



RESEARCH PROPOSAL GUIDELINES

The research proposal guidelines are prepared for applicants to ISM Doctoral Programme in Management.

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

- Introduction
- The analysis of the current state of research
- Research problem/question
- Aim and objectives
- Scientific contribution
- Practical significance
- Research methodology
- Research limitations
- References

Title

The title shall be concise and define the essence and scope of a planned research. It should include the main keywords of research 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 within the modern research context as well as research aim and contributions.

The analysis of current state of research

The aim of this part is to disclose the existing level of knowledge in the research area. Literature analysis shall show that the intended research is solidly grounded on past works and is based on the analysis of literature and previous research.

The author is expected to analyse main studies performed previously and to reveal the essential gaps, contradictions, data misinterpretation, theoretical and practical problems that have not been tested yet in the chosen area. It is important 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 shall be cohesive with a clear line of argument, and guided by the same underlying principles and methods as literature review but in more concentrated form.

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

Research problem

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

Research aim

The research aim refers to the essential thesis goal. It shall be formulated concisely 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 to properly perform theoretical and empirical research and avoid deviation from the research aim. Thesis title, research problem, aim, and objectives shall be closely interrelated.

Scientific contribution

Scientific contribution demonstrates the major contribution of intended research to existing knowledge in the research area. The scientific contribution may include: a contribution to theory development, new or improved research methodology, the empirical evaluation of earlier theoretical propositions, new or improved research methods (Davis and Parker, 1997).

Practical significance

Practical significance highlights the practical value of research for the 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. The research methodology part may contain the description of the level of analysis, unit of analysis and unit of observation. The author is expected to demonstrate the appropriateness of methodological decisions to the aim of research and the nature of the research problem.

Research limitations

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

References and format requirements

Research proposal shall 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).

RESEARCH ETHICS

The research proposal shall be prepared in accordance with research ethics requirements. Intellectual property must be protected, and plagiarism and self-plagiarism are not tolerated. All research proposals are checked for plagiarism. For more information, please visit the ISM Research Ethics webpage <https://www.ism.lt/en/university/committee-on-ethics/for-researchers> .

References

- Baker, M.J.(2000) Writing a Research proposal. The Marketing Review, p.1, 61-75.
Heath, T.P. and Tynan, C. (2010) Crafting a research proposal. The Marketing Review, Vol. 10, No. 2, p.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, p. 11 – 20.