

WRITING RESEARCH PROPOSAL: GENERAL GUIDANCE

EE 469 Seminar in Development Economics
Semester 2/2014

Content of Research Proposal

- Title
- Background
- Problem statement
- Significance of study
- Research objective
- Scope (and limitation) of study
- Literature review
- Methodology (tentative)
- Project timeline (optional)
- References

Writing Research Proposal (1)

- Title:
 - This should be short and clear.
 - Be creative, such as using a question, a contradiction, or some catchy words, but make sure they convey the right meaning.
- Background:
 - Discuss the context of the work. Background should help readers become more familiar with the topic.
 - Tell what has been or has not been done.

Writing Research Proposal

- Problem statement:
 - Discuss the nature of the problem. What is the unresolved issue?
 - This part can include research questions
- Significance of study
 - Explain the importance and relevance of the topic.
 - Discuss the contributions and implications of the study.
- Research objective
 - Be clear and specific. Good objectives should be tangible and achievable.
 - If there are more than one, list them in the order of importance.

Writing Research Proposal

- Scope (and limitation) of study
 - Define the scope of study, e.g. sample or specific groups included in the analysis
 - Address limitation of the study (if any).
- Literature review
 - Review of what is known about the topic or the knowledge frontier.
 - Try to organize ideas into a few groups.
 - Discuss the missing piece in the literature, and how this study can contribute to the literature.

Writing Research Proposal

- Methodology (tentative)
 - Suggest the method to be used in solving the research problem or answering the research question.
 - Later on, you should discuss certain tools to be used.
 - Need to explain why the method is appropriate.
- Project timeline (optional)
 - List activities and timeline to accomplish each task.
 - Important if applying for grants.
- References
 - Mainly references used when conducting literature review.

Some Tips

- Start small – define a specific problem
- Organize your thoughts – drawing diagrams would help.
- Start early with your draft and discuss among your peers
- Become familiar with vocabs of your subjects
- Write logically
- Remember essay structure – intro, body, conclusion