



Writing a Productive Research Proposal: A Practical Guide for Proposal Writers in Business Administration

Farsheed Latiffee^{1,2*}

¹Lecturer, Faculty of Dentistry, Spinghar Institute of Higher Education, Nangarhar, Afghanistan.

²Head, Research Department, Spinghar Institute of Higher Education, Nangarhar, Afghanistan.

*Corresponding Author Email: farsheed.latiffee@gmail.com

ABSTRACT

A well-structured written research proposal is a key requirement when applying for research funding or applying to a committee for approval of a research project. So, this paper is a deep study of different research and articles that go into great detail about how to write a research proposal. The paper is more focused on the key elements of the research proposal and is especially beneficial and productive for academic people and university students. This paper will explain all the initial and important parts of research proposal writing starting from the title, introduction, abstract, keywords, research scope, hypothesis, literature review, research methodology, sampling, data collection, data analysis, expected result, and budget. Since it is a review piece of writing, all of the references are valid, up-to-date, and trustworthy, which will undoubtedly satisfy your needs when writing a research proposal. Based on the references and literature, I am sure this review article offers insightful explanations and guidance, which will let you know almost everything you need to know about how to develop a research proposal. As a result, writing a research proposal will enable you to conduct the research project efficiently and effectively and will pave the way for an excellent presentation of the outcomes. Additionally, this article sheds light on several crucial components of producing a research proposal. The keywords for this paper consist of Proposal, data collection, and research.

Keywords: Research Proposal, Business Administration, Proposal Writing, Proposal Components, Methodology

INTRODUCTION

According to Annersten and Wredling (2006), a well-written research proposal is essential to securing the funding required to carry out a project or study successfully. A proposal serves as the foundation for the financial decisions made by the funding organizations that support research. Some agencies need a two-stage proposal process; the first step is a succinct project outline, and the second step is the submission of a more comprehensive proposal. Application package with the necessary forms and guidelines for structuring the proposal's content. To determine whether the desired project is ethically acceptable, the ethics committee needs a research strategy. However, according to Coloney and Scheingberg (2008), there are a lot of commonalities in the types of information that are required in research proposals, and we'll discuss some of these important ones in this piece. A written document created to request funds for a particular project is called a proposal. A proposal writer, often known as a grant writer, is the one who drafts the proposal. The purpose of a research proposal is to persuade readers that you have a viable study idea and that you have the skills and work plan necessary to complete it. According to Klopper, (2008), a research proposal requires to contain all the key elements involved in the research process and include sufficient information for the readers to evaluate the proposed study. To persuade the reader of the work plans that you have a significant study concept, a proposal must contain enough essential

information. You must demonstrate that your methodology is sound and that you have a solid understanding of the key topics and pertinent literature. Your research proposal's excellence is determined by both the caliber of your proposal writing and the caliber of the project you have in mind. Simply because the proposal is inadequately worded, an excellent research study could be rejected. As a result, writing that is compelling, clear, and coherent pays reward. As required, this paper focuses on proposal writing rather than on the development of research.

In conclusion, this paper can help all the people who are interested and keen on writing a productive research proposal for any project.

LITERATURE REVIEW

A literature review plays a pivotal role in the process of writing a research proposal, especially in business administration. It provides a comprehensive overview of existing studies, theories, and methodologies relevant to the research topic. By synthesizing the current body of knowledge, researchers can identify gaps in the literature, thus justifying the need for their own research (Machi & McEvoy, 2016). In the context of business administration, a well-conducted literature review ensures that the research is grounded in prior studies, thus enhancing the credibility and relevance of the proposed study. Furthermore, it allows the researcher to refine their research question and hypothesis by building on what has already been explored in the field (Saunders, M, 2014).

The literature review serves as a foundation for developing a solid research methodology, which is crucial for any successful business administration research proposal. It helps the researcher to identify the most appropriate research design, data collection methods, and analytical techniques. A thorough review of the existing literature allows proposal writers to make informed decisions about the research methods they will use (Creswell, 2017). By understanding the strengths and limitations of previous studies, researchers can select methodologies that are well-suited to their research objectives, ensuring that their proposal is both scientifically sound and practical. In addition, the literature review demonstrates the researcher's understanding of the field and provides a theoretical framework that underpins the entire research process.

Moreover, the literature review in a research proposal helps to define the scope of the study and sets clear boundaries for the research. By reviewing existing literature, researchers can focus on the most relevant and significant aspects of the topic, which is essential for writing a concise and effective proposal (Bryman & Bell, 2022). This process not only helps in narrowing down the research questions but also enables the proposal writer to identify potential challenges and limitations associated with the study. A well-organized literature review will thus help avoid redundant research and ensure that the proposal addresses important, unanswered questions in the field of business administration.

Research Proposal

Even though there aren't many widely recognized standards for creating high-quality research proposals, this article will teach you how to create a knowledgeable, genuine, and skillful research proposal (Sudheesh & Nethra, 2016).

The research proposal is a crucial element in the process of conducting academic research, particularly in business administration. It serves as a roadmap for the entire research process, outlining the objectives, methodology, and expected outcomes of the study (Machi & McEvoy, 2016). The research proposal is essential for obtaining approval or funding for a project, as it demonstrates the feasibility and significance of the proposed study. In business administration, a well-written research proposal is crucial for establishing the relevance of the study to current industry trends and academic discourse. It allows the researcher to justify the need for the study and to ensure that the research will address a meaningful gap in the existing literature (Creswell, 2017).

Key Elements of a Business Administration Research Proposal



Figure 1. Main Parts of a Research Proposal

The Title

Always remember that the title of the study proposal should be brief and descriptive, according to (Wong & Psych, 2016). For example, titles that explicitly identify the independent and dependent variables are frequently expressed in terms of a functional connection. But if you can, come up with a title that is both educational and attention-grabbing. In addition to grabbing the reader's attention, a strong title also makes them more likely to accept the proposal.

Abstract

As noted by Wong and Psych (2016), it is the most significant and succinct synopsis of the research, spanning roughly 300 words. Therefore, it must contain the research question, the study's justification, any hypotheses, the methodology, and the key conclusions. The design, events, sample, and any tools used in the study can all be described as part of the method.

Introduction

The section of the document that gives readers background information about the study described in the paper is called the introduction. Its primary goal, however, is to present the study proposal and lay out the research framework so that readers can comprehend its connection to the research (Wilkinson, 1991).

Project Scope and Specific Aims

A successful research project requires a clearly defined scope, which is essential for guiding its completion. The scope of the study is shaped by the specific goals and objectives of the investigation, which should be aligned with the research's purpose. In particular, clinical settings and practice-based research often provide fertile ground for identifying meaningful research questions. To ensure the research is effective and impactful, the study's scope should be both realistic and relevant to the interests of the researchers, the organization, and the intended beneficiaries. As noted by Weber and Cobaugh (2008), establishing the practical relevance of the study is crucial for laying a solid foundation for the project.

Questions and/or Hypotheses

How many of the questions are relevant to normative or census-type research? Are they connected to each other? They are most commonly used in qualitative research, while their use in quantitative research is becoming more and more widespread. On the other hand, hypotheses are relevant to theoretical investigations and are typically used only in quantitative research (Kerlinger, 1979; Krathwohl, 1988). The idea that inspired the author's hypotheses must be explained to the reader. The theoretical framework must serve as the foundation for hypotheses, and the data must serve as the foundation for conclusions. The use of hypotheses in business administration research began with the application of the scientific method.

Literature Review

A literature review plays a pivotal role in the process of writing a research proposal, especially in business administration. It provides a comprehensive overview of existing studies, theories, and methodologies relevant to the research topic. By synthesizing the current body of knowledge, researchers can identify gaps in the literature, thus justifying the need for their own research (Machi & McEvoy, 2016). In the context of business administration, a well-conducted literature review ensures that the research is grounded in prior studies, thus enhancing the credibility and relevance of the proposed study. Furthermore, it allows the researcher to refine their research question and hypothesis by building on what has already been explored in the field (Saunders, M, 2014).

The literature review serves as a foundation for developing a solid research methodology, which is crucial for any successful business administration research proposal. It helps the researcher to identify the most appropriate research design, data collection methods, and analytical techniques. A thorough review of the existing literature allows proposal writers to make informed decisions about the research methods they will use (Creswell, 2017). By understanding the strengths and limitations of previous studies, researchers can select methodologies that are well-suited to their research objectives, ensuring that their proposal is both scientifically sound and practical. In addition, the literature review demonstrates the researcher's understanding of the field and provides a theoretical framework that underpins the entire research process.

Moreover, the literature review in a research proposal helps to define the scope of the study and sets clear boundaries for the research. By reviewing existing literature, researchers can focus on the most relevant and significant aspects of the topic, which is essential for writing a concise and effective proposal (Bryman & Bell, 2022). This process not only helps in narrowing down the research questions but also enables the proposal writer to identify potential challenges and limitations associated with the study. A well-organized literature review will thus help avoid redundant research and ensure that the proposal addresses important, unanswered questions in the field of business administration.

Research Methodology

Choosing the right methodology and ensuring its alignment with the business problem is critical. Many studies (Saunders et al., 2015; Creswell, 2017) emphasize the importance of selecting appropriate research designs, especially when conducting applied business research.

Ethical considerations are fundamental in the methodology of any research proposal. As Marshall and Rossman (2014) point out, adhering to ethical principles is vital in maintaining the integrity of the research process. This involves obtaining informed consent from participants, ensuring confidentiality, and avoiding conflicts of interest. In business administration research proposals, ethical issues often arise when dealing with sensitive data, such as financial information or employee performance. Ensuring ethical integrity is crucial in building trust with participants and stakeholders and in ensuring the credibility of the research outcomes.

Research methodology is a critical aspect of any academic proposal, particularly in the context of business administration. A well-structured methodology is necessary to ensure the research is both scientifically rigorous and practically relevant. It provides a systematic plan for conducting the research, from formulating research questions to selecting the methods of data collection, analysis, and presentation of results. This section expands on the key elements of research methodology in the context of writing productive research proposals, specifically within the field of business administration (Creswell, J. W. (2017).

Sampling

The process of choosing a sample from a big population or from an individual for a particular type of research is known as sampling. According to Bhardwaj (2019), sampling has a variety of benefits and drawbacks. Sometimes we wonder why sampling is necessary. The reason is that sampling is used in research studies because surveying the entire population is too costly and time-consuming. External validity, or the degree to which study results may be extrapolated to individuals or circumstances not included in the study, depends heavily on sampling. A sample must be selected from a population using one of various probability sampling plans in order for the results to be validly generalized to that population. A probability sample is one in which the likelihood of each element in the population being included in the sample must be prioritized. At some point, random sampling is a component of all probability samples (Shavelson, 1988).

Types of Sampling

Let's first define the term "sample" before moving on to the various types of sampling. In research terminology, a sample is a collection of individuals, things, or items drawn for assessment from a broad population (Bhardwaj 2019). So, sampling is done to achieve reliable data. For example, it would be exceedingly challenging to inspect every chip in a factory to determine whether they are all okay. Therefore, we will select a random chip and verify that it has the right size, shape, and taste. As a result, sampling is a crucial and significant research tool when the population is large. This leads to the division of sampling into two categories.

Data Collection

Gathering data draws attention to the most crucial aspect of your study. Describe the overall strategy for gathering the data. Questionnaires, survey administration, procedures, interviews, and observation techniques may all fall under this category. Provide a clear explanation of the field controls that will be used. Talk about how you got it, if applicable (Pajares et al., 2007).

Data Analysis

Give precise labels to the methods you want to employ, such as Analysis of Variance (ANOVA), Multivariate

Analysis of Covariance (MANCOVA), Hierarchical Linear Modeling (HLM), ethnography, case study, and grounded theory. Provide a reasonable description of the coding techniques if they are to be employed. In this case, Pajares et al. (2007), advise that if you triangulate, thoroughly describe your methodology. Give the reader your specific goals and the justifications for them. This aids both you and the reader in assessing the decisions you made and the steps you took. Briefly describe any analytical tools you plan to employ, such as Ethnograph, NUDIST, AQUAD, SAS, SPSS, and SYSTAT. Give a thorough justification for your choice of design, technique, and analyses.

Expected Result

It is clear that there are no outcomes at the proposal stage, claim Wong and Psych (2016). To answer your research question or test your hypothesis, you must, however, have a basic understanding of the type of data you will be gathering and the statistical techniques you will employ.

Developing Budget

When thinking about the project's scope, duration, and relevance, the investigator should start thinking about the budget. According to Ingersoll and Eberhard (1999), a project's budget often grows along with its scope. One of two methods is typically used to prepare budgets. According to one system, the investigator must create the budget with varying degrees of assistance from the fiscal personnel of the organization. Only if the investigator is somewhat conversant with spreadsheet programs like Excel will this be feasible. A well-designed budget template can be quite helpful. Typically, these computer files with built-in formulas are located at the administration office of a sponsored program. This method has the benefit of giving the investigator complete control over the scope, specifics, and speed of budget preparation (Higdon & Topp, 2004).

Sivabalan et al., (2009), state that although budgets are frequently utilized, they are criticized, mostly for performance evaluation purposes. We discover that companies view budgets as more crucial for planning and control than for evaluation, which justifies their continuous usage in spite of critiques based on assessment. Since the majority of current budget research focuses on evaluation, this finding is particularly significant as it raises the possibility of a gap between budget research and practice. For the same reasons, we discover that most firms employ rolling forecasts in conjunction with the yearly budget.

Citation

You need to cite any statement within the text while you are copying it. It acknowledges within your text the document from which you have obtained your information (Fathi, 2021).

Conclusion

The conclusion of a research proposal plays a crucial role in summarizing the overall intent and significance of the study. It is not merely a final section, but a space to reaffirm the objectives, methodology, and expected outcomes of the proposed research. The conclusion provides the reader with a final impression of the research's potential contribution to the field, particularly within business administration. A well-crafted conclusion demonstrates the alignment of the proposed research with existing knowledge, while also suggesting future directions or areas for further exploration. As noted by Creswell (2014), a clear and concise conclusion helps solidify the coherence of the proposal and underscores its relevance to the research community and practical applications.

Styles of References

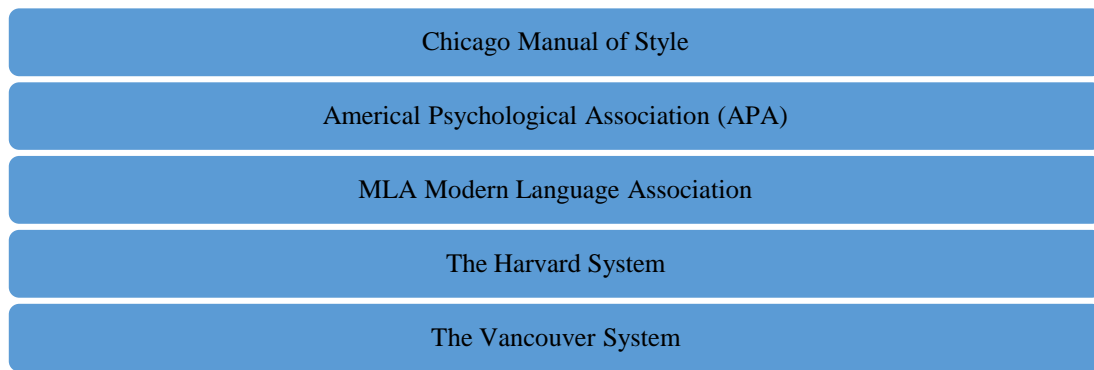


Figure 2. Reference Styles

Some Useful Guiding Principles for Research Proposal Writers

According to Ayudita (2021), there are several useful guidelines that can help you prepare your research proposal effectively and satisfactorily.

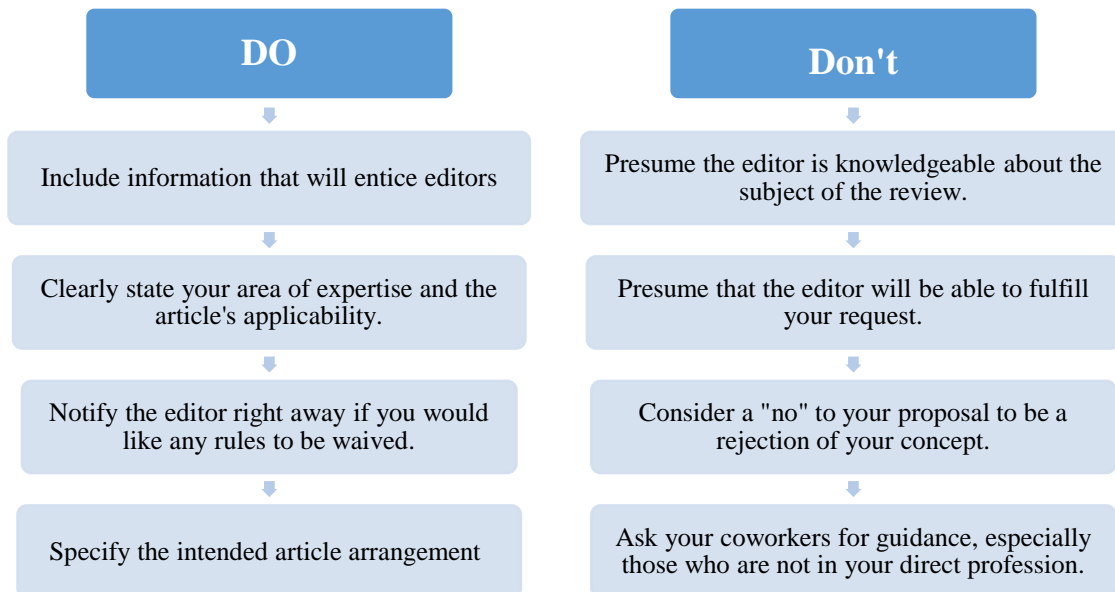


Figure 3. Useful Guidelines for Research Proposal

CONCLUSION

The conclusion of a research proposal plays a crucial role in summarizing the overall intent and significance of the study. It is not merely a final section, but a space to reaffirm the objectives, methodology, and expected outcomes of the proposed research. The conclusion provides the reader with a final impression of the research's potential contribution to the field, particularly within business administration. A well-crafted conclusion demonstrates the alignment of the proposed research with existing knowledge, while also suggesting future directions or areas for further exploration. As noted by Creswell (2017), a clear and concise conclusion helps solidify the coherence of the proposal and underscores its relevance to the research community and practical applications.

Moreover, the conclusion serves as an opportunity for the researcher to address any potential limitations of the study, ensuring transparency and credibility. It provides a balanced overview of what the research aims to

accomplish and how it could influence current practices or theory within business administration. By articulating the potential impact and practical implications of the proposed study, the conclusion reinforces the value of the research and its contribution to the body of knowledge in the field. According to Creswell (2017), an effective conclusion ensures that the research proposal is not only scientifically rigorous but also practically relevant, which is essential in business administration studies.

REFERENCES

- Annersten, M., & Wredling, R. (2006). How to write a research proposal. *European diabetes nursing*, 3(2), 102-105. approaches. Sage Publications.
- Ayudita, P. A. (2021). *Optimalisasi Thermal EOR dengan Injeksi Surfactant*.
- Bell, E., Bryman, A., & Harley, B. (2022). *Business research methods*. Oxford University Press.
- Bhardwaj, P. (2019). Types of sampling in research. *Journal of Primary Care Specialties*, 5(3), 157-163.
- Creswell, J. W., & Creswell, J. D. (2017). *Research design: Qualitative, quantitative, and mixed methods*
- Higdon, J., & Topp, R. (2004). How to develop a budget for a research proposal. *Western Journal of Nursing Research*, 26(8), 922-929.
- Ingersoll, G. L., & Eberhard, D. (1999). Grants management skills keep funded projects on target. *Nursing Economic\$, 17(3)*.
- Kerlinger, F. N. (1980). Analysis of covariance structure tests of a criterial referents theory of attitudes. *Multivariate Behavioral Research*, 15(4), 403-422.
- Klopper, H. (2008). The qualitative research proposal. *Curationis*, 31(4), 62-72.
- Krathwohl, D. R. (1988). *How to prepare a research proposal: Guidelines for funding and dissertations in the social and behavioral sciences*. (No Title).
- Machi, L. A., & McEvoy, B. T. (2016). *The literature review: Six steps to success*.
- Marshall, C., & Rossman, G. B. (2014). *Designing qualitative research*. Sage publications.
- Pajares, F., Johnson, M. J., & Usher, E. L. (2007). Sources of writing self-efficacy beliefs of elementary, middle, and high school students. *Research in the Teaching of English*, 42(1), 104-120.
- Saunders, M. (2014). *Research Methods for Business Students* (6th edn).
- Shavelson, R. J. (1988). The 1988 Presidential Address Contributions of Educational Research to Policy and Practice: Constructing, Challenging, Changing Cognition. *Educational researcher*, 17(7), 4-11.
- Sivabalan, P., Booth, P., Malmi, T., & Brown, D. A. (2009). An exploratory study of operational reasons for budget. *Accounting & Finance*, 49(4), 849-871.
- Sudheesh, K., Duggappa, D. R., & Nethra, S. S. (2016). How to write a research proposal? *Indian journal of anaesthesia*, 60(9), 631-634.
- Weber, R. J., & Cobaugh, D. J. (2008). Developing and executing an effective research plan. *American journal of health-system pharmacy*, 65(21), 2058-2065.
- Wong, P. T., & Psych, C. (2016). *How to write a research proposal*.