M COM & PhD DEGREES

Research proposal guidelines

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A. RESEARCH PROPOSAL STRUCTURE

1. Introduction and Background to the research

2. Statement of the problem

3. Objectives of the research

3.1 Primary objectives(s)

3.2 Secondary objective(s)

4. Research questions

5. Significance of the research (Academic and practical contribution of the study)

6. Literature review

6.1 Theoretical paradigm

6.2 Research constructs

6.3 Relationships between variables

7. Research Methodology and Design

7.1 Research design and plan

7.2 Population and Sample

7.3 Data collection instruments, sources and procedures

7.4 Data analysis and procedure

 8. Outline of the proposed research report

 9. Time Frame and Budgetary considerations

10. Bibliography/List of References

IN THE CASE OF A PhD PROPOSAL THE CONTRIBUTION TO THE STUDY MUST BE INDICATED BEFORE POINT 6 AS A SEPARATE POINT.

THE PROPOSAL MUST BE SUBMITTED IN ARIAL, FONT SIZE 12, 1 ½ SPACING. ALL HEADINGS ARE 14 FONT SIZE AND SUB HEADINGS 12 FONT SIZE!!!

THE PROPOSAL SHOULD BE A MAXIMUM OF 25 PAGES (EXCLUSIVE OF THE REFERENCE LIST WHICH MUST BE A SEPARATE DOCUMENT)

B.   Research Proposal Guideline Discussion

Nr	Step	Discussion
A	**Introduction to the research**	- The purpose of an introduction is to provide a broad overview of the study. - There are usually three paragraphs involved in the introduction. - Paragraph 1 orientates the reader towards the industry/sector that experience the problem. Here the need to create the seen for the reader as to why this research is relevant. - Paragraph 2 highlights the theory relating to the topic at hand, contextualising the research at hand and specifying literature on the topic. - Paragraph 3 introduces the reader to the different components of the proposal. - NO SUB-HEADINGS TO BE USED!!!!!!!
B	**Background to the research**	- The purpose of the background is to inform the reader of the current status in the industry relating to the issue at hand. - There should be a comprehensive discussion (about one and a half pages). - Focus on the following aspects: ✓ What is the current situation in the industry at hand? ✓ What makes the research necessary?/What situation created an interest into the research? (Here you need to begin strong arguments that relate to the formulated problem

		statement).
		- Ensure that this section provides a broad focus on the current scenario in the industry, to a narrower focus on the specific companies selected to a direct linkage with the formulated problem statement.
		- PREFERABLY NO SUB-HEADINGS TO BE USED!!!!!!
C	**Statement of the problem**	- What is to be researched?
		- It must be clear to the reader how the problem statement links up with the background to the study.
		- From the problem statement the primary and secondary objective must CLEARLY flow!!!!!
D	**Objectives of the research**	**General objectives**
		Link to the primary research problem
		Specific Objectives
		Link to the secondary research problem
E	**Research questions (If any)**	- Optional
		- What are you researching in the question format?
F	**Significance of the research**	- What is the value of the research?
		- What contribution will the research make?
		Note:
		The academic and industry significance of the study needs to be discussed. A discussion on the contribution the study is making to academic literature as well as the practical significance of the study needs to be argued.
G	**Literature review**	- Different books, journals, websites or

	• **Theoretical paradigm** • **Research constructs** • **Relationship between the Variables**	dissertations/theses as reference material to illustrate what has been researched on the topic before.
	Research methodology and design	**Research Design and Plan** Qualitative vs. Quantitative research Motivate why? **Population and Sample** Who is the population and sample? Motivate why? **Data Collection instruments, sources, and procedures** Techniques applied. Motivate why? **Data analysis procedure** - How was it done? - Who did it? (For example, the statistical services of the university?)
H	**Outline of the proposed research report**	- Intended chapters ahead
I	**Time frame and budgetary considerations (Optional)**	- Indication by month of the duration of the study - Indication of the intended rand value to be spent on the research
J	**Bibliography or List of References**	- See provided guidelines

C. IMPORTANT POINTS WHEN WRITING THE METHODOLOGY SECTION

- Start the section by discussing why it is important to follow a scientific methodology approach in your study, THEN
- Indicate the relevance of empirical research to your study.

- **Research design**
- Indicate what research design is (i.e. provide a theoretical perspective on the concept "research design").

- **Research Method**
- Is the research QUANTITATIVE or QUALITATIVE in nature in terms of the methodology?
- Now, discuss what it is (i.e. provide a theoretical perspective).
- Why do you apply it to your study? (i.e. highlight and discuss the relevance of the method to your study).
- Apply the method to your study (i.e. provide a practical application of the theory to your study).

- **Research format**
- Is the research Explorative, Descriptive, Causal or a Case study method?
- Now discuss what it is (i.e. provide a theoretical perspective).
- Why do you apply it to your study? (i.e. highlight and discuss the relevance of the format to your study).
- Apply the format to your study (i.e. provide a practical application of the theory to your study.
- **Research Technique(s)**
- Which research technique(s) are you using to gather the primary data? (i.e. personal interviews or focus groups).
- Now, discuss what it is (i.e. provide a theoretical perspective).
- Why do you apply it to your study? (i.e. highlight and discuss the relevance of the technique to your study).
- Apply the technique to your study (i.e. provide practical application of the theory to your study).

- **Data Collection methods**
- Clearly indicate whether you are going to use primary or secondary data, NOW
- Indicate what primary or secondary data is (i.e. provide a theoretical perspective).
- Identify the secondary data which you are going to use for your study.
- Cross reference to the section on the research technique(s) which the primary data technique(s) you have applied to your study.

- **Population**

- Specify who or what is your population?
- If there are different components of the population, clearly indicate this.

- **Sampling procedures**
- Introduce the reader to what the terms of "sampling" and "sampling procedure" implies (i.e. provide a theoretical perspective to the terminology)

✓ *Sampling Type*
- Do you use probability or non- probability sampling?
- Now, discuss what it is (i.e. provide a theoretical perspective).
- Why do you apply it to your study? (i.e. highlight and discuss the relevance of the sampling type to your study)
- Apply the sampling type to your study (i.e. provide a practical application of the theory to your study)

✓ *Sampling technique(s)*
- Clearly indicate the size of the sample
- How was this sample selected? (e.g.: which formula was applied to calculate the size of the sample specified above)
- Now, indicate which sampling technique do you use in the study (i.e. random sampling or judgmental sampling etc.)
- Now, discuss what it is (i.e. provide a theoretical perspective).
- Why do you apply it to your study? (i.e. highlight and discuss the relevance of the sampling technique to your study)
- Apply the sampling technique top your study (i.e. provide a practical application of the theory to your study).

✓ *Data Analysis*
- Start by discussing what data analysis is (i.e. provide a theoretical perspective on the topic)
- Discuss what the data analysis process entails in terms of your study (i.e. provide a practical application of the theory to your study)
- Identify who is statistically going to analyze your data? (i.e. is it the Statkon at UJ?)
- What statistical package is to be used for the data analysis?

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