

## RESEARCH PROPOSAL GUIDELINES

Research proposal is a preliminary plan of the doctoral dissertation. Your research proposal should include the following parts:

- Introduction
- Analysis of the current state of the research in the research area
- Research problem
- Aim
- Objectives
- Scientific contribution
- Practical significance
- Research methodology
- Research limitations
- References

### **Title**

The title should be concise and define the essence and scope of the planned research. It should include the main keywords that may reflect dependent and independent variables and the relationship between them, researched process and / or certain contextual factors which are intended to study.

### **Introduction**

The introduction should include topic relevance and significance in the modern research context as well as emphasize research contribution. The topicality must highlight main aspects that make the topic relevant in contemporary research and practice.

### **Analysis of current state of research in the research area**

This part shall show that the intended research is grounded on past works and is based on a deep and logical analysis of scientific literature and previous research.

The aim of this part is to disclose the existing level of knowledge in the research area. The author is expected to analyse main studies performed previously and to reveal the essential contradictions, misinterpretations of data, theoretical and practical problems that have not been tested yet empirically and to identify remaining gaps in the chosen area. The author is expected to prove why an additional study is needed. It is necessary to provide an overview of key sources, disclosing main studies, streams of thought, theories and concepts. This part should be cohesive with a clear line of argument, and should be guided by the same underlying principles and methods as literature review but in more concentrated form.

The literature analysis should be based on scientific literature i.e. scientific articles (from scientific databases), monographs, books, dissertations and research reports. Textbooks, dictionaries, encyclopaedias, non-scientific periodicals should be avoided.

### **Research problem**

Research problem is based on the literature analysis and identified research gaps. The research problem can be formulated in the form of statement or question.

### **Research aim**

Research aim refers to the essential thesis goal. It must be formulated concisely, in one sentence and should be closely linked with the title and reflect the essential results that have to be achieved.

### **Research objectives**

Research objectives should specify the key stages of the research that will lead to the final goal. Accurately formulated objectives enable the author properly perform theoretical and empirical research and avoid deviation from the research aim. Objectives are usually formulated using infinitive verb form.

Thesis title, research problem, aim, and objectives shall be closely interrelated.

### **Scientific contribution**

Scientific contribution demonstrates major contribution of the intended research to the existing knowledge in research area. Scientific contribution may include: a contribution to the theory development, new or improved

research methodology, empirical evaluation of other authors theoretical propositions, new or improved methods of research results analysis (Davis and Parker, 1997).

#### ***Practical significance***

Practical significance highlights the practical value of research to the modern society, management practice and its development.

#### ***Research methodology***

This part shall include a preliminary methodological approach, provisional data collection method (s) and data analysis techniques. Research methodology part may contain the description of a level of analysis, unit of analysis and unit of observation. Author is expected to demonstrate appropriateness of methodological decisions to the aim of research and nature of the research problem.

#### ***Research limitations***

Research limitations show the scope of research, the boundary conditions of conclusions and research findings.

#### ***References and formal requirements***

Research proposal should be written in English. Its volume with references should be up to 5000 words (Times New Roman, 12 pt, single line spacing, after paragraph 6 pt).

#### ***List of references***

Baker, M.J.(2000) Writing a Research proposal. The Marketing Review, pp.1, 61-75.

Heath, T.P. and Tynan, C. (2010) Crafting a research proposal. The Marketing Review, Vol. 10, No. 2, pp.147-168.

Davis, G.B. and Parker, C.A. (1997) Writing the doctoral dissertation: a systematic approach. 2nd ed./Barron's Educational series. p. 155.

Iqbal, J. (2007) Learning from a Doctoral Research Project: Structure and Content of a Research Proposal. The Electronic Journal of Business Research Methods. Vol. 5 Issue 1, pp. 11 – 20.