

Topic 3. Lecture. Research proposal

What is a Research Proposal?

A research proposal is a document used to propose a research project. A research proposal's main goal is to present and justify the need for a specific research, opening avenues towards a solution for the problem posed and to present plausible ways of conducting the research.

A good Research proposal must contain extensive literature reviews, with persuasive evidence that needs to exist for the proposed study, and benefits on working towards that particular issue.

The research process often begins with a very broad idea for a topic you'd like to know more about. You do some preliminary research to identify a problem.

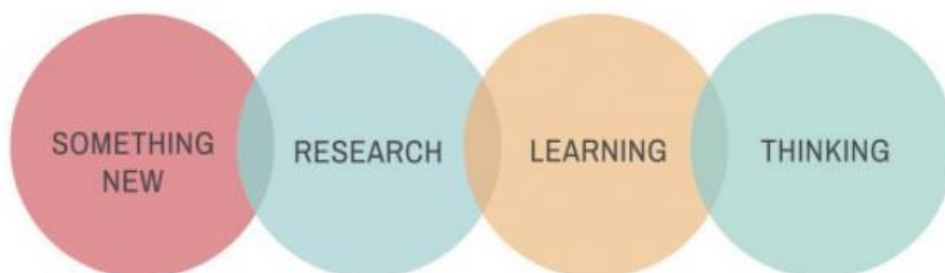
After refining your research questions, you can lay out the foundations of your research design, leading to a proposal that outlines your ideas and plans.

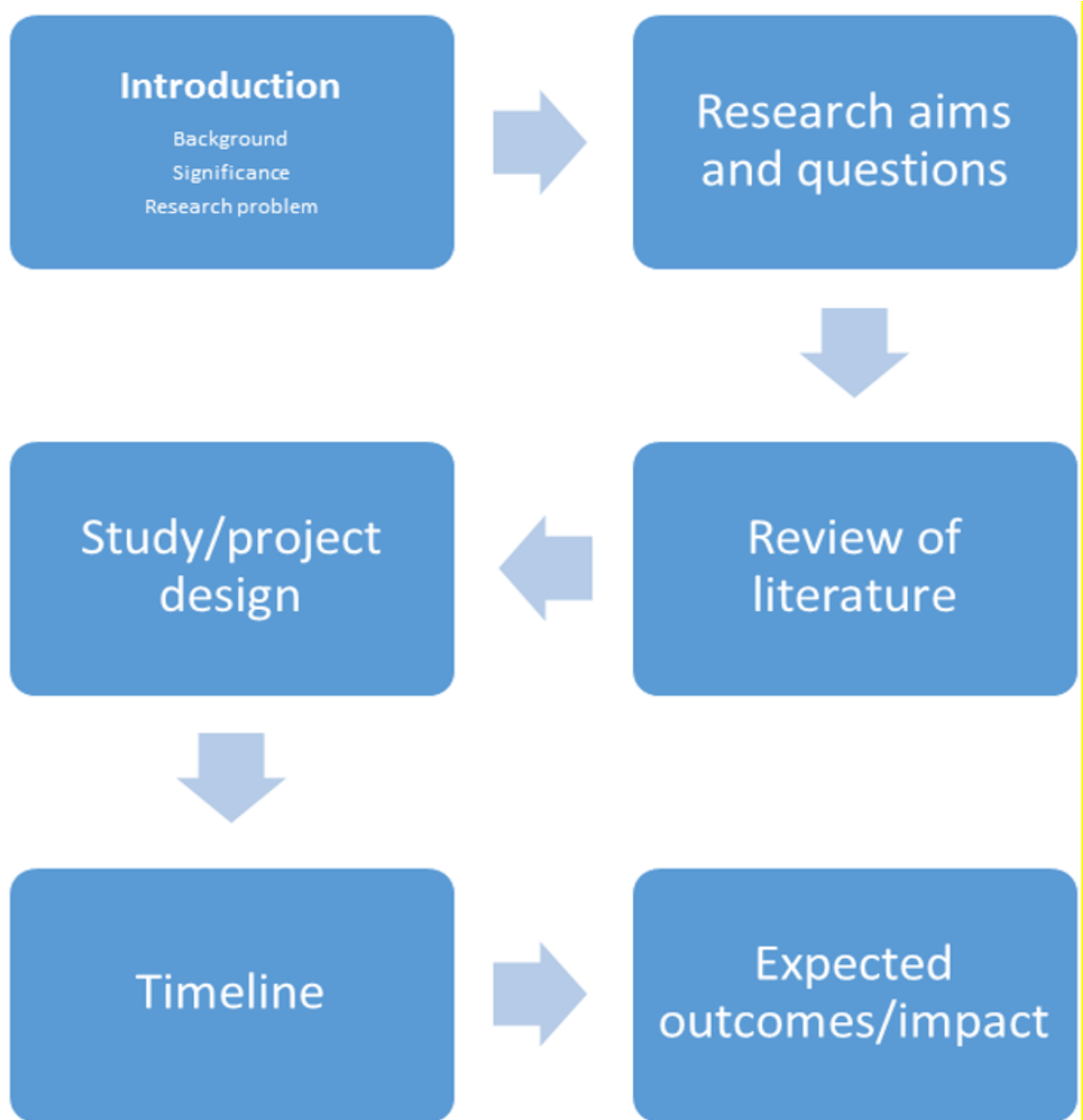
Essentials of Research Process

Any research has several stages, which follow each other, and which must pass as a researcher. These stages are relatively fixed - they exist in every quantitatively oriented research.

This schemes illustrates basic stages of the quantitative research project:

INNOVATION





The arrows in this diagram indicate the predominant sequence. In real life, however, the researcher carried out some activities in parallel.

For example, the construction of the research instrument can operate already at the stage of formulating the research problem and hypotheses - namely research problem must be formulated so as to have available appropriate research tools, otherwise the research problem is resolved.

Step 1: Choose your topic

Step 2: Identify a problem

Step 3: Formulate research questions

Step 4: Create a research design

Step 5: Write a research proposal

Finally, after completing these steps, you are ready to complete a research proposal. The proposal outlines the context, relevance, purpose, and plan of your research.

As well as outlining the background, problem statement, and research questions, the proposal should also include a literature review that shows how your project will fit into existing work on the topic. The research design section describes your approach and explains exactly what you will do.

You might have to get the proposal approved by your supervisor before you get started, and it will guide the process of writing your thesis or dissertation.

Structure of Research Proposal

The required content and structure of a research proposal varies from one field of study to another. You should therefore consult closely with your supervisor so that you are made aware of any particular requirements in your field of study. In general, however, a research proposal consists of the following elements:

- ✓ Introduction. Background, significance and research problem
- ✓ Research aims and questions
- ✓ Review of literature
- ✓ Study/project design
- ✓ Timeline
- ✓ Expected outcomes/impact

Background means that You have to introduce the research topic to your reader and explain why it is significant.

Focus here on the dominant trends and more recent developments in this field.

You have to explain Why is this topic **significant** to you? Why should others be interested in it?

You might find it helpful to think about what led you to undertake research in this area.

You might also consider how scholars in the field discuss its importance.

To set a research problem you have to identifying gaps in the academic literature in your field. You will need to demonstrate that the gap you have identified is worth exploring. This will require an understanding of key questions, problems, and developments in your chosen field of study and close consultation with your supervisor.

What is a good research question?

The criteria for a good research question vary from one field of study to another. It is therefore advisable that you consult with your supervisor and closely examine examples from other theses and published studies to get a sense of the requirements in your field. In general terms, however, a good research question should be:

Relevant: It must clearly relate to the problems or issues that the project seeks to address.

Important: It should address a key problem in the field

Clear: It should be expressed using concise language and contain no ambiguity.

Precise: What is being investigated should be clearly specified.

Researchable: The information and sources required to answer the question must exist and you must be able to access them.

The purpose of the study/project design component

In this section of your proposal you will need to answer three questions:

- What kind of data or sources will you use?
- How will you collect and manage this material?
- Which theoretical and methodological techniques will you use to interpret and analyse these data/sources?

It is important that you explain the design of your project in a clear and logical way. Your reader should be able to clearly see what you will do and how will you do it, and how this combination of data/sources and methods will allow you to address your research problem.

The purpose of the timeline component

The timeline demonstrates to the reader that your project can be completed within the period of candidature.

The timeline should consist of a series of goals that you will need to meet in order to complete all aspects of your thesis, from initial research to the final editing, with an expected date of completion for each step.

It should also contain a statement of the progress that you have made to date. The timeline should also factor in other research related activities such as conferences and publications (if applicable).

The timeline is not a static document; you will need to update it regularly.

Expected outcomes and Impact

Conclude your research proposal by stating your expected outcomes. At this stage in the research process, what arguments and conclusions do you expect to reach? Your reader will understand that these are projected outcomes based on the extent of research at the time of writing, and that they will almost certainly change in the light of further research. It is essential, however, that you give your reader a sense of what conclusions may be drawn. This will allow your reader to further assess the significance and validity of your project. It will also indicate to your reader that you have thought ahead and considered the potential outcomes and implications of your research.

Format of a research proposal

How to write your research proposal?

A universally accepted format for a research proposal is:

1. Title

The title makes the first impression. It needs to be easy to remember, and completely unique. This leaves a lasting impression on the reader.

2. Background

The second part of a research proposal leads the reader through a background to the topic which is to be researched on, and a timeline of all recent developments in the field. This section could also, highlight key points, which made you want to research, and have a list of books which mention the topic on hand.

This followed by an in-depth explanation will take your proposal a long way towards being accepted.

3. The Questions

These need to be formulated clearly, giving a slight intro followed by a direct question addressing the information you are looking for. These need to be grammatically correct and in simple language.

4. Research Methods

In the next section, you need to talk about how exactly you'll conduct the research. That is,

- the theoretical resources that will be used
- the theoretical framework for conducting the research
- proposed research method
- a comparison of advantages and limitations among the available approaches and methods to conducting the research.

5. Working plan and Schedule

Your thesis, with a projected timeline and schedule comes up next, with a projected date of completion. A brownie point here would be possible outcomes.

Alongside this, you will have to write on the execution of the research in detail.

6. *Bibliography*

The final part of your research proposal is also the most important; it gives credit to all the authors and primary data used in your research proposal, while lending the proposal validity.

Learning Outcomes

- be able to distinguish between the object and the subject of research;
- be able to determine the relevance of the topic of scientific research;
- know the structure of the research plan

References:

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