



## A Handy Guide on RESEARCH PROPOSAL/SYNOPSIS

(Only for PhD scholars of Department of East Asian Studies, University of Delhi)

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A PhD researcher is expected to have a good command over methodological skills after successful completion of the mandatory course on *Research Methodology*. Nevertheless, students must continue developing their techniques by attending suitable workshop and updating with new research/development in the field.

Before writing a synopsis, a student must prepare an exhaustive list of literature on the desired topic and review it systematically or thematically.

Since we primarily conduct research in area studies (East Asian Studies) that promotes interdisciplinary and transdisciplinary research with sound training in their respective disciplines, the knowledge of language (Chinese, Japanese, and Korean) enables us to situate ourselves better and utilise concepts, theories, and intellectual debates of the region more effectively in our research. Without command over the relevant language, it is difficult to acquire and comprehend this knowledge. Research in East Asian Studies necessitates proficiency in the appropriate language. Thus, students are both encouraged and required to acquire proficiency in the relevant language.

The research proposal/synopsis must follow the following structure:

### **Section 1: Introduction/Background (2-3 pages)**

The student must briefly introduce their topic and provide a broad research context.

### **Section 2: Review of the Literature (8-10 pages)**

The literature should be reviewed thematically or systematically and should not be a mere listing of summaries of a few selected books or articles. A researcher aims to find anomalies or gaps in the literature that they can address in the proposed research. It is pertinent to highlight the issues relevant to your thesis and not just emphasise previous research. It is always better to have different perspectives on the topic to comprehensively understand and locate the problem therein.

### **Section 3: Definition, Rationale and Scope of the Study (2 pages)**

After conducting a systematic or thematic review of the relevant literature, you should clearly define the research problem you intend to investigate and clarify the purpose and scope of the study.

#### **Section 4: Research Problem/Question and Hypothesis (1 page)**

In this section, you formulate your research questions after clearly stating the research problem. Be mindful while formulating your research questions, as this will determine the direction of your research.

The next part is formulating a hypothesis. A hypothesis must be a crisp and logical statement, which is a falsifiable proposition. Please be careful about developing a hypothesis which is a simple and conclusive statement.

#### **Section 5: Research Methods (1 page)**

This section should clearly describe how the student seeks to find answers to their research question(s) and how data will be collected and analysed. Why a particular approach or method is employed in this research should be clearly stated. A mere statement like the study is descriptive or empirical and employs both quantitative and qualitative approaches using the induction or deduction method is insufficient. But the rationale of it.

#### **Section 6: Tentative Chapters (1 page)**

The student must provide a list of tentative chapter headings with a brief description (not exceeding 75 words) of each chapter. The first and the last chapter must be called Introduction and Conclusion, respectively.

**Bibliography: All sources that may be relevant to your research should be listed in Chicago Style (In-text citation, author-year).**

The length of the synopsis should ideally be 12-15 pages (excluding the bibliography) in A4 with Times New Roman Font 12 and 1.5 line spacing. The synopsis must be printed on only one side of A4 paper, with a margin of 1.5 inches on the left-hand side of each page and 1 inch on the right. The top and bottom margins should also be an inch. Long quotations (running over 150 words) should be single-spaced and left indented. Use Indian (British) spellings rather than American spellings.

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