**RESEARCH PROPOSAL OUTLINE**

**Research Title**

An Investigation into the gender pay gap in the technology sector in South Africa.

**Problem Statement and Significance of the Study**

Understanding the gender pay gap in the technology sector in South Africa is essential for achieving gender equality and promoting a more inclusive work environment. This research proposal aims to investigate the magnitude, underlying factors, and potential solutions to address the gender pay gap in the South African technology sector, contributing to policy development and organizational practices that support equal pay and opportunities for all employees. In essence, this research seeks to promote gender equality and fairness in the technology field in South Africa.

**Aims and Objectives**

The purpose of the study is to determine the status of the gender pay gap among employees in the same salary band and to establish whether men and women receive similar pay for similar work in the study population. The focus will be on the South African Technology industry.

The primary objectives of the research are as follows:

* To thoroughly investigate and examine if there is a gender pay gap in the technology industry in South Africa and the magnitude of that pay gap through existing literature.
* To identify and examine the causal factors contributing to the gender pay gap in the technology industry within South Africa.
* To further explore potential solutions, strategies, and policies that can contribute to policy development, and/or improvements, organisational best practices, and strategies that will help in eradicating gender pay gaps in the technology sector in South Africa.

**Research Questions**

1. What is the extent of the gender pay gap in the technology sector in South Africa?
2. What are the main factors contributing to the gender pay gap in the South African technology industry? How do these factors differ from those observed in other industries or countries?
3. How do individual characteristics, such as education and experience, influence the gender pay gap in the technology sector in South Africa?
4. How do existing policies, initiatives, and best practices in South Africa and other countries address the gender pay gap in the technology sector, and what can be learned from them?
5. What evidence-based strategies and recommendations can be proposed to reduce or eliminate the gender pay gap in the South African technology sector?

**Research Design & Approach**

Taking into consideration that this will be based on secondary research. An emphasis in the literature review will be done that will drive the research design and approach, and ultimately achieve the research objectives as outlined earlier.

The following research methodology will be undertaken:

* First, a vigorous and thorough literature review pertaining to the gender pay gap in the South African technology sector will be conducted on previous and common research papers, this will include academic journals and articles, government reports and constitutional publications, industry publications, and literature from academic libraries.
* Secondly, the collected literature will be analyzed, synthesized, and re-synthesized in order to draw different constructs, identification of trends and common themes, and abstract the findings related to the gender pay gaps. These findings will also be compared with other countries and other industries as well in order to provide more insight into the topic and identify any conflicting information, disparities, and similarities.
* Thirdly, the evaluation of existing frameworks, best practices, policies, projects, and initiatives that exist in South Africa, and different sectors pertaining to gender pay gaps will be scrutinized in order to identify any correlations.

**Ethical Considerations & Risk Assessment**

Ethical practices shall be maintained throughout the entire research process. All information for the secondary data shall be references and the authors of these shall be sufficiently acknowledged (Welman et al, 2005).

Given that the research will be based on secondary research and relies on existing literature, key ethical considerations will be taken into account which include:

The Proper citation, referencing, and acknowledgment of sources to avoid plagiarism and breach of intellectual property rights, all results will be accurately represented, and no form of research misconduct will be associated with the research.

The research will also ensure anonymity where there are elements of personally identifiable information and ensure informed consent where necessary.

**Artefacts**

This research artifact outcome expected from this research is a Research Report that will provide:

Guidelines, a framework, recommendations, and an evidence-based strategy and policy recommendations to promote gender equality pay grades, and fairness in the technology field in South Africa.

**Timeline of Activities**

The Estimated timelines for conducting the research are tabled as follows:

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| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **STAGE** | **ACTIVITY** | **ESTIMATED DURATION** | **DELIVERABLE** |
| Research Design and Planning | Finalise research problems and questions | 4 Weeks | Confirmed research problem and questions |
| Develop research design | 4 Weeks | Draft research design section for the final report |
| Prepare research proposal | 4 Weeks | Research proposal/ ethical approval submission |
| Literature review | Search, capture, and synthesize relevant literature | 12 Weeks | Notes and other output processes from the review process |
| Draft literature review | 6 Weeks | Draft literature review with relevant sources for the final report |
| Data analysis | Prepare secondary data for analysis | 3 Weeks | Secondary data ready for analysis |
| Draft conclusions and recommendations | 1 Week | Draft data analysis and findings section for the final report |
| Report Write-up | Prepare the final draft of the report | 2 Weeks | Report final draft |
| Review draft with Supervisor | 1 Week | Noted on feedback from supervisor |
| Final editing and Quality assurance | 2 Weeks | Final report |
| Submission of report | 1 Day | Final submission of the report |

**References**

Welman, C. Kruger, F. & Mitchell, B. (2005) Research Methodology.3rd ed. Cape Town. Oxford University Press.