

MLIS semester II
(paper – 1)
Research Methods and Statistical Techniques
Topic – Designing of Research Proposal
e-content

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Designing of Research Proposal

Research plan has been used synonymously with proposal and synopsis. They refer to a blue print of your research. A research proposal is thus, a document to our plans and ideas of carrying out our research. It is different from research design. Research design is also a strategy of how you are you going to conduct your research. But it precedes research plan. It can be formulated only when research design has been decided. In fact, research design helps to formulate research plan. It is the document that describes all the decisions that have been taken in the design stage plus the administrative decisions concerned with your research. It presents systematically everything starting with the title of project to the tentative structure of your thesis.

FUNCTIONS

The functions of a research plan are to:

- _ give directions on what needs to be done, when and how and in what order;
- _ provide a route from stating the topic to finalising the results;
- _ enable to evaluate your progress during research;
- _ define your topic to limit its scope; and
- _ prove to your supervisor that you have gone into the fine details of your topic and will be able to conduct research.

STRUCTURE

1. **Title** :- The title of your study (dissertation or project) is the first part of your plan. We should ensure that the title is self-explanatory. It should convey what we intend to do. There should be no ambiguity. It should be clear, precise, and grammatically correct. It should not be broad or more specific than what we plan to study in the research.
2. **Introduction** :- The introduction provides background information to the topic of your study. It includes a thorough review of what is available related to your area of study. Try to clarify the conceptual area zeroing down towards the topic.
3. **The Problem** :- Introduction and the problem could be visualised as occurring together in continuation as background to the study. The difference is that introduction is more general as compared to the problem. The problem starts with where introduction has left the topic. It is continuation of introduction, focusing specifically

on the topic. Why have you chosen the topic? Is there any need to conduct such studies? etc.

4. **Scope**:- After the problem has been stated, it is important to explain its scope also. In the scope one should indicate to what extent one intends to probe the topic. He should clarify the scope as far as the subject content is concerned as well as the geographical area is concerned. There should also be a submission of the scope regarding the coverage of the time period. The scope must give an indication of the limitations of the topic.
5. **Objectives** :- After the problem, the plan should state the objectives of your study. This is one of the most important parts of your plan. It helps to know what you intend to do. Anyone interested in your study gets to know the whole picture from just the objectives. We can very well judge the importance of objectives. Therefore, it is important that they are stated in a crisp language so that are clear and unambiguous. Moreover, they should convey what is the intended outcome of your study.
6. **Hypotheses** :- It is an assumption of relationships between the dependent and independent variables. Hypotheses provide the researcher a line of action along which he/she moves to find out answers to the problem he/she is working on. This is tested during the course of study.
7. **Review of Related Literature** :- After the hypotheses are stated, a brief review of literature is presented. It helps the researcher to know and assimilate what others have already done in the field. It gives him the direction of movement into his research.
8. **Research Design** :- The plan of research from the point of operationalisation of hypotheses to the analysis of data is

presented as research design. The research design is the blueprint of your nature of investigation, data collection methods to be used, number of contacts to be made with the subjects, and the reference period of study. Broadly your nature of investigation can be either exploratory, or descriptive, or experimental. It depends upon your topic which one you choose.

9. **Tentative Chapterisation** :- The physical structure of the research report is also presented in the research plan as tentative chapterisation. What will be the chapters in your thesis are presented here.

10. **Limitations** :- Every research study has limitations. These could be from the point of view of the contents (coverage of the subject), geographical area, time period of study, etc.