Sample Synopsis for Study Reference

IGNOU MAJDM Project: MNMP 12 (MNMP012 Internet Research Project), Track A

Laid out against Stages 1 to 8 of the MNMP012 Project Manual (School of Journalism and New Media Studies, applicable from July 2026 onwards)

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Read this page first

This file shows how a Track A research proposal for the MNMP 12 Internet Research Project can be laid out, stage by stage, on one example topic. It was prepared by the ignouproject.com editorial desk (Shri Chakradhar Publication Pvt. Ltd., New Delhi) with AI assistance. Every stage heading, word limit and rule in it was checked against the MNMP012 Project Manual, and the four references were checked against their publishers' records in November 2026.

It is not for submission. The Manual says the Project Report must be your own original work, that generative AI tools may not be used to write it or to generate its review of literature, and that any use of such a tool must be declared in Annexure C. A proposal copied from this file would break those rules, and the same example topic in two students' packets is easy to spot.

Square brackets [ ] mark the facts only you can supply: your city, college, period, sample and every count. Three of the twenty reviews that Stage 5 asks for are worked here on real, verified sources; the other seventeen must come from your own reading. ignouproject.com is an independent service, not affiliated with or endorsed by IGNOU.

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Proposed title

Spotting AI-Generated Images in Social Media News Feeds: A Survey of Undergraduate Students in [City], [Month Year] to [Month Year]

The Manual asks you to settle the title by naming the central theme, the period and the location, and to narrow it as far as you can. This title names all three. Once the proposal is sent, the Manual says the topic and even its wording must not change.

Research area chosen from the Manual's Stage 1 list: area 21, Interdisciplinary Approaches, combining 8a (Artificial Intelligence) with 17 (Media and Information Literacy).

What goes in the packet

Item	Source in the Manual	Who signs or fills
This proposal (Stages 1 to 8), typed	Submission of the Project Proposal; Stage 8	You
Annexure A, Project Proposal Proforma, with the Certificate by the Supervisor	Annexure A	You fill the boxes; your supervisor signs the certificate
Annexure E, Proforma for Approval of Project Proposal (MNMP012)	Annexure E, "to be forwarded by the student"	You fill the top part; the lower part is for office use, with a line for the signature of the RC or a nominated counsellor
Where it goes	Introduction; Submission of the Project Proposal	Your Regional Centre or Study Centre, which issues the approval

Do not start Stage 9 (data collection) until the approval letter arrives. The Manual says so in as many words.

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Stage 1: Identification of the research area (800 words)

Write about the significance and relevance of the area, and why it matters to you. Refer to Units 1 and 2 of MNM-031 Internet Research Methods, as the Manual directs.

Frame. Generative image tools now let anyone make a photograph-like picture in seconds, and such pictures circulate in the same feeds where students follow news. Research on synthetic images has moved quickly: Nightingale and Farid (2022) found that faces made by an AI system were practically indistinguishable from real photographs for their participants and were rated slightly more trustworthy. [Add two or three points from your own reading on how such images reach Indian news audiences.]

Frame. The area belongs to MAJDM because it joins two strands of the programme: the platform logic studied in the second-year theory courses and the media and information literacy courses (MNM-035, MNM-036). [Explain, in your own words, why this area matters to you: your work, your teaching, your newsroom or your own feed.]

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Stage 2: Concept note on the research area (1,600 words)

Part	Words	What the Manual asks	Your frame
Background statement	400	Overall context and the Indian scenario, with a few authentic sources	[Context of AI-generated images in Indian social media news; cite the official or academic sources you actually read]
Rationale and significance	800	Build on your Stage 1 writing	[Extend Stage 1: why recognising synthetic images is now a literacy skill for students]
Justification of the study	400	(a) Why the topic needs study; (b) where it is based	[(a) the gap you see; (b) [City], [colleges or campus], and why you can reach these students easily]

The Manual expects you to be familiar with, and able to reach, the location you name. Evaluators often return proposals whose location is vague, so name the city and the institutions.

Stage 3: Mind mapping (350 words)

Draw the map in any tool and add a 350-word write-up. The Manual asks for at least 8 to 10 associated keywords. A possible starting set for this topic:

AI-generated image; synthetic media; deepfake; image verification; visual misinformation; media and information literacy; social media news feed; undergraduate students; trust in news; reverse image search.

[Your map: put the central theme in the middle, branch the keywords into three or four clusters, and write how each cluster leads to a search term in Stage 4.]

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Stage 4: PRISMA chart (350 words)

Build a keyword string from your mind map. Combine synonyms with OR, link concepts with AND, and keep two-word terms in double quotation marks, as the Manual shows. One possible string:

("AI-generated" OR synthetic OR deepfake) AND (image OR photo OR visual) AND (detection OR recognition OR verification) AND (students OR youth OR "young adults")

Box in your chart	Your number	Check
Records found in [database 1] and [database 2]	[ ]	Write each database and the search date
Duplicates removed	[ ]	Records screened = found minus duplicates
Excluded after reading title and abstract	[ ]	Give the criterion for each exclusion
Full texts that could not be retrieved	[ ]	
Excluded after reading the full text (by reason)	[ ] / [ ] / [ ]	Full texts assessed minus these = included
Included in the review	20 for Track A	The Manual asks for 20 articles in Track A and 40 documents in Track B

Every box must add up to the next one. The sample chart printed in the Manual itself does not balance, so do not copy its numbers; report your own counts. Page et al. (2021), the PRISMA 2020 statement, gives the full checklist and the revised flow diagrams if you want the standard form. Attach the bibliographic details of the final list, as the Manual asks.

Inclusion and exclusion criteria: [years searched, for example 2016 onwards as the Manual suggests; full-text access; peer-reviewed or UGC-CARE journals; language; study type].

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Stage 5: Review of literature (2,000 words: 20 articles, about 100 words each)

Three entries are worked below on real sources as a pattern. Read each original before you cite it; the remaining seventeen entries must come from your own search.

1. Nightingale, S. J., & Farid, H. (2022). The authors tested whether people can tell faces produced by a generative AI system from photographs of real people. Their participants could not reliably separate the two, and the synthetic faces were rated slightly more trustworthy, by 7.7 per cent. The study is about faces, not news images, so it shows how far realism has reached rather than how students read news. [Your note: what it means for your image task.]

2. Vaccari, C., & Chadwick, A. (2020). Using experimental treatments with a large representative UK sample, the authors examined deepfake political video. They found people were more likely to feel uncertain than to be misled, and that this uncertainty reduced trust in news on social media. The design is a useful model for testing reactions, though it studied video, not still images, and adults, not students. [Your note.]

3. Wardle, C., & Derakhshan, H. (2017). This Council of Europe report separates mis-information (false content shared without intent to harm), dis-information (false content shared knowingly to cause harm) and mal-information (genuine content shared to cause harm). It gives the vocabulary your questionnaire can use when it asks students why an image was shared. [Your note.]

4 to 20. [Your seventeen reviews, each about 100 words: what the study asked, how, what it found, and what it means for your topic.]

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Stage 6: Research trends (800 words)

The Manual asks for two trends in each of three categories, after arranging your reviews in any two of four ways (chronological, thematic, methodological, area-wise).

Category	Trend 1	Trend 2
Thematically emerging trends	[ ]	[ ]
Trends in theoretical frameworks	[ ]	[ ]
Methodological approaches	[ ]	[ ]

If your twenty reviews do not show two trends in each row, the Manual tells you to go back to Stage 3 and collect more literature.

Stage 7: Research problem, aims and objectives (800 words)

Problem statement frame. [From your Stage 6 gap: little is known about how undergraduate students in [City] recognise AI-generated images that reach them as news, and whether media and information literacy exposure is linked with better recognition.]

Aim	Objectives (neutral wording)
1. To examine how undergraduate students in [City] encounter AI-generated images in their social media news feeds	1.1 To identify the platforms on which students meet news images. 1.2 To describe how often students report seeing images they later learned were AI-generated.
2. To assess how accurately students tell AI-generated images from camera photographs	2.1 To measure recognition accuracy on a set of [24] images. 2.2 To compare accuracy across [discipline, gender and daily hours online].
3. To explore verification practices and media and information literacy exposure	3.1 To identify the verification steps students report using. 3.2 To examine the association between MIL training and recognition accuracy.

The Manual gives three readings: objectives "may range from two to four" (Part I), "a minimum of three aims" with objectives under each (Stage 7 text), and "minimum of 6 objectives" (Stage 7 table). This pattern meets the Stage 7 readings; agree the final number with your supervisor.

Hypothesis (the Manual says "if any"): $H_0$1. There is no significant difference in mean recognition accuracy between students who have and have not received MIL training.

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Stage 8: Data collection tools (800 words)

Element	Plan (fill in your own)
Design	Descriptive survey with an image-recognition task
Population and sample	Undergraduate students in [City]; [sampling method]; [n] respondents; why this number
Tool 1: questionnaire	Section A profile; B news habits; C verification practices; D MIL exposure [items adopted or developed, with source]
Tool 2: image task	[24] images, half generated by [tool] and half camera photographs with permission or an open licence; order randomised
Data collection	[Online form or in-class], [dates], consent statement on the first screen, no names collected
Analysis plan	Percentages and mean accuracy (objectives 1.1 to 2.1); t-test or chi-square by objective 2.2 and 3.2; thematic coding of open answers (3.1)
Time frame	[Weeks for pilot, collection, analysis, writing]

The Manual asks you to keep filled questionnaires, recordings or datasets until your result is declared, because the evaluator may ask for them. Data must come from your own survey: data written on assumption is fabrication.

Issues or questions to be raised

RQ1. Where and how often do students meet AI-generated news images? RQ2. How accurately can they separate them from photographs? RQ3. Which verification habits and training go with better recognition?

Expected outcome

[A short statement of what the study will add, worded without predicting results.]

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References (APA 7th edition)

Nightingale, S. J., & Farid, H. (2022). AI-synthesized faces are indistinguishable from real faces and more trustworthy. *Proceedings of the National Academy of Sciences, 119*(8), e2120481119. https://doi.org/10.1073/pnas.2120481119

Page, M. J., McKenzie, J. E., Bossuyt, P. M., Boutron, I., Hoffmann, T. C., Mulrow, C. D., et al. (2021). The PRISMA 2020 statement: An updated guideline for reporting systematic reviews. *BMJ, 372*, n71. https://doi.org/10.1136/bmj.n71

Vaccari, C., & Chadwick, A. (2020). Deepfakes and disinformation: Exploring the impact of synthetic political video on deception, uncertainty, and trust in news. *Social Media + Society, 6*(1). https://doi.org/10.1177/2056305120903408

Wardle, C., & Derakhshan, H. (2017). *Information disorder: Toward an interdisciplinary framework for research and policy making* (Council of Europe report DGI(2017)09). Council of Europe.

[Your remaining references, every one a source you actually consulted. The Manual treats fabricated or unverifiable references as malpractice.]

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If you choose Track B instead

Track B is a systematic review of 40 documents on a Media and Information Literacy topic, preferably from the Manual's list of 134 topics in eight streams. The Track B proposal is Chapters 1 to 4 with all 40 citations added at the end of Chapter 4, sent with the annexures to your RC or Study Centre for approval.

Chapter	Words (Manual table)	Your frame
1. Identification of the research area	1,000	[Topic from the 134-topic list and why it matters]
2. Concept note	1,600 (400 + 800 + 400)	[Background, rationale, justification with location]
3. Mind mapping	350	[Map and write-up]
4. PRISMA chart	350	[Chart with your own counts, ending at 40]
Citations 1 to 40		[40 documents you have read, in APA style]

Two figures in the Manual disagree for Track B: the chapter table adds to about 10,000 words, while the General Information page says about 8,000; and each review is 100 words in the table but "a minimum of 50 words" in the Chapter 5 text. Ask your supervisor or write to majdm@ignou.ac.in before you plan the length.

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