

Running head: AN EXAMPLE OUTLINE OF A FULL RESEARCH

APA Style: An Example Outline of a Full Research Proposal

Your Name

Organisation/ Institution/ School

**(TITLE: Must be specific and concise [20 word limit]. Must include variables. Must include mention of population)**

Abstract

**Type your abstract here within 100-250 words limit.**

**State the purpose of your study, the population you are studied, the sample you used, and your method: qualitative or quantitative, instrument (interview, survey, questionnaire, etc.)**

## Your title

### *Introduction*

First address the **problem!** State the overall area of concern (populations-at-risk for injustice or discrimination; need for more functional affiliations for individuals and groups; unethical policies/practices; lack of knowledge in the field, etc.). Provide brief statistics to indicate the incidence of the problem.

Address the ethical research issues.

State the potential utility of your research; for example, does it add to current knowledge? Or test a theory?

Discuss how this problem area affects individuals, communities, and society as a whole (what are issues of social and economic justice).

### *Variables*

Conceptually define any major variables in a clear and concise manner.

### *Summary*

Summarize this chapter in approximately two to three paragraphs. (Add any additional points or sub-points that relate to your study)

## **Review of the Literature**

### *Review*

Summarize what existing literature has to say about the problem and the existing solutions: What has been tried, what has worked, what has not worked, why.

State the theoretical framework supporting the theory base presented.

After presenting what is already known, make your case for your research either answering a new question, getting a new answer to an old question, answering a question about a new population, etc. After you have made your case that your research is going to give new information, summarize the major points. You will formulate your research question or your hypothesis here.

*Note that whilst the Introduction discusses the problem, the review of literature should focus on solutions (those that exist, those that are still required).*

## Method

### *Purpose*

Introduce the general methodology most authors have taken on this topic and the one you will be using and why (tie to the literature review).

The purpose is a statement of what you intend to study not what you intend to find.

### *Paradigm*

Discuss your philosophical paradigm for the acquisition of knowledge. Although you will rarely find this information in published works, you will use this exercise to understand your own philosophy on knowledge acquisition and be able to articulate it.

### *Study Design*

This should flow from your paradigm. Are you doing qualitative or quantitative; is it exploratory, descriptive or explanatory? Explain why you are using this type of study and what you plan to explore, describe, or explain (tie this to the literature review).

Within either design - state the type of study being used: is it ethnographic, content analysis of written material, structured interview, or a program evaluation, etc.? State also, why this approach is best for your study.

### *Population and Sample*

What is the population you plan to study (e.g., male local Singaporean sample), what is your sampling plan (e.g., convenience, stratified, random), and why? Give as much information about the population that has been gathered from your review of the literature: age range, gender mix, education, etc. This information will be used to compare to your sample's demographics in the Results section.

### *Investigative Techniques*

Do you plan to use interviews, behavior observation, questionnaires, etc.? What subtype of each do you plan to employ (e.g., structured vs. unstructured interviews or closed vs. open-ended questions)? State your rationale for your approach (lit. review). List all of your variables, which ones are independent or dependent? What level of measurement do you plan to use for each variable?

### *Instrumentation*

Do you plan to use a standardized questionnaire/ instrument or design your own? How does this instrument affect issues of reliability and validity (discuss)? Discuss questionnaire/

instrument biases. Identify independent & dependent variables. Discuss how this questionnaire/instrument will be scored.

### ***Data Collections***

How will you distribute your instrument or where will you do the observations? What is your timetable and what reminders will you give to respondents to get instruments back to you in time to complete your study?

### ***Data Analysis Plan***

What statistics do you plan to collect: descriptive/ univariate statistics (frequency, central tendency, etc.) Inferential statistics (Pearson's r, ANOVA, etc.) Bivariate, multivariate statistics, and how do you plan to do your analysis?

### ***Ethical Consideration (Human Subject Protections)***

When and how will you submit for Institutional Review Board (IRB) approval? What safeguards are in place in your study to protect human subjects? Consider both emotional and / or physical harm. Consider who the subjects are and if children or some other vulnerable population.

What is your basic ethical approach? What are the power differentials between you and your subjects, and how will you protect them from any possible abuses? What steps are you taking to insure informed consent?

Provide a copy of any introductory letter and consent forms in the appendix.

### ***Bias***

We all have biases; the most insidious are those of which we are unaware or unacknowledged. What makes you different from your subjects? Is it race, ethnicity, social class, education, work experience, physical or mental ability, gender identity, sexual orientation, etc? How might these differences impede your investigation (invisibility, insensitivity, overgeneralization, double standards, and dichotomization)?

### ***Assumptions***

What do you need to take for granted to answer your question or test your hypothesis? (e.g. honest responses from participants, typical population, heuristic value of a certain theory, normal distribution, etc.)

### ***Limitations***

Taking into account how broad your topic might be, include matters that will deliberately not be discussed. What aspects of the problem are outside your interests at this point (or for this

paper)? If you had the resources to, what are some of the things you could or would improve about your design, sample, analysis, or any other aspects of your study?

### ***Timeline***

You will be required to submit a proposed timeline for completion of your research study. State briefly the start and end points for each of the tasks you intend to complete for the research (e.g. data collection, lit review etc.). This includes the likely date of submission of your thesis.

### **References**

**(This is your section header centered on the page) (1-2 pages)**

**Type your reference list here in proper APA formatting**

Internet sites such as Wikipedia will not be accepted as references.

Appendix

**Include a copy of your survey/questions/instrument, IRB approval, and Agency approval letter in the Appendix section**