

How to write research proposal?

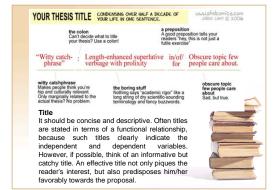
 A research proposal is intended to convince others that you have a worthwhile research project, a good grasp of the relevant literature and the major issues, and that your methodology is sound.

 Generally, a research proposal should contain all the key elements involved in the research process and include sufficient information for the readers to evaluate the proposed study.

Regardless of your research area and the methodology you choose, all research proposals must address the following questions:

- What you plan to accomplish
- Why you want to do it and
- How you are going to do it.

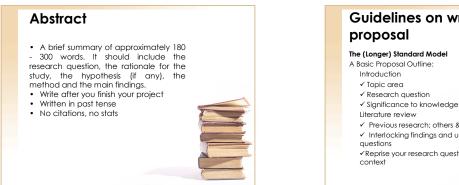




Sample Titles

- Birds of a "bad" feather flock together: The Dark Triad traits and mate choice
- The making of Darth Vader: Parent-child care and the Dark Triad
- Trolls just want to have fun
- Emotional intelligence and academic success: examining the transition from high school to university
- Implicit Statistical Learning in Real-World Environments Leads to Ecologically Rational Decision Making
- Healthy Out-Group Members Are Represented Psychologically as Infected In-Group Members





Guidelines on writing a research

The (Longer) Standard Model

- ✓ Previous research; others & yours
- ✓ Interlocking findings and unanswered
- ✓ Reprise your research question(s) in this



INTRODUCTION

- Problem Statement (basic difficulty area of concern, felt need and goal to be achieved)
- Make your case here that this is a relevant issue one that begs to be addressed.

- Purpose (goal oriented-emphasizing practical outcomes that "may" occur). May not be "So I can graduate." What do you hope/anticipate being able to do with the results of your study?
- Significance (relevance, need-may overlap with the statement of problem)
- You respond to this as if somebody said about your study, "So, what?"



INTRODUCTION

- · Assumptions (postulates)
- · What will you have to assume to conduct your study?
- If survey questions, that respondents will answer truthfully, etc.



INTRODUCTION

- Limitations and Delimitations of the Study
- A limitation is a factor that may affect the study but is not under your control such as a lack of generalizability.
- A delimitation is a factor that is under your control. You might choose to look only at teachers in a particular state or country



INTRODUCTION

- Definition of Terms (largely conceptual here-with citations; operational definitions may follow in Methodology Chapter).
- Use a citation for each term you define. Define all jargon and unfamiliar terms. When in doubt, define.
- End with specific hypotheses/predictions relating to all of the variables you have introduced or will be including



Introduction

Provide necessary background or context for your research problem.

Place your research question in the context of either a current "hot" area, or an older area that remains viable.

Provide a brief but appropriate historical backdrop along with contemporary context in which your proposed research question occupies the central stage.

Identify "key players" and refer to the most relevant and representative publications. Paint your research question in broad brushes

and bring out its significance. Provide detailed statement of intent of the research; present and justify a plan of action





REVIEW OF THE LITERATURE

- Introduction (organization of the chapter -. overview).
- Tell the reader each subheading that will be discussed, followed by "A summary will conclude this section."
 - (sections/subsections should match auestions).



An Effective Literature Review should

- Flesh out the background of your study. Critically assess important research trends or
- areas of interest. Identify potential gaps in knowledge.
- Situate the current study within a wider
 - disciplinary conversation.
 - You are entering a scholarly conversation already in progress. Show that you've been listening and have something valuable to say Illustrates the uniqueness, importance of and
- need for your particular project. Demonstrate familiarity with the topic and
- appropriate approaches to studying it.
- Justify methodological choices

Tips on drafting a literature review

- Categorize the literature (primary sources best)
 - stake out the various positions that are relevant to your project,
 - build on conclusions that lead to your project, or
- project, or demonstrate the places where the literature is lacking. Avoid "Smith says X, Jones says Y" literature reviews synthesize! Avoid including all studies on the subject. Avoid polemics, praise, and blame.



Literature Review

 Ensures that you are not "reinventing the wheel" Gives credits to those who have laid the ~ groundwork for your research

Demonstrates your understanding of the theoretical and research issues related to your

research question ✓ Shows your ability to critically evaluate relevant literature information and to integrate and

synthesize the existing literature ✓ Provides new theoretical insights or develops a

new model as the conceptual framework for your research

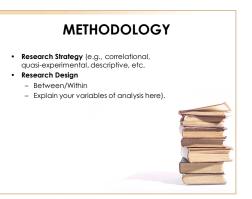
 Convinces your reader that your proposed research will make a significant and substantial contribution to the literature (i.e., resolving an important theoretical issue or filling a major gap in the literature).



Tips on Drafting Methodology

- Break down your methodology into subsections.
 - selection of participants, materials, testing environment, procedure, methods of analysis, etc.
- analysis, etc. Remember that your methods section may also require supporting literature. Anticipate and pre-empt the audience's methodological concerns.
- Acknowledge major problems.
- Reasons why methodology selected is appropriate to address research questions in study.
- Justify your approach by showing how benefits outweigh potential problems.

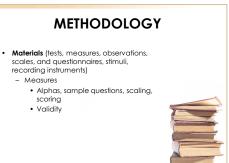


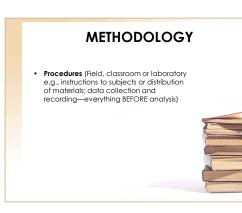


METHODOLOGY

- Population and Sample (Define both very specifically)
 Inclusion and exclusion criteria
- Recruitment methods
- Compensation

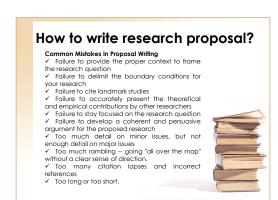












DOs and DO NOTs

- DO
 ✓ Produce/prepare a professional looking
- proposal ✓ Make it interesting ✓ Make it informative, meaningful
- Make it easy to read
 Use clear headings/sub-headings
- Be concise, precise
 Check spelling, grammar
 Consistent formatting
- Present in accurate/acceptable format ~ SYNTHESIZE
- 1 Discuss constructs in same order throughout DO NOTS
- Use words that you clearly do not
- understand and can not define



Avoid unnecessarily complex language

"Accordingly, the limited gaps of our knowledge of these effects lie in any untested variables that are subject to modification and replication. For instance, will these fallacious effects be demonstrated in different environments with different enhancing stimuli beyond only people's appearances?"

"The purpose of this study is to strengthen the predictive reliability of fallacious reasoning made by people in situations where factors tangential to content specificity influence their decisions about receptively transmitted information."



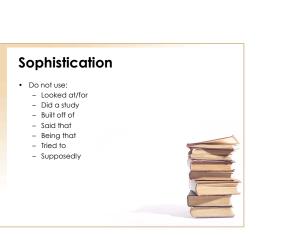
Grammatical Issues

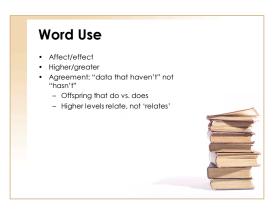
- Only
 - NOT "We only tested children under the age of 3.
 - "We tested only children under the
 - age of 3.
- That vs. which
 - "The measure that was used had been validated".
 - "The measure, which had been validated, was used here.
- Since, While
 - Use only to convey temporal information



APA Style

- Alphabetical order
- No issue #s
- And vs. &
- "et al." after first mention
- Do not write out all names if > 5
- Page #s for direct quotes





Dangling References

- This or that what???
- More than what?
- Include "that" between phrases, not "the experiments she ran" but "the experiments that she conducted"
- Be clear who "they" refers to
- "men sang more loudly than women" should be followed with "did"



Say what you mean

- Television predicted violence those who watched television more often engaged in more violent acts than those who watched television less often
- 'Partners were more aggressive' when you mean 'individuals perceived their partners to be more aggressive'
- Women who are older will be more affectionate with their partners (compared to younger women or compared to with family members?)

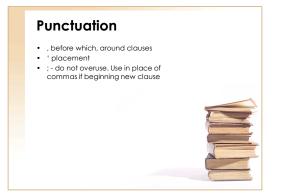


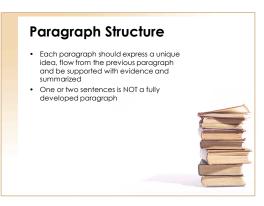
Be Concise

- Don't use "also" twice in one sentence
- Don't add "or not" after "whether"
- "challenged" vs. "made more difficult"



Avoid judgment terms • Better than - received higher scores, performed more efficiently





Style Considerations: Tone

- When conveying your attitude in
 - your writing: – Try to strike a consistently
 - confident tone.
 - Avoid an apologetic or arrogant tone.



Style Considerations: Coherence

- Move from "old" information to "new" information.
 - Put the most important information at the end of the sentence (stress position).
 - Keep the subject and verb together.
 - Start sentences with short, easily understood phrases.
 - Use "stock" transitional phrases.
 - Use pronouns and/or recycling.



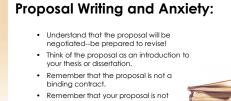
Voice

- <u>Active:</u> I will conduct the bulk of the research during the six-month fieldwork period.
- <u>Passive</u>: The bulk of the research will be conducted during fieldwork.
- Reasons to use Passive Voice: • Your field may prefer its use, especially in describing research design and
- in describing research design and experimental activities.You need to preserve coherence from
- You need to preserve coherence from sentence to sentence.
- Switching from "I" to "we" for authorship



Visual Aids

Incorporate charts, graphs, diagrams, illustrations, etc., wherever possible, permissible, or practical.



 Remember mar your proposal is not meant to limit ideas, but to help you think practically.

Talk to your advisor!

