

# **Lecture Note**

**Course Title: HIM 3309 Research for Hotel Business**

**Credits: 3(2-2-5)**

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**Program: Hotel Management**

**Week 5**

## **Unit 5: Writing a Research Proposal**

### **Topic**

- What is a proposal?
- Research questions and hypotheses
- Key components in research proposal
- What makes a good proposal?

### **Objectives**

After the completion of this unit, students should be able to:

- Describe what a research proposal is and why it is required to write up before conducting a research.
- Recall key components to be included in a research proposal.
- Explain the principles to remember while developing a research proposal.
- Describe what could make a good research proposal.
- Draft a research proposal for their semester project.

## 1. What is a proposal?

Proposal represents your draft idea of why a particular research title must be conducted. Your proposal revolves around your aim (s)/ and objectives, how they connect to the readings you have undertaken and how they drive your choice of approach, methods and analytical techniques. A proposal starts from assumption that you have decided in a single topic area, narrowed down from several initial ideas and that you may have already some preliminary reading of the connected thematic literature, and perhaps also in the area of research methods. On the other word, a proposal gives a direction for researchers.

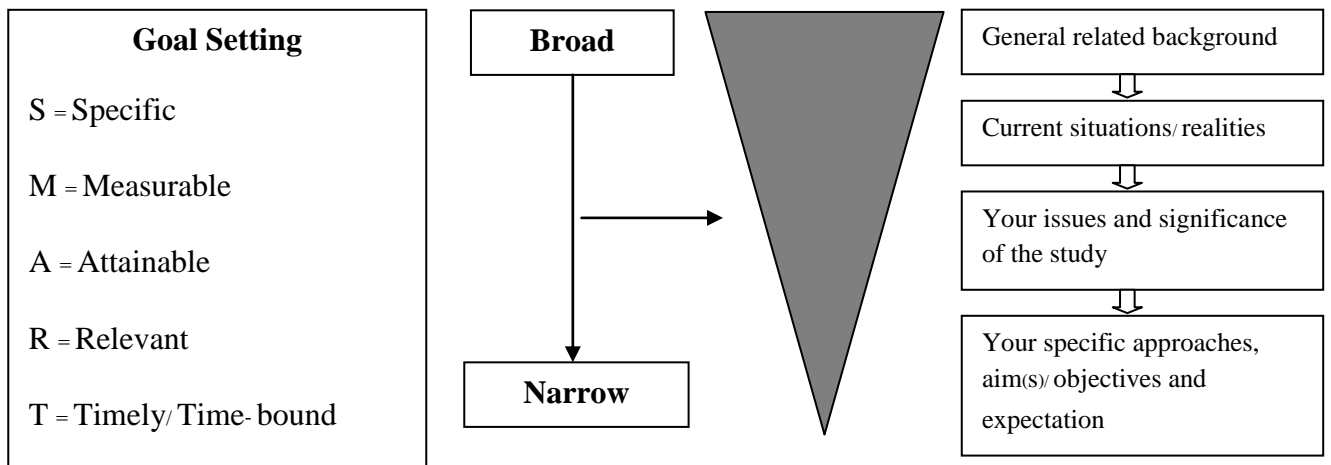
Connectivity and continuity is very important in drafting a proposal. By having your aims and objectives firmly established before you start your empirical work, you should spend your time on structuring your work in that way that shows the connectivity and continuity throughout your research.

*What to be in a research proposal?*

- Why you have chosen these aims/ objectives (as well as research questions and hypotheses if you have) (what is the background or the rationale of them- In here you need to develop the background from the wider to the narrow scope more specifically to your topic area
- The importance of this research both in application in real life or in different areas of the society, and in the academic
- The sort (s) of data you require in order to be able to address or answer them
- The type (s) of analytical technique you may need to employ in order to address or answer them

*The principle you need to repeat in mind while developing your research proposal is the following:*

- Specific (clear, straightforward and directed to a particular goal)
- Measurable (so that you can evaluate your progress)
- Attainable (appropriate to the task at hand, with an achievable scope)
- Relevant (applicable to the current operating conditions or considerations)
- Timely/ Time- bound (with a clear start and end point)



## 2. Research questions and hypotheses

There are 2 types of questions to be addressed in your research proposal.

- *General question:* this refers to current situation or particular reality which shows conflicts, problems, significant issues, or gaps, which can be solved by research process
- *Research question:* this refers to questions evolved from particular situations or realities or gaps (in general question mentioned above) that are under the interest of a researcher to find solutions, or to find what and how those gaps can be filled in, or to find what to make in order to match with those realities. Research results (or findings) may finally match or not match with the realities but researcher needs to be able to explain those situations (why have they happened, how have they happened, for example).

There are 4 dimensions of specification of research topic area to address in your proposal: context (what), time (past/ present/future) (when), location or place (where), and target/ population/ object of study (who/ which object). Making this will help you justify your research title; this means, when you design your research title, you need to make sure that these dimensions are shown in the title.

### Example 1

The research title is “*The Study of Local Wisdom and Its Influence on Tourism Promotion of Koh Pha Ngan, Surat Thani Province*”

Context: local wisdom that influences on tourism promotion

Time: at the present time

Location/ place: Koh Pha Ngan, Surat Thani Province

Target/ population/ object of study: local wisdom

### Example 2

The research title is “*Administration and Management of Tourism in the Upper North of Thailand for Accommodating Senior Tourists*”

Context: administration and management of tourism

Time: at the present time

Location/ place: Upper North of Thailand

Target/ population/ object of study: senior tourists

*What affect ways to pose your research question?*

- Academic background of the researcher: for example, education, background knowledge and special expertise
- Significance of the selected research title: for example, whether the research conduct is to answer some problems or to find new body of knowledge
- Future trends: for example, whether the research conduct is to meet up particular future technological or social trends
- Possibility: for example, how easy or complicated it will be to get answers or explanations of the research you will conduct, readiness of research tools
- Academic gap: for example, some theories and concepts may not be clearly defined and need more studies to complete the gaps
- Redundancy of research works: researchers should make sure that the research title they are going to conduct is not redundant with other authors' works, and the researchers must clarify what the central points of interest of their works are.

### **3. Key components in research proposal**

#### *3.1 Aims/ and objectives*

You as a researcher are required to establish what you are trying to achieve through your research.

#### *3.2 Context/ background*

This section of the proposal establishes the background to, and rationale for your research. It explains how your study compares with, or differs from, other existing studies on, or connected to, your topic area. To do this, it establishes the potential originality and contribution of your research to tourism studies. You should also briefly explain the timing of the research.

### 3.3 *Selection of methods and analytical techniques*

Your choice of data sources (primary and/ or secondary, qualitative and/ or quantitative) and analytical techniques should be thoroughly described and properly justified with respect to your aims (s) and objectives, and with other previous works (that's why literature review is very important and helpful). You should outline your sample frame (s), your approach (es) to sampling, and the size of the sample (s) you expect to draw.

### 3.4 *Draft survey instrument*

These may not be required in your proposal and if you are not confident about your topic. However, your proposal will be read and commented by your advisors or reviewers, as you also expect to get their feedback about your proposal, or whether it will be approved or not, you still need to have a draft of your survey instruments (i.e. questionnaires, interview schedules, focus- group topic guides, etc.) for comments. These are usually included as appendices after your proposal.

## **4. What makes a good proposal?**

There is a list of questions to follow, to check whether your proposal is good enough as follows:

- Are the aim (s)/ and objectives clearly articulated?
- Are the aim (s)/ and objectives clearly located in the relevant academic reading?
- Is the research informed by appropriate theories and concepts?
- What is the rationale for the research?
- What is the background to the research?
- Are the choices of research method (s)/ and data source (s) appropriate?
- Are the choices of analytical technique (s) and data presentation appropriate?
- Are there any practical issues surrounding access to, or availability of, data?
- When will the research be conducted and is the timing appropriate?
- Where will the research be conducted and is the choice of (case-study) location (s) appropriate?
- Is the scope of the project feasible for the time and/ or financial and/ or human resources available?
- Are the timelines for the research realistic?
- Has a project (management) plan been included?

- How comprehensive is the project plan and are there any significant missing components?
- Are there financial resources available to be able to conduct the research as described?
- What are the ethical issues associated with the research, and are these fully described?
- Are there appropriate measures in place to address any ethical issues the research may raise?
- What are the health and safety issues involved in conducting the research?
- Are the hazards fully audited?
- Are the risks properly assessed?
- Are there appropriate measures in place to manage the health and safety risks?