# The Importance of Research Proposal

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*Abstract :*

*Most students and beginning researchers do not fully understand what a research proposal means, nor do they understand its importance. A high quality proposal not only promises success for the project, but also impresses the Thesis Jury about the student's potential as a researcher.*

*A research proposal is intended to convince others that the student has a worthwhile research project and that s/he has the competence and the work-plan to complete it.*

*Keywords :*

*beginning researchers - worthwhile – competence- convince- quality*

## I-Introduction

Most students and beginning researchers do not fully understand what a research proposal means, nor do they understand its importance. A high quality proposal not only promises success for the project, but also impresses the Thesis Jury about the student's potential as a researcher. A research proposal is intended to convince others that the student has a worthwhile research project and that s/he has the competence

and the work-plan to complete it. Generally, a research proposal should contain all the key elements involved in the research process.   The proposal should have sufficient information to argue that the student has an important research idea, that s/he has a good grasp of the relevant literature and the major issues, and that the methodology is sound. The research proposal provides a coherent and concise outline of the intended research. This allows students to assess the originality of the proposed topic.

### II-The importance of research proposal

A research proposal is a document of usually ten to fifteen pages that informs others of a proposed piece of research. A reason to get the proposal right is that this can save the student time in the long run.

Proposals are informative and persuasive writing because they attempt to convince the reader to do something. The goal of the student is not only to persuade the reader to do what is being requested, but also to make the reader believe that the solution is practical and appropriate.

Generally speaking, the proposal must assist with the identification of the following:

- 1. The student's proposed area of research and the originality of that research;
- 2. Adequate resources for the project (for example, library materials and research expertise);
- 3. An appropriate supervisor for the project; and

- 4. The student's ability to construct and communicate a reasoned piece of writing.

The following is a guide to an effective and coherent structure for the research proposal

## 1- Title:

It should be concise and descriptive. For example,

- First page – title of the research; researcher's name; name of institute/organization where the researcher belongs; name of the supervisor, co-supervisor; date; etc

- In selecting the title, the following points should be taken care of:

-Reflect the theme of the research

-Be self-explanatory

-Be brief

-Language be simple and unambiguous

-Be specific to a   particular domain

## 2. Abstract:

The abstract is a brief summary of the entire proposal, typically ranging from 150 to 250 words. It should outline the proposal's major headings: the research question, theoretical framework, research design, sampling method, instrumentation, and data and analysis procedures. A good abstract accurately reflects the content of the proposal, while at the same time being coherent, readable, and concise.

### 3-General Introduction

It is very important in defining the scope of the project and provides an important development of the topic summarised in the abstract, and is an important opportunity for the student to demonstrate competence in the relevant area as well as familiarity with the field.

Its main purpose is to provide the necessary background or context for the research problem. How to frame the research problem is perhaps the biggest problem in proposal writing.

If the research problem is framed in the context of a general literature review, then the research question may appear uninteresting. However, if the same question is placed in the context of a very focused and current research area, its significance will become evident.

The introduction typically begins with a general statement of the problem area, with a focus on a specific research problem, to be followed by the rationale or justification for the proposed study.

### 3.1 Research questions

It may be useful to present the research as a series of research questions to be examined by the thesis. An effective structure might be to use each question as a sub-heading to a paragraph or two of elaboration and detail on the "problem" or "issue" contained in each research question. Research questions ask what relationships exist between the different variables in the study.

## 3.2 Research hypotheses

Research hypotheses are assumptions about the tentative solution of the research. These assumptions are derived on personal experience, review of the related literature, consultations/ focused interviews with the experts / professionals or combination of all.

## 3. 3 Chapter outlines

It is not necessary to have a chapter structure at this stage; however it is sometimes useful to identify the progress of the research through chapters.

The general introduction generally covers the following elements:

- 1. State the research problem, which is often referred to as the purpose of the study.
- 2. Provide the context and set the stage for the research question in such a way as to show its necessity and importance.
- 3. Present the rationale of the proposed study and clearly indicate why it is worth doing.
- 4. Briefly describe the major issues and sub-problems to be addressed by the research.
- 5. Identify the key independent and dependent variables of the experiment. Alternatively, specify the phenomenon the student wants to study.
- 6. State the research questions and/or hypotheses which are connected carefully to the literature being reviewed
- 7. Set the delimitation of the proposed research in order to provide a clear focus.

## 4- Literature Review

The literature review serves several important functions:

- 1. It demonstrates one's knowledge of the research problem.

- 2. It demonstrates the student's understanding of the theoretical and research issues related to the research question.

- 3. It shows the student's ability to critically evaluate relevant literature information.

- 4. It indicates the student's ability to integrate and synthesize the existing literature.

- 5.It provides new theoretical insights or develops a new model as the conceptual framework for the research.

- 6.It convinces the student's reader that the proposed research will make a significant and substantial contribution to the literature (i.e., resolving an important theoretical issue or filling a major gap in the literature).

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**5-Methods**

**"The methods or procedures section is really the heart of the research proposal. The activities should be described with as much detail as possible, and the continuity between them should be apparent"** (Wiersma, 1995, p. 409).

The Method section is very important because it tells how the student plans to tackle the research problem. It will provide the student's work plan and describe the activities necessary for the completion of the project. The student needs to demonstrate his knowledge of alternative methods and make the case that his approach is the most appropriate and the most valid way to address the research question.

Research methods may include experiment,  descriptive, or historical– survey, activity analysis, trend study, program evaluation, follow-up study, document (content) analysis, case study, ethnographic (field) study, comparative and correlational, data collection tools –tests/inventories, observations, inquiry forms, interviews. Where research visits are a key part of the project, it may be useful to explain the decision to undertake the research in some place. This could include the decision to work with particular individuals, for example.

## 6- Results

Obviously the student does  not have results at the proposal stage. However, he needs to have some idea about what kind of data he will be collecting, and what statistical procedures will be used in order to answer the research question or test the hypothesis.

## 7-Discussion

The student needs to communicate a sense of enthusiasm and confidence without exaggerating the merits of his

proposal. That is why the student needs to mention the limitations and weaknesses of the proposed research, which may be justified by time as well as by the early developmental stage of his research area.

## 8. Bibliography/References

The bibliography should be a short list of the key relevant literature in the area. Therefore , the student should know how to get

- **-**Related documents to be consulted/studies
- -Follow technicalities in writing bibliography/references
- -To present the bibliography in alphabetic order
- -To present it in classified manner, manuscripts, books, journals, commission reports, newspapers, etc.

## III-Conclusion

A research proposal should be viewed as more than the outcome of a formalised procedure. It tests in particular the student's ability as a researcher to conceptualise clearly and to plan and organise carefully and thoroughly. It must be done well in order to be fair to the research idea, and to **'sell'** the idea. It needs to be kept in mind however, that student plan needs not be rigidly adhered to as opportunities to refine his topic arise, unforeseen circumstances come his way or if unexpected data or sources of data arise.

The importance is to have a clear sense of direction right from the start. An exemplary proposal emerges only through a long

series of efforts, during which all aspects of the investigation from concepts, problems, methods, stages and expected results are clarified and repeatedly elaborated. Therefore, a good proposal constitutes a coherent and concrete whole in which problems, theories and methods support one another

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