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Basics of Research Proposal

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Project Proposal

Short Questions and Answers

1. What is a research proposal?

Answer: A research proposal is simply a structured, formal document that explains what you plan to research (i.e. your research topic), why it's worth researching (i.e. your justification), and how you plan to investigate it (i.e. your practical approach).

2. What is the purpose of a research proposal?

Answer: The purpose of the research proposal (it's a job, so to speak) is to convince your research supervisor, committee, or university that your research is suitable (for the requirements of the degree program) and manageable (given the time and resource constraints you will face).

3. What are the key parts of a research proposal?

Answer: A typical research proposal consists of three key sections: introduction, literature review, and methodology of your future study.

4. What is the structure of a research proposal?

Answer: A research proposal should flow similarly to a research paper. This is the general order of how content should be structured in a research proposal (McCombes, 2019):

- Cover Page: Contains your project title, your name, your supervisor's name, program/department, institution or affiliation, and date.
- Table of Contents: Outlines the contents of your entire proposal with respective page numbers.
- Introduction: Contains background and context, a problem statement, research questions, and the rationale behind the study.
- Literature review: Contains key concepts and theories that serve as the framework for your study as well as any gaps in research.
- Research design and methods: Contains research objectives, method, and potential limitations

- Implications: Explains how the study can be applied to the existing field of knowledge on the topic.
- Reference list: A list of references used to write the proposal.
- Research schedule: A timeline of research phases and how they will achieve the objective and meet deadlines.

5. What is the length of a research proposal?

Answer: The length of a research proposal varies dramatically. A bachelor's or master's thesis proposal can be just a few pages, while proposals for Ph.D. dissertations and research funding are often very long and detailed.

6. What should the language of a research proposal be?

Answer: Instead of using common language, which is the type of language we use in normal conversations, you want to use the "language of research" or the "language of science." This means that if a term has two meanings, you should only use the term for the meaning that is the most relevant to your research. For example, if a chemist uses the word "element" in a proposal, they use it only in the context of its scientific definition. This prevents the reader from getting confused throughout the document. Avoid creating new terms in your proposal and be sure to clearly define unfamiliar words at the beginning of the proposal (Locke et al., 2007). Lastly, you also want to avoid using the first person in your proposal ("I will...") as it does not demonstrate professionalism in writing.

7. What are the goals of a research proposal?

Answer: The research proposal has a set of specific goals:

- To present and justify the need to study a research problem.
- To present a practical way in which the proposed research study should be undertaken.
- To demonstrate that the design elements and procedures being set forth to study the research problem meet the governed standards within the predominant discipline in which the problem resides.

8. What are the prerequisites of topic selection?

Answer: In a nutshell, based on Michigan-Flint University, for the purpose of selecting the best topic for your writing,

- brainstorm ideas
- choose a topic that will enable you to read and understand the literature
- ensure that the topic is manageable and that material is available
- make a list of keywords
- be flexible
- define your topic as a focused research question
- research and read more about your topic
- formulate a thesis statement

9. What questions should you ask to generate ideas?

Answer: It is important that you think through the following questions, not only to help you get your head around your idea but also in terms of refining your research question. At the end of this process, you should be able to name your research in either a concrete statement or question that can easily communicate to others the intention of your research.

- What is the aim and purpose of the research?
- Where are you going?
- Who am I to be doing this research?
- Who will this research benefit from?
- How will your research be of benefit?
- Has anyone else already answered this question?

10. What is a research approach?

Answer: A research approach is a plan and procedure that consists of the steps of broad assumptions to a detailed method of data collection, analysis, and interpretation. It is, therefore, based on the nature of the

research problem being addressed. the approach of data analysis or reasoning.

11. What are the two basic research approaches?

Answer: The two basic research approaches are quantitative and qualitative research. Both types have different purposes. Quantitative research is statistics-based. They make observations of people or events and analyze them through qualitative methods.

12. What is the process of topic development?

Answer: The research topic process includes the following:

- Brainstorming for ideas on the specific theme of the research topic
- Choose a topic that enables you to read and understand literature.
- Ensure that the topic is manageable and at the same the materials are available
- Make a list of keywords that are relevant to the research topic
- It should be clear that the research topic is not rigid, rather it is flexible
- The research topic should be defined as a focused research question
- The researcher should read more about the topic to get a clear idea
- After critical thinking, the researcher needs to formulate a research statement.

13. What resources do you need to develop a topic?

Answer: Resources needed to develop a topic can be categorized into three groups:

- Multiple resources-supervisor, course readings, class notes, Internet
- The research guide- for a particular subject created by a subject librarian

- Library resources- like CQ Researchers and subject-specific encyclopedias

14. What are the criteria for topic selection?

Answer: Most professionals and researchers follow the following criteria for topic selection:

- Past experience
- Theory testing
- Replication of previous research
- Personal interest
- Feasibility of the topic for research.

15. What are the policies for topic selection?

Answer: The following policies need to be considered by researchers before the selection of a research topic:

- Level of interest
- Level of experience
- Available information on the topic
- The interest of the audience

16. What are the categories of the title?

Titles for research can be of the following categories:

- Declarative title
- Descriptive title
- Interrogative title

17. What is a declarative title?

Answer: A declarative title states the main findings and conclusions in the research report or dissertation or research paper so that the readers can understand the research quickly and get interested in it.

18. What is a descriptive title?

Answer: A descriptive title describes the subject of the research in the form of an article, report, or dissertation but does not reveal the main conclusions.

19. What is an interrogative title?

Answer: An interrogative title introduce the subject of research in the form of a question, for example, does the financial background of learners affect their learning outcomes?

20. What are the guidelines for writing a title?

Answer:

21. What are the principles of writing a title?

Answer: The researcher should follow the following principles in writing the title:

- The title should summarize the main idea.
- It should be 12 words in length or fewer.
- The title includes words that contribute to the meaning.
- It gives away the ending.

22. How do you develop a working title?

Answer: The working title should be developed early in the research process because it can help anchor the focus of the study in much the same way the research problem does. Referring back to the working title can help a researcher reorient herself back to the main purpose of the study if she finds herself drifting off on a tangent while writing the title

23. What is a problem statement?

Answer: The problem statement establishes an interaction between two or more factors that produce a dilemma that may cause further explanation. It defines the root problem as well as other variables and constructs inherent to the problem. It identifies an area that needs further research or helps to resolve an existing problem in the field.

24. What is the purpose of a problem statement?

Answer: The purpose of a problem statement can be stated as follows:

- Introduces the readers to the importance of the topic being studied
- Places the problem into a particular context that defines the parameters of what is to be investigated
- Provides the framework for reporting the results and indicates what is probably necessary to conduct the study and explains how the findings will present the information.

25. What is a literature review?

Answer: A literature review is one of the contributing components of a research project. It finds out the relevant researched knowledge on the specific field of topic conducted by the previous researchers and how the researched knowledge and ideas can be incorporated in the intended research project.

26. What are the criteria for the literature review?

Answer: A researcher should remember the following criteria to review the literature on her research topic:

- Be clear about the research questions.
- Search widely.
- Give importance to significance over the content.
- Identify the key themes.
- Be critical.
- Identify the findings of the research.
- Use valid sources.
- Be aware of categorization.
- Be aware of the theoretical underpinnings.
- Be aware of the provenance of the source.

27. What is the purpose of a self-study review?

Answer: A self-study review increases the researcher's knowledge about the intended research topic. This also stimulates the researcher's creative thinking. Through self-study, she can understand the credibility of the research project she is going to undertake.

28. What is the purpose of the contextual review?

Answer: The purpose of Contextual review is as follows:

- Helps to link the study proposal.
- Places the research in an overall picture and context.
- Indicates gaps in knowledge.
- Finds out the need for the proposed study.

29. What is the purpose of the theoretical review?

Answer: The purpose of the theoretical review is as follows:

- It orients the researcher about different theories and conceptual frameworks that are used to describe and explain the research topics.
- The researcher knows the discussions and can assess different theories that have been used.
- The researcher can use a certain theory as her starting point with the relevant arguments.

30. What are the preconditions of the literature review?

Answer: The preconditions of the literature review are as follows.

- A list of relevant theories
- A search for relevant information
- A survey on writing on the subject
- A way of learning about the subject

- Finding dissertation topics and research methods
- Remember that the literature review is an important component of a dissertation report.