MS Synopsis

A research proposal is a document that presents a plan to reviewers for evaluation. It is actually a road map showing clearly the location from where a journey begins; the method of getting there and the destination to be reached at.

The purpose of the research proposal is to:

- Present the issue to be researched and its importance.
- Give an idea to supervisor about how you will proceed in your research thesis.
- Suggest the data necessary for solving the problem and how the data will be gathered, analyzed and interpreted.

The synopsis must include the following sections

Title page

It must include:

- Research topic
- Name & ID of the student
- Major field of study
- Name of Research Supervisor
- Name of the University
- University Logo
- Date of Submission

1. Introduction

The introduction section must include:

- Introductory paragraph
- Rationale of the study— Why this research is needed?
- Statement of the problem

2. Background

Background of the research shows the impact and implication of the topic on the environment (the specific set up in which you are studying the issue). It should be well elaborated. It is advised to include current facts and figures in the background. You should also explain it in the context with the work already done on the topic. It should provide all the necessary initial information so that the reader can better understand the situation under study.
3. Research Objectives

Research objectives are the deliverables of the research project. You should consider following points on stating research objectives:

- These should state the purpose of the research
- These must be based on logical facts and figures
- These must be achievable within a specified timeframe and parameters
- These objectives should be presented such that these should facilitate the reader to locate various important points in the research work
- The specified objectives should be clearly phrased in operational terms specifying exactly what you are going to do, where and for what purpose
- At the end of the study, objectives must be assessed to see if they have been met/achieved or not

4. Research Questions

Write the research objectives in terms of questions that can be addressed by research. You should consider following points on stating research questions:

- Research questions must be clear
- Be researchable
- Connected with already established theory and research
- Linked with each other
- Have potential for making contribution to research
- Be neither too broad nor too narrow.

5. Significance

It lays down the importance or potential benefits of the research. It specifies how your study will improve, modify or broaden presented facts in the field under exploration. Make a note that such improvements/ modifications may have significant implications also.

When you are taking into account the importance of your study, pose yourself the following questions.

- What will be the outcomes of this research study?
- Will the results of this research contribute to the solution or development of anything related to it?
- What will be improved or changed as a result of the proposed research?
- How will results of the study be implemented and what innovations will come out?
6. Preliminary Literature Review and Proposed Theoretical Framework:
   - Literature review is the systematic account of what has already been researched and published on the topic at hand. It basically assesses the existing level of knowledge at the subject matter.
   - Literature review is based on the funnel technique that narrow down the topic from a general perspective to the specific one.
   - It sets the stage for the study and provides rationale for proving or refuting the arguments our results generate.

For detailed guidelines about the literature review do visit the following link:


7. Research Methodology

This section should provide solid or concrete foundations to the study. Quality and value of the research report depends upon how precisely and accurately the data is collected, processed, analyzed and interpreted so that fruitful conclusions may be drawn out of it. It includes:

7.1 Type of Research: (Quantitative or Qualitative)

7.2 Research Paradigm: (Positivistic, Constructive or Pragmatic). Justify the selection of research paradigm based on inductive or deductive reasoning approach.

7.3 Nature of Research Study: (Descriptive, Exploratory or Explanatory)

7.4 Data Collection Sources: (Describe all the primary and secondary sources used for data collection)

7.5 Data Collection Tools/Instruments:
   - Which tools are used for data collection (Questionnaire, Interviews, Archival analysis, observation, content analysis etc.)
   - Why a particular tool is selected?
   - Will you use multiple tools for data collection? If yes, provide justification.

7.6 Subjects/Participants:
   - What is the target population?
   - Which sampling frame is used? (Based on scope of study)
   - What is the sample size?
   - What type of sampling technique is used? And Why?
7.7 Data Processing, Analysis Techniques and Interpretation:

- Mention the methods used to extract and process the information gathered
- Transcription/Codification of the data (Based on type of study)
- Software used to process the data (SPSS, AMOS, NVivo etc.)
- Analysis technique (Regression, Correlation, Analytic Induction, Thematic Analysis, Comparative analysis etc.)

References

This section includes a list of source materials on a particular subject. In a formal report it shows what books and other library materials were consulted. As part of the reference matter, it follows the appendix or appendices. APA format should be used for citing the references.

Kindly visit the following link to quote the references in the required manner

http://www.waikato.ac.nz/library/study/guides/apa.shtml