



Research Proposal Guidelines – 2024

Prepared by

Research & Extension Committee

United College

Kumaripati, Lalitpur

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Outlines

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Overview

For students at United College pursuing a Master of Business Studies (MBS) program, the research proposal acts as a foundational blueprint for their dissertation, detailing the study's objectives, methodology, and expected contributions to the field after selecting a dissertation topic. This document is crucial for organizing and guiding the research process, ensuring that the study is feasible, relevant, and systematically structured. Students are eligible to write their research proposals during or after the third semester of their MBS program, allowing them time to refine their ideas and align their research with their academic and professional goals. Crafting a well-defined proposal helps in clarifying research questions and hypotheses, which are essential for maintaining focus and coherence throughout the dissertation. Additionally, the proposal enables students to outline their research methodology, including data collection and analysis techniques, which helps in anticipating potential challenges and ensuring methodological rigor. It also serves as a key tool for obtaining approval from academic advisors or review committees, who evaluate the proposal's feasibility and scholarly value. Furthermore, a comprehensive proposal establishes a clear timeline and budget, which are crucial for effective resource management and timely completion of the dissertation.

Purpose

Research proposal aims to provide a structured plan for completing a dissertation after selecting a topic. Submitting this proposal is mandatory and must be defended at the college. Students are then allowed to proceed with their dissertation, but they must wait six months after the proposal submission before they can submit their final work.

Evaluation

The evaluation process for research proposals involves several key steps. First, students submit a hard copy of their research proposal to the evaluation committee, composed of faculty members. Each student then presents their proposal in a 15-minute PowerPoint presentation, summarizing their problem statement, research objectives, methodology, expected outcomes, and working plan of MBS dissertation. Following the presentations, the evaluators assess the quality and feasibility of each proposal. They decide whether to approve the proposal for further development or request revisions. The committee provides detailed comments and feedback on the proposals, highlighting strengths, weaknesses, and areas for improvement. This feedback is crucial for refining the research proposal before it moves forward.

Procedure

The procedure for writing a research proposal by MBS program students starts with selecting a research topic, submitting relevant research articles, participating in writing

the proposal according to RMC guidelines, submitting it to the college, preparing and defending the proposal, and, if required, revising and resubmitting it based on feedback.

1. **Topic selection:** Once students of the MBS program have carefully selected a research topic that is both relevant and feasible, and aligns with their academic interests and career goals, they can proceed to the next step. This initial choice sets the foundation for the entire research journey.
2. **Submitting research articles:** After finalizing the topic, students must gather and submit at least three research articles related to it. These articles should provide valuable insights and context, supporting the significance of the research and demonstrating its relevance. This ensures the proposal is built on a solid foundation of existing knowledge.
3. **Participation in training:** With the topic and supporting articles in hand, students should actively participate in the training of research proposal writing conducted by Research Management Committee (RMC). They need to familiarize themselves with the proposal writing guidelines provided by the RMC. Adhering to these guidelines is crucial for structuring the proposal effectively and meeting institutional standards.
4. **Following proposal guidelines:** Once students begin drafting their proposal, they must meticulously follow the specific guidelines outlined by the RMC. These guidelines typically cover aspects such as format, structure, and required content. Ensuring compliance with these guidelines helps in presenting a well-organized and professional proposal.
5. **Writing the proposal:** After adhering to the guidelines, students should proceed to write their research proposal. The document should include all essential sections: an introduction to the topic, a literature review, clearly defined research objectives, a detailed methodology, and expected outcomes. The writing should be clear, detailed, and well-organized to effectively communicate the research plan.
6. **Submitting to College:** Upon completion of the proposal draft, students need to submit it to the college by the specified deadline. It is essential to ensure that the submission includes all required documents and forms to avoid delays in the evaluation process. Timely submission is critical for keeping the research on track.
7. **Preparing for proposal defense:** After submitting the proposal, students should begin preparing for the proposal defense. They need to develop a comprehensive presentation that summarizes the research proposal, highlighting key aspects such as

research objectives, methodology, and anticipated contributions. Rehearsing the presentation is important to effectively communicate ideas and respond to any questions or feedback from the evaluation committee.

- 8. Defense of proposal:** During the proposal defense, students will present their research plan to the evaluation committee usually of faculty members. This is an opportunity to showcase the proposal, address any questions, and demonstrate the viability of the research. The committee will assess the proposal based on its clarity, feasibility, and potential contribution to the field.
- 9. Rewrite proposal and resubmit:** If evaluators request revisions, students must revise their proposal based on the feedback and suggestions provided. Addressing any identified weaknesses or areas for improvement is crucial. Once the necessary changes have been made, the revised proposal should be resubmitted for further review. This iterative process ensures that the proposal meets the required standards and is well-prepared for the next stages of research.

Technical guidelines

The technical guidelines provided outline the formatting requirements for a document, ensuring consistency and readability. These guidelines help maintain a uniform appearance throughout the document, ensuring that it meets academic or professional standards.

S/N	Particular	Descriptions			
1	Chapter heading	Font: Times New Roman	Size: 16	Align: Center	
2	Sub-heading	Font: Times New Roman	Size: 14	Align: Left	
3	Body part	Font: Times New Roman	Size: 12	Align: Justification	
4	Margin	Left: 1.5	Right: 1	Top: 1	Bottom:1
5	Spacing:	1.5			
6	Alignment	Justification			
7	Page number	Font: Arabic number	Size: 12	Align: Upper right corner	

Outlines of research proposal

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Title page: The title page should include the title of the proposal, your name, the name of your institution, and the date of submission. It serves as the cover of your document, providing the reader with the first impression of your work.

Table of contents: The table of contents should list all sections and sub-sections of the proposal, along with corresponding page numbers. This will help readers navigate the document easily and find specific sections quickly.

1. **Background of the study:** The background of the study should provide an overview of the research topic, including its historical context and significance. This section sets the stage for the research by explaining why the topic is important.
2. **Problem statement:** The problem statement should clearly articulate the research problem and its implications. It identifies the gap or issue that the study aims to address and explains why it is essential to find a solution or answer.
3. **Research questions:** The research questions should be listed in this section, specifying the specific questions the study seeks to answer. These questions guide the direction of the research and define its scope.
4. **Objectives of the study:** This section outlines the objectives that the study seeks to achieve. It should be clear and specific, detailing what the research aims to accomplish. Objectives should be based on research questions.
5. **Hypothesis (if any):** If the study includes hypotheses, they should be stated in this section. A hypothesis is a tentative explanation or prediction that can be tested through research. Hypotheses are derived from literature and theories.
6. **Rationale of the study:** The rationale explains the importance and necessity of the research. It justifies the study by highlighting its potential contributions to the field and its relevance to current issues or gaps in the literature.
7. **Literature review (LR):** The LR summarizes existing research related to the topic, identifying key findings and gaps. This section demonstrates understanding of the current state of knowledge and how study will build on from previous work.
8. **Theoretical framework:** This section describes theories that will guide the research. Theoretical framework provides a foundation for the study, helping to explain the relationships between variables and guiding the research design and analysis.
9. **Research gap:** The research gap identifies the specific gaps in the current literature that the study will address. It highlights areas where previous research has been insufficient or where new insights are needed.
10. **Research methodology**
 - 10.1 **Research design:** This section should detail how the research will be conducted and organized. It includes exploratory, descriptive, correlational, casual-comparative, explanatory, and experimental research design.

10.2 Population and sample, and sampling design: Define the population, sample size, and sampling technique to be used. This section should provide details on who will participate in the study and how they will be selected.

10.3 Nature of sources of data, and the instrument of data collection: Specify the sources of data (primary or secondary) and the instruments (interview, questionnaire, observation) used for data collection.

10.4 Methods of data analysis: This section should outline the techniques that will be used to interpret and make sense of the data such as descriptive (Mean, S.D. etc.) and inferential (correlation, regression, hypothesis test) statistics.

10.5 Research framework and definitions of variables: Provide the conceptual framework and define key variables involved in the study. This section should explain how the variables are related and how they will be measured.

11. Time schedule plan of report writing: This section should provide a detailed schedule, outlining when each part of the research process will be completed to ensure timely submission of the report.

References: List all references cited in your proposal following APA style. This section should include all sources used in the preparation of the proposal, demonstrating the breadth and depth of your research.

Practice questions for research proposal defense

Problem statement

1. Why did you choose this specific problem for your research?
2. How does your problem statement reflect gaps in current knowledge or practice?

Research questions

3. How do your research questions contribute to solving the identified problem?

Research objectives

4. How each objective aligns with your research questions?
5. How will meeting these objectives advance the field?

Rationale of the study

6. How does your study contribute to existing knowledge or practice?

Limitations of the study

7. What potential limitations have you identified in your study?

Hypotheses

8. What are the theoretical or empirical bases for these hypotheses?

Literature review

9. How does your literature review support the need for your research?

Theoretical framework

10. Which theoretical framework is guiding your study?

11. Why is this theoretical framework appropriate for your study?

Conceptual framework

12. What are the key concepts in your conceptual framework?

13. How do these concepts relate to your research questions and objectives?

14. What visual or diagrammatic representation have you used to illustrate this framework?

Research gap

15. What specific gap in the research literature does your study address? Why is it important to address this gap?

Research approach

16. What research approach (qualitative, quantitative, or mixed-methods) have you chosen and why?

Research design

17. What is the overall design of your study (e.g., experimental, descriptive, exploratory)? How does your design align with your research questions and objectives?

Population and sample

18. Who is/are your study population?

19. Why is this population appropriate for your research?

20. What is the sampling frame for your study?

21. What is your sample size, and how did you determine it?

22. What statistical methods or calculations did you use to estimate the sample size?

23. How does your sample size impact the generalizability of your results?

24. What sampling technique have you used (e.g., random, stratified, convenience)? Why did you choose this sampling technique?

Data collection instrument

25. What instrument(s) will you use for data collection? How do the instruments align with your research objectives?

Reliability and validity of instrument

26. How will you ensure the reliability and validity of your data collection instruments?

Ethical considerations

27. What ethical issues might arise in your research, and how will you address them?

Data analysis

28. What methods will you use for data analysis?

29. How do these methods align with your research questions and hypotheses?

30. What software or tools will you use for data analysis?
31. What types of descriptive statistics will you use to summarize your data?
32. What type of inferential statistics will you use for analysis of data?
33. Which statistical techniques will you use to assess correlation?
34. Which type of regression analysis will you conduct?
35. How will you interpret the results of your regression analysis?
36. How will you test your hypotheses?
37. What criteria will you use to determine whether to accept or reject each hypothesis?

Findings / expected outcomes of the study

38. What are the anticipated outcomes of your study? How will these outcomes contribute to the field?

Recommendations

39. What recommendations do you plan to make based on your findings?

References

40. Which referencing style would you use for referencing and citations of your study?

Appendix – 1

.....<Title, Capital letter>.....

A Research Proposal

By

<Name of student>

Registration No:

Exam Roll No:

To

United College

Affiliated to Tribhuvan University

Kumaripati, Lalitpur

In partial Fulfillment of the Requirements for the Degree of

Master of Business Studies (MBS)

<August, Year>

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