

What should be contained in your research proposal?

A proposal is a roadmap to the intended research work. A well written proposal signals to credibility of your research idea and research readiness. The proposal should convey clearly your understanding of the research issue and objectives, including why it is being studied, how it will be studied, what methods will be used, what the contribution will be, and characteristics of data and sampling approach. A well thought-out and systematically written proposal is an attestation to your research aptitude. You should focus on the following components while preparing the proposal.

1. Introduction

- Background to research topic
- Statement of research problem
- Significance of research

2. Literature review

- A review of literature relating to or in periphery of research topic
- Assess your research question/problem in context of literature surveyed

3. Methodology

- Research design
- Theoretical framework/conceptual framework
- Your modeling approach/method
- Data required/sampling approach

4. Expectation

- Expected outcome of your research
- How objectives will be addressed
- Tentative Implication of your findings

Introduction:

This should contain a background to the research issue (question or problem) or discovery you are embarking, it should be pertinent to your research issue, just by reading it we should be able to anticipate what research problem (in Statement of the Problem) you would be highlighting on (write one to one and half page on it).

Statement of the problem:

Here you should mention what specific issue you will examine and why (why doesn't mean nobody has done it!). What event, situation, observation transpired you to pursue the issue as worthy of research or identify a gap in research carried out so far. This is probably the most important part of your proposal. Clarity on this helps a researcher derive hypothesis and objectives easily and makes the examiners see relevance and usefulness of the research agenda (half a page).

Significance of research:

This part should address what value/knowledge this research will add, what is its importance, its implication to firms, industry, business, society, economy etc (about half a page).

Review of Literature:

Do a literature survey of a couple of journal articles to find out about the state of knowledge in the area of your research issue. This should help you/us observe the research gap you are addressing and potential contribution to the existing literature (about a page).

Research methodology:

This should provide a brief discussion on your research design, nature of the research - qualitative, quantitative; survey, exploratory, observational, causal etc, and why this particular design is suitable. This should also contain theoretical framework, analytical framework, data collection approach, sample characteristics (about a page)

Expectation:

What results are expected in line of what is accomplished so far theoretically and empirically in existing literature, what value addition from the research outcome (about half a page) is expected and its implication.

Limit the research proposal between 1500 to 3000 words with type in double space using Times New Roman Font Size 12. You are also expected to make a presentation on your research proposal. Also prepare slides for presentation.