

GUIDELINES FOR PREPARATION OF RESEARCH PROPOSAL

A. Introduction

Since the introduction of this module of writing a research project, there has not been a uniform format for presenting research work for students. Some students have been presenting journal articles while others follow formats from other institutions, they have been through with and we came up with this make uniform the presentations across all the faculties.

B. Key Areas of A Research Proposal

There are a number of key considerations in presenting a proposal.

1. TITLE PAGE

This should present a concise and unequivocal title in line with proposal objectives. Oftentimes, authors choose cryptic titles, sometimes accompanied by a sub-title. Every version of the proposal **must** be dated and bear the name of the author.

2. ABSTRACT

This is often a requirement for the research proposal and it may be limited to not exceeding one 500 words. Normally, the abstract is the last paragraph to be written in the case of a proposal or the thesis itself. The abstract should be a compression of the whole document with a mention of the problem, objectives of the study, data to be collected, the study site, methods used to analyse the data collected and (expected findings) a summary of findings. It should be one paragraph, single-space without abbreviations.

3. TABLE OF CONTENTS

This should include heads of sections of the proposal or thesis. It should show into what sub-sections the writing is done. It is often argued that too many sub-sections disrupt the flow of the document and make reading difficult. The requirement is that each sub-section presents an idea and there are not repetitions. Authors are advised not to go

beyond level 3 of subtitles unless it's absolutely necessary. The main sections should be in upper case whilst subsections should be in sentence case format.

4. CHAPTER ONE: INTRODUCTION

Introduction as, Chapter One of the proposal or thesis usually encompasses various components of the study including: overview, background of the study, statement of the problem, research questions, research objectives, research hypotheses and justification of the study. These various components in the “Introduction” chapter are meant to assist the student in organizing the flow of information in a systematic and coherent manner. For the purposes of our guidelines, the introduction chapter shall include:

4.1 Overview: This is short section at the start of the chapter that gives a glimpse of what is contained in the chapter. It could be one to two paragraphs (at **this stage ignore this part**)

4.2. Background information: In these guidelines it is proposed that the scope of “background information” be unpacked left only to “introduce” the intended study in a few concise sentences. The student is expected to give a background information on the study they are carrying out, and it's advisable that one starts with more generic information (global), and narrows down to background information of the specific area they are studying.

4.3 Problem Statement: This should give brief and specific information about the problem under investigation. It is the statement of what bothers the student and prompting the study. This should be clear in no more than one page. A student who fails to identify the problem concisely and briefly is a student without a thesis topic and so no problem to investigate. It should be clear the facets of the problem including the implications on academics, geography, and time.

4.4 Research Objective: There is normally an overall objective which is then cut into other objectives to help the student in obtaining the required data to meet these objectives. Some qualitative studies may be conducted without objective(s), only relying on research questions. Quantitative studies must not fail to have objectives.

4.3 Research Questions: These should align with the objectives and should arise from the problem statement. They should show what the thesis will seek to answer. Too many research questions may infer lack of focus in the research problem. On the other hand, the research questions also suggest the scope of enquiry. The balance may be guided in subsequent supervision. It is important to note that there is usually one key research question corresponding to overall objective (purpose) of the study. This is then followed by disaggregated questions that inform various objectives that the student wishes to address in the study. In quantitative studies, a student may opt to ignore the research questions, and state the overall objective and specific objectives

4.5 Research hypotheses: These should immediately follow the objectives and they should be statistically testable. Ideally it is expected that each single objective should have a matching hypothesis. The common practice in many institutions is to write them in the negative. For example, if the objective is “to assess the effect of gender on environmental conservation”, the hypothesis could be “that gender has no influence on environmental conservation”. However, the style of writing of hypotheses is at the left to the discretion of the student and the supervisor.

4.6 Justification of the study: Here the student ought to show in not more than one page why the research is important, that is, what its use will be. For instance, how would the study help the clientele that s/he is targeting with the research and who else is expected to consume and benefit from the results of the work the student is undertaking. At the back of the mind, the student should be asking who will benefit from the study, and who will lose if the study is not done.

4.7 Rationale: Here the student should show why the research should be conducted. For instance, a study can be conducted to find out the reasons behind high school drop out rates because educationists have year in year out complained about the trends and blamed the government for doing little to stop the wastage.

4.6 Scope and Limitation

This should bring out the delimitations in terms of geography, population, time, academics, among others. The section should allow the student to present the research

topic in such a way that it is doable. Any problems likely to affect the research are stated here.

5. CHAPTER TWO: LITERATURE REVIEW

Selection of the literature to be reviewed is advised by the research problem, questions, objectives and theoretical framework. It necessitates plunging, conceptually, to the origins and evolution of the theory and problem. In the end, the study through literature reviewed, is to identify the gap in knowledge, which the study seeks to fill. The student should also review literature on methodological applications, which relate to what s/he is studying and determine what methods have been used in similar analysis. This will help determine whether it would be necessary to borrow such methods, slightly alter them to fit the study or use completely new methods

6. CHAPTER 3: METHODOLOGY

There is usually a lot of debate on where to place the analytical framework (which comprises theoretical and conceptual framework) to be used in the analysis. Some institutions prefer placing this at the end of the literature review, while others prefer that it appears at the beginning of the methodology chapter. Whatever the case we propose our methodology section to comprise:

6.1 Philosophical paradigma: The student should be able to prepare the examiner his/her philosophical underpinnings that will guide the research. The student should clearly trace their research methodology in the ontological and epistemological leanings, which they will allow them to discuss the theoretical framework, research design and approaches.

6.2 Study Design: The proposal must outline the study design in this section. The student should be able to locate the research in classical experimental design, quasi-experimental design, observational design, cross-sectional design, retrospective design, prospective design, among others.

6.2.1 Study site: There is debate on where exactly to insert description on the study site. Some institutions prefer that it's placed at the beginning of the methodology section before analytical framework, while others prefer it appears at the end of the methodology after data analysis section. It is our considered opinion that this section is placed here.

6.2.1 Research Approach: The student, based on their philosophical under-pinnings should explain if the study be conducted will utilise quantitative, qualitative or mixed approaches.

6.2.3 Research Method: The student, based on their philosophical under-pinnings should explain the type of method to be used to conduct the study such case study, ethnography, discourse analysis, narrative research, grounded theory, among others.

6.2.4 Data needs, types and sources: Here the student is expected to describe the primary sources of data or secondary data (from literature) or a combination of both. The student is also expected to give and indications of where and how this data are to be obtained.

6.2.5 Population, Sampling procedure and Data collection: In this subsection, the sampling methods should be clearly explained. Also important is the sample size to be used if one is dealing with primary data, and how this sample will be determined. Data collection is also expected to be detailed e.g. the instruments used and the steps involved e.g. pretesting, actual survey etc.

6.2.6 Data Analysis: The student should show how to handle raw data from the field. How will it be entered, cleaned, and what software will be used for analysis etc.

6.2.7 Data Presentation: The student should show how data from the field will be presented in Chapter 4.

7.0. Validity and Reliability

In quantitative research, the student should show how the tools used will take care of validity and reliability. It should be noted that in qualitative data, the terms to be used

will be credibility (internal validity), transferability (external validity), dependability (reliability) and confirmability (objectivity)

8.0 Ethics

This is a cardinal section of this chapter. The SOJMC will consider the following as key steps to be made by all students as part of research ethics, in addition to traditional methods: defense of proposals, obtaining of certificate of field work, obtaining research permit from NACOST, defending final project, and obtaining certificate of corrections.

9.0 Presentations of findings, Analysis and interpretation (chapter four)

The data obtained is to be interpreted here under the thematic areas that come up from the objectives of the study. Then an analysis is done through presentation of the data and an analysis deduced from the data.

10.0 Discussions (Chapter five)

Have a discussion on the relationship between the objectives of the study and whatever that is found out incorporating the literature reviewed.

10.1 Limitations of the study

Discuss the hiccups that were encountered when doing the research.

10.2 recommendations

What the research was unable to cover but would want it to be done in future by other researchers

10.3 conclusions

What is new that the work came up with

10.0 References

In this section where **all** the works examined are properly listed down using a standard referencing style. Always cross check whether all references in the text appear in the reference (bibliography) section. Our referencing style will be APA (guidelines to be presented to each student)

Appendixes

This will vary with different area and disciplines. For instance, it may be necessary to attach a copy of your questionnaire in the final thesis.

COURSE CODE: PGD002

**COURSE NAME: POST GRADUATE DIPLOMA IN WATER
HYGIENE AND SANITATION WASH Monthly**

Research Proposal

By

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May 2019

WASH Councils and Community Based Mechanisms

Introduction

Lack of access to water sources is a growing problem throughout the world. Coupled with the effects of climate change, the water bodies suitable for exploitation in terms of water filtering and human use are ever regressing (Luo et al, 2019). Even though the adoption of the Millenium Development Goals (MDGs), which was followed up upon by the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), many countries and communities still lack access to clean water as we are still experiencing the loss of ecosystem services not only in the water sector but in many other areas as well (Seager, 2010; Vorosmarty et al, 2018)

Huge populations in various areas of the world are relying on polluted water as their single water source. Such water access increases health risks that cannot be borne by the poor as well as it can become very costly for governments as well, who are responsible for containing any possible epidemic outbreaks, cleaning up pollution, not to mention increasing mortality rates that can hinder the country's economic output (Williams, 2013).

In peri-urban areas, where the lack of access to water is challenged by additional barriers such as undeveloped water infrastructure affecting water provision services, uncertain land tenure rights, populations stricken by poverty, WASH becomes even more inaccessible (Bartram, 2010).

In addition, due to high investment risks and low probabilities on cost recovery, the Governments and utility providers abstain from infrastructural developments in the poor peri-

urban areas and cherry pick large cities and rich neighborhoods where the return on investments can be high (Bakker, 2013). With such landscape, the focus has been turned to Non governmental organizations (NGOs), public-private partnerships (PPPs) and water users to establish various types of partnerships that often times focus on the creation of informal institutions and/or local action groups (LAGs). However, such partnerships that entail community mobilization have been most effective in rural areas, where the PPPs are not very effective due to many reasons (logistics, insufficient funds, etc) (Dressler et al., 2010;).

Even though there are many studies on the community based mechanisms and how informal institutions can be achieved (World Bank, 2006) in rural areas, there is less focus on how these mechanisms and local action groups can achieve the facilitation of water provision services (Matson, 2014).

Georgia, gaining independence in 1991 from the Soviet Union, broke off from a 70-year socialist rule, where a top down, centralized decision-making was the only system that governed all soviet republics. The state was the owner of all natural resources, including water (Mukhin and Kryvda, 1976). Following such an inherited institutional and governance tradition, now independent Georgia faced challenges of transitioning to democracy and open market economy. The country was confronted with numerous hurdles: corrupt institutions, insufficient information on natural resources, low institutional capacities, lack of research in water sector and public participation in community based mechanisms, etc. In addition, Georgia's willingness to politically associate and economically integrate with the EU through gradual approximation aimed at the EU membership, led to the changes in the legal framework of the country, causing

numerous fluctuations within the communities that had to abide to the rising costs of communal payments.

Currently, unsustainable resource use is one of the most challenging issues in Georgia. Coupled with centralized governance systems and insufficient funds, natural resource depletion (partly due to climate change) causes economic losses for the country (Inasaridze, 2013), with dangers of complete ecosystem service disappearance in some areas. In this sense, good or sustainable resource governance is characterized with interactions between organizations, people, resource management, instruments, etc. (Kishor and Kenneth, 2012), where institutional settings on various levels of interaction are embedded within transparent legal framework, followed by decentralized decision making (Mislimshoeva et.al 2014).

The objective of this paper is to examine how the formed WASH councils from local stakeholders of the republic of Georgia facilitate the implementation of water and sanitary pilot projects within their communities. The stakeholders that the WASH councils include are the Schoolteachers, Municipality representatives as well as community leaders and NGO employees. As Agrawal, 2001 and Dressler et al., 2010 state, implementing community based mechanisms in local communities more often than not, fail to succeed as the power play within the communities is uneven, resulting the more strong capturing the majority of resources or directing the development strategies to their own, personal benefits (Ahlers and Zwarteveen, 2009). What is more, failures can be attributed to other reasons, such as political elitist interventions, inadequate incentives that lower the interests of the communities to participate, insufficient attention to power dynamics within the communities as well as the mistake of

perceiving a community as a single entity, disregarding the multiple social layers that operate within (Wilson, 2013).

The rest of the paper is as follows. First we discuss how the WASH councils have been formed and review literature on institutional dynamics, participation and representation, water power relations and WASH council performance in terms of water delivery and institutional design principles. This is followed by a brief methodology and a discussion on the key findings on the performance of WASH councils within the communities.

Literature review

Studies on Common-pool resources (CPR) theory have a strong impact on institutional dynamics, arguing that open access causes the tragedy of the commons (Hardin, 1968). Ostrom (1990), proposes the establishment of robust institutions whether formal, or informal, that regulate resource use in such manner that defend the resources from over exploitation, whether be it public or private organizations. As the legal rights over resources are given and the incentives are well perceived, the hypothesis continues to state that the users understand the costs and benefits of resource exploitation local resource users are likely to invest time and energy to collectively manage common-pool resources sustainably (Ostrom et al., 1999). What is more, Wade (1988) and Ostrom (1990) argue about the design principles that are important for the creation of successful community based governance systems. The core design principles are largely effective, improving the efficacy of many kinds of community groups (Cox et al., 2010; Wilson et al. 2013)

What is more, according to Daly (1996), leaving ecological sustainability to market forces will have detrimental impact on the environment, as businesses focuses on profit maximization. Similar thing happened in Georgia, when in 2004 Georgia plunged into neo-liberalism, to “westernize” the state by blindly emulating Western economic models. This unfortunately resulted in leaving stakeholders aside and focusing on short-term gains, neglecting environmental factors (Eradze, 2014).

Therefore, in such an environment as described above, having community based mechanisms (CBM) placed within the local communities can achieve a number of benefits such as efficiently manage common resources without overspending or overexploiting and producing environmental and social benefits as the resource exploitation costs and benefits are well internalized within the local governing bodies (Ostrom, 1990; Chambers, 1997; Blaikie, 2006; Nelson and Agrawal, 2008). CBM’s essential component is the implementation of the monitoring activities carried out by the community representatives. Monitoring is to prevent and/or mitigate the free riding behavior among the communities and increase the community empowerment, efficiency, equity and reduce the occurrence of social injustices (Chambers, 1997; Blaikie, 2006).

The CBM mechanism has become popular in the water governance sector as the community governance systems offers an alternative to the failing public and/or private water supply (Ferguson et al., 2005). The water supply agencies that lack funds for water delivery externalize their water costs to the users (ibid).

However, in the developing world, there are still many challenges and unknowns in the community based management related to water resources even though the community organizations show much promise (Adams, 2015).

The paper seeks to understand how water governance related community organizations seek to adapt and self organize in the rural areas of Georgia.

Theoretical Framework

An institution, as North (2005) states, is the rules of the game in a society. Institutions set a mode of operation between humans and environment and interact with other, already existing, formal and informal institutions (Corbera and Brown, 2008). It limits freedom of actions of individuals and communities to a certain extent within the institutional framework. Agents operating in the institutions will always seek to adapt to new exogenous circumstances, but it does not mean an efficient equilibrium will be achieved (Crouch and Farrell, 2004).

Path dependence (Ostrom, 2000; Greener, 2005) or path creation (Schneiberg, 2006) is a general theoretical framework to analyze institutional change. More specifically, path dependence suggests that in circumstances where various equilibria can exist, the early choices will determine the equilibria and affect the future. It is a theory which assumes that inefficient institutional settings can be stable and repetitive, where processes that had been initially started, even when ceasing to produce effective choices and advances, keep going on as the opportunity cost of changing the institutional path is too high for the actors to bear, therefore, nothing is changed (Crouch and Farrell, 2004). However, institutions themselves provide adaptation possibilities and coordination mechanisms, affecting the path trajectories (Pierson,

2000). Path dependency identifies how institutional processes respond to new challenge they face (Crouch and Farrell, 2004). Path dependence theory explains why inefficient institutions are durable, compared to economic theories where economically rational actors would lead to efficient institutions (Pierson, 2000).

Institutional changes in Georgia are mainly motivated by the country's aspiration for joining the western institutions. For examining Georgia's forest institutions, the paper applies path dependence theoretical framework to understand how current water related problems are embedded within the former Soviet rule and how, after the independence, with open market economy knocking at the door and new actors and social layers starting to emerge, the inherited "traditions" still continued to affect the current community management.

The above-mentioned theoretical framework of path dependence (or path creation) is beneficial for analyzing the developments in the Georgian water sector.

Methodology

Georgia is located in the South Caucasus, bordering Russia, the Black Sea, Turkey, Azerbaijan and Armenia. The total area of the country comprises 6,949,400 ha. According to the Green Alternative (2015), in Georgia, there are numerous diseases caused by contaminated water, vulnerable communities are often marginalized, most of the water tanks have not been repaired and restoration work has been done for a long time, drinking water is irregularly distributed in many populated areas of Georgia, due to the lack of laboratory controls the drinking water often does not meet the state requirement standards. What is more, in schools, especially in rural areas, there is often inadequate WASH conditions with small emphasis on the hygienic behavior.

The present thesis introduces a brief history of the institutional change in Georgian water sector since the beginning of the Soviet Union to show how it developed until today and which actors were at play.

The thesis draws upon the research carried out within the project “Georgia Community WASH (Water, Sanitation and Hygiene) Initiative,” implemented by CENN with support from the Global Water Challenge and The Coca-Cola Foundation (TCCF). Within the project, a number of WASH Councils were founded upon the basis of community based mechanisms.

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