.

All abstracts were coded according to move structure i.e. Introduction, method, results and discussion. Then raw sources about the occurrence of each move were counted.

After frequency count, a percentage about the occurrence and distribution of these rhetorical moves was calculated.

Table 2: Analytical instrument based on Swales and Feak (2009) to measure macro structure of abstracts

Moves	Structure	Abstract 1	Abstract 2	Abstract 3
Move1	Background	✔	✔	✔
Move2	Purpose	✔	✔	✔
Move3	Method	×	×	×
Move4	Result	✔	✔	✔
Move5	Discussion	✔	✔	✔

Table 3: Analytical instrument based on Swales and Feak (2009) to measure micro structure of abstracts

Sr. No.	Categories to be analyzed	Abstract 1	Abstract 2	Abstract 3
1	*Presence of key clause*	Sentence 2	Sentence 5	Sentence 3
2	*Length of abstract*	500 words	720 words	400 words
3	*Verb*	Present	present	Past indefinite
4	*Citation*	Nil	Nil	Nil
5	*First person*	1	1	1
6	*Meta discourse reference*	Nil	Nil	Nil
7	*Acronyms*	1	Nil	NIL
8	*Indicative or Informative*	Indicative	Indicative	Indicative
9	*Cross cultural references*	One reference	Nil	Three reference

A table comprising of all above mentioned textual items was prepared and the occurrence of all these variables in the corpus was entered in the table. Then the frequency count was calculated and percentages for occurrence of these variables were computed.

4. Results and Discussion

The analysis revealed that all the 40 abstracts belonging to Islamiyat had first move Introduction. The second move 'Purpose was present in 25% of Abstracts. Move 3 Method is present in10% of abstracts. While the move 4 Result was present in 13 percent of abstracts. The last one Discussion move occurred in 37percent of Islamiyat R.A. abstracts. In broader perspective the result categories reveal that basic structural components of R.A abstracts (I.P.M.R.D.) are not present in most of the abstracts written in the Pakistani context. Though few similarities in the frequency of occurrence and distribution of structural moves have been noticed yet significant statistical differences have also been found. The generic structure of the corpus abstracts is further illustrated in the following table.

Table4: The table below shows the distribution of moves, number and percentages of structural units according to Informative abstracts:

MOVES	ISLAMIYAT ABSTRACTS
Abstracts with 5Moves	Nil
Abstracts with 4Moves	2(5%)
Abstracts having 3Moves	3(7.5%)
Abstracts having 2 Moves	13(32.5%)
Abstracts having 1Move	22(55%)

4.1. Implication of rhetorical structure in textual comprehension

Discourse analysts and cognitive psychologist as Carrel (1994), Devine and Eskey (1989) and Meyer (1991) are of the view that lack of rhetorical structure effects comprehension of a text particularly in the case of nonnative readers. This lack of uniformity in structural pattern implies that analysts are having an intention to communicate ideas other than that intended by the international discourse community or by Swales himself. This point of view is further confirmed by the fact that the instructions by the research journal ZIA_E_TEHQIQ restrict the researchers to give a summary of the research article instead of a rhetorically well-organized abstract. The term summary with its Urdu equivalent 'Talkhis'or 'Khulasa' implies a brief snapshot of the research article. The summary may have some of the moves of Swales' model but would not have all the moves as enumerated by Swales and Feak (2009). Moreover, genres reflect their organizational cultures and relevant disciplines and by doing so they represent social action embodying discipline, institution and profession specific practice. Hence the abstracts under research should be viewed in the disciplinary, social and professional constraints within Pakistani context. Swales and

Feak (2009) himself has contended that the model is applicable for informative abstracts, however, while dealing with the abstracts under study they do not fit to this criterion. Keeping in view the discipline specific nature of Swales model it was decided to apply another model devised for the abstract belonging to humanities. This model was available on the (Writingcentr Adelaide.edu.au) Adelaide University Website for analysis of RA abstracts of descriptive nature.

The analysis at the second level showed that all the RA abstracts belonging to Islamiyat category have the first move i.e. background. Purpose move occurs in 25 percent of the abstract. The third rhetoric move occurs in 75% of abstracts. The content move is least present of all the four moves. Only 20 percent abstracts have content move. Moreover, the analysis showed that 13 % of abstracts are having all the moves of the descriptive abstracts. While 57 % of abstracts have 3 of the rhetorical moves. 30 % abstracts have 2 structural moves. And there has been no abstracts with a single structural move.

Table 5: Distribution of moves, Number and percentages according to descriptive article abstract criteria:

MOVES	ISLAMIYAT ABSTRACTS
Abstracts having 4 moves	5(12.5%)
Abstracts having 3 moves	23(57.5%)
Abstracts having 2 moves	12(30%)
Abstracts having 1 move	Nil

A higher level of consensus in the move structure of Descriptive abstracts and Islamiyat abstracts under study and deviation from Swales' model of informative abstracts, reiterates the fact already stated by Bhatia (1993|) that all discipline and profession specific genres have a specific integrity and this integrity can be distinguished from contextual, discursive and contextual features. So, it would be unjustified to apply models and designs of one specific discipline to another discipline. As far as discrepancies apparent in the abstracts under study from the descriptive abstracts model are concerned they can be attributed to several reasons; Such discrepancies are not only part of this study but similar discrepancies have appeared in earlier studies when abstracts written in one specific research context are compared to another. The comparison of French and English RA abstracts (2007) by Swales and Bonn and Spanish and English RA abstracts by Martin (2003) are clear examples in the point. In both of these cases only 54% and 20% complete agreement had been found respectively between both of the comparative categories. It reveals the abstracts as a genres are also exploited by the member of research community so it is useless to

expect an exact uniformity and agreement between any model and practical implications.

Another fact revealed by analysis is that though a higher tendency of agreement has been achieved in rhetoric structure of Descriptive abstracts and those written in Islamiyat in Pakistan yet the move structure of abstracts in Islamiyat does not follow the move sequence exactly. Move structure does not follow any fix order. The reason behind this deviation can be accounted for as lack of genre based research orientation in Pakistan, particularly in the field of humanities where research work is either altogether neglected and if it exists it does not follow any set conventions. Due to lack of research conventions no deliberate attention is paid on the part of research journals publishing these articles to set any generic criteria for the writing. The fact that publishing journal's own criteria, its insistence that criteria should be met by the researcher and instructions to researchers about the writing of articles do create a difference and can prove to be contributive in having a well-structured abstract and corresponding article. As far as the issue of least occurring move i.e. content is concerned if we admit the fact that the abstracts written in Pakistani context have more a connotation of the summary than a well formed piece of research article preliminary introduction, the content would naturally be present within the abstract, though a categorical list of all content items is not given as required by the descriptive RA abstracts criteria.

Thirdly, an analysis of micro structure of all the corpus abstracts was made to find out the occurrence of the following variable i.e. length of abstract, occurrence of key clause, use of tense, presence of any citation, presence of 1st person pronoun, meta discourse references, acronyms, cross cultural references.

1. The length of the abstracts was the first variable to be investigated. In the corpus 7 abstracts were having a length less than 100 words while 32 abstracts had a length that ranged from100 to 200 words. However, the length of extreme cases had ranged from 44 to 215 words. The publishing journal had instructed to add an abstracts comprising of one paragraph, a major discrepancy might have occurred if there had been two passages in a single abstract since two separate passages indicate that the text of abstract consists of two separate main ideas. But only two cases of such abstracts have been found.
2. The use of verb form was the second variable to be investigated. In all the corpus abstracts present tense use has dominated. 28 percent of abstracts were written in Present Tense. 80% of all the abstracts have used passive form of verb. This passive form of verb can be interpreted as specific generic feature of research. For Swales and Bonn 2007, the   passive form indicates different stylistic and linguistic conventions.

3. Another variable to be evaluated in this study was the occurrence of reference to another study or citation. As far as justification of research by offering the answer to the question why this research or referencing some other research by means of specific citation or without specific reference, is concerned only 3% of Islamiyat abstracts have used this technique. The occurrence of this referencing technique has been quite high in English language (80%) and lesser in French (45%) as indicated by Swales and Bonn (2007). For Yakhontova 2002 this high tendency for referencing can be explained in terms of research selling pressure. The French research work had less pressure to compete in international research community hence it refers less. In the similar way it can be inferred that the work published in Zia-e-Tehqiq has limited academic community to focus so least tendency has been found for citation and referencing. Hyland and Tse (2005) have also observed the similar fact that writers in English have increased the use of promotional elements in their abstracts focusing the international research community's trends.

4. There had not been found any instance of 1st person pronoun usage in the corpus abstracts.

5. Almost 80% of abstract have meta discourse references i.e. (this article, following article, the article under discussion or deictic like here or herein etc). However, Santos (1996) has described a further distinction between purposive and descriptive meta discourse language. For him the meta discourse statement that overtly mark the research purpose for using expression like 'this research attempts to elaborate', 'the goal of this research is' belong to purposive category while the statements that aim at dealing with issue 'why this research' are termed as descriptive meta discourse references. As far as meta discourse references that are the part of this study abstracts they tend to be exclusively purposive. The pragmatic reason behind the fact is that in Pakistani context research unrolls the data and facts. As Regent (1985) and Bashchmidt (1999) have remarked that English abstracts with their focus on placing their research within the scope of previous research, argue, 'why this research is important' while French place more emphasis on giving data. Again this diversity of rhetorical and linguistic features can be attributed to lack of publishing pressure, small discourse community size and fact and data based, deductive nature of Pakistani prose. Hence a trait that can be regarded as formative generic feature of the corpus abstracts is the use of meta discourse references.

6. In only 17% of abstracts acronyms have occurred. As far as the use of abbreviations is concerned only 17% of Islamiyat abstracts have it. A logical reason behind this trend of lacking acronyms is that in languages and theology based subject there is less possibility of occurrence of terminological acronyms as compared to social sciences and natural sciences.

7. In 16% of abstracts cross cultural references have been found. The existence of cross cultural references again can be attributed to the reason that the subject matter has more tendency towards cultural trends and confines as compared to other subjects belonging to humanities and natural sciences.
8. The place of key clause varies in different abstracts. This discrepancy in occurrence of key clause can be attributed to the same lack of structural unity.
9. As far as rhetorical organization of the corpus abstracts is concerned the following significant rhetorical trends have been observed; moves Reordering, missing of some of the model moves and embedding subordinate move structure.
10. In certain abstracts it is quite difficult to describe whether the statements belong to result move, background, purpose or method move. In such situations the abstracts do not fulfill their primary purpose i.e. provision of a clear lens by means of which readers may get an awareness about the study and its outcomes. It can be assumed that the abstracts that do not report the result of the study provide an information gap and invite the reader to read the full paper but at the same they do have a potential risk for rejection of the paper by the side of efficient reader who would prefer to study another abstract that contains a clearer description of result.

5. Conclusion

The study has proved statistically and empirically that generic structure in all the research areas generally and in humanities particularly has internal diversity as well as it reflects external diversity of immediate research community conventions producing these genres. Hence generic structures can be followed as guide lines but they should not be taken as set formulas to be followed uniformly in all disciplines and in all contexts. To view the generic structures as fix rules is to deny the very spirit of genre theory which establishes according to Bhatia (1993) "Genres are ever evolving and adaptable"

This study would be contributive in paving the way to streamline the generic structure in the field of research article abstract writing particularly in Islamiyat and specifically for the research community in Pakistan working in the discipline of humanities. By comparing the rhetorical categories and RA abstracts constituents to those universally acknowledged criteria of generic structures i.e. Swales model (2009) and standard criteria published by Addelide University's website for writing of descriptive RA abstract, this study has brought to light the generic gap existing in the different communities within the same genre. Moreover, the elaborative discussion of rhetorical categories and essential constituent parts of the abstracts under study has provided a detailed description of current generic trends in the concerned areas and factors underlying behind these generic choices. The current study can be of great worth for

researchers in evaluation and assistance while writing RA abstracts in the relevant field, moreover, it would facilitate in measuring generic features of RA abstracts written by them and modify and improve them accordingly. However, in this study only forty abstracts from research journal Zia-e-Tehqiq have been selected for the corpus. Future studies by adding abstracts from a wider range of journals can add new dimensions to the analysis. Though current study has investigated a set of micro structure, yet this linguistic analysis has not taken into consideration voice, authorial presence and S: hedges etc. Studies exploring these features can also bring diversity to the work.

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