Guidline for preparing research proposal

The research proposal should include the following information:

1. Title
2. Rationale for the study
3. Aim of the study
4. Research methods
5. Ethical considerations
6. Significance of the research
7. Timeline and funding
8. References

1. Title

Title should answer the question: What is your research about? It should be a short, concise phrase. This is just a tentative title for your intended research. You will be able to revise your title during your actual research.

2. Rationale for the study

This section outlines why you chose your topic - why is this research needed? Is there gap of knowledge? Your study must make an original contribution to knowledge, so the proposal should demonstrate the originality of your intended research. You should describe the importance of the research to patients, the nursing profession, to health care and/or society and explaining how your research builds on and adds to the current state of knowledge in the field. It should be well argued and convincing, and should clearly show the importance of this study to patient care.

3. Aim of the study

The proposal should set out the central aims and questions that will guide your research. Before writing your proposal, you should take time to reflect

on the key questions that you are seeking to answer. What is the research question you are trying to find the answer to? You may formulate one or two main questions. This can also be termed as the aim or purpose of the research. Think about how you finish this statement: "The purpose of this research is …"

4. Research methods

The proposal should outline your research methods, explaining how you are going to conduct your research. You should discuss the following aspects:

- Research type: will you do qualitative or quantitative research?
- Participants: who will you be doing your research with (individuals, organisations etc? What is your sample size and its parameters?)
- Data collection: how will you go about collecting your information (surveys, experiments, interviews, observations)? This should also include any equipment or instruments that you will need.
- Data analysis and discussion: once you have the information, what will you do with it? Include any tools you will use to assist you with analysis (e.g. programmes, models). Indicate how analysing the data in this way will answer your research question.
- Limitations: look at your methodology and consider any weaknesses or limitations that may occur as a result of your research design. Address the limitations by indicating how you will minimize them. In methodology section, it is important to demonstrate that you have read other studies in your area of research. You should be able to address the strengths and limitations of the methods in similar research and justify why you have chosen the method that you have.

5. Ethical considerations

Research ethics covers the questions of research integrity and covers the questions of the research topic, research methods and the research data. The research ethics consideration will be based ethical principles and considering the need for informed consent and ethical review by ethical committee by relevant institution.

6. Significance of the research

The significance of the research focus on the reflection produced new scientific knowledge. You should explain why your research is important and why it is timely to research your proposed topic, how it builds on and adds to the current state of knowledge in the field and in the society.

7. Timeline and funding

The timeline, expected costs and planned funding sources illustrate the realisation of the research project.

5. References

It is important to include all references you have used and cited when writing your proposal.

References

Läänelaid, Siim (2020) How to write a successful proposal. PATSAFE project training presentation.

Queensland University of Technology (QUT) webpage:
 https://www.qut.edu.au/

University of Auckland webpage:
https://www.auckland.ac.nz/en.html

University of Birmingham webpage:
https://www.birmingham.ac.uk/index.aspx

How to cite this document*: PATSAFE (2021). Guideline for preparing research proposal. PATSAFE Toolbox No. 3.*