



Guidelines for Preparing the MPhil/Ph.D. Concept Paper

Title page

Your provisional title should be precise. It should clearly and accurately indicate your area of study and/or the proposed approach. It should be informative, interesting, and original. The title page should also include personal information, such as your name, academic qualifications, designation, and affiliation.

Introduction

The introduction must give an overview of the research project you propose to carry out and must include the following elements:

Background and Context

Explain the background of the project, focusing briefly on the major issues of its knowledge domain and clarifying why these issues are worthy of attention.

Problem Statement

Describe the theoretical or practical research problem that you want to address. What is already known about the problem and what is missing from current knowledge must be covered?

Research Questions/ Hypotheses

State the specific question(s) that you aim to answer. If you are going to test hypotheses, they should be given in this section.

Relevance and Importance of the research

Make it clear what new insights you will contribute, who they are relevant to, and why the research is worth doing.

Review of related literature

Review of related literature is usually the more extensive part of the concept paper; therefore, it must be developed over various paragraphs and sub-paragraphs. The literature review must summarize, compare, and critique the most relevant scholarly sources on the topic. The author should be able to understand the theories, concepts, studies, and the existing knowledge gap through the literature review. It should accompany comprehensive references, which must be listed at the end of the concept paper.

Research Design and Methodology

Research design and methodology section shows how the research outcome will be obtained according to the objective(s) of the study. Following areas should be covered in this section.

- Introduction to the methodological approach with reasons (Qualitative, Quantitative, Mixed method) proposed to be used for the investigation.
- Population and sample
- Data collection methods
- Data analysis methods
- Ethical Clearance approach.

Outcomes of the study

Outcomes of the study should be emphasized together with the importance of the study and what it will contribute to the body of Library & Information Science knowledge. It may be an improvement of a process, policy, challenge existing assumption, theory, or a model, strengthening of an existing theory or model or introduction of a new theory or model etc.

Time frame

Time frame should indicate the time durations you are going to allocate for each step of the study. It may be in monthly timeslots.

List of references

In this section you should list out all the sources of information you have used throughout the concept paper. Use of APA referencing style (latest edition) is compulsory. If any other style needs to be adopted, it must be justified strongly and approved later by the Academic Committee.

Format of the concept paper

The expected length of the proposal is not less than 1000 words. Times New Roman point 12 must be used for the text and double spaced on A4 size pages. A spiral bound hard copy must be submitted together with an identical soft copy.

Recommended readings

Kumar, Ranjit (2005). Research methodology: a step-by-step guide for beginners. Delhi: SAGE.

Uyangoda, Jayadeva (2011). Writing Research Proposals in the Social Sciences and Humanities: a Theoretical and Practical Guide. Colombo: Social Scientists' Association.

Further Information from

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