Psychology 360: Personality Research
The research propsal

William Revelle

Department of Psychology
Northwestern University
Evanston, Illinois USA

NORTHWESTERN
UNIVERSITY

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Outline

The proposal   Searching the literature   Writing the paper
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                                             ○○

Choosing a topic

1. A problem of theoretical interest to field of personality
2. Of interest to you!
3. Can be straight correlational,
   prefer if experimental with an individual difference parameter

Requirements

1. Systematic review of the literature
    What is the current understanding of the problem?
    What has been done before
    What problems have been detected
2. Proposed research technique
    Method and procedure
3. Expected results (how to analyze them)
    What are they expected to be if your hypothesis is right –
    What are some of the alternatives

Proposal requirements

1. Abstract
2. Introduction
     Literature review
     Hypothesis
3. Methods and Procedure
     What is to be done
    What instruments will be used
    Who are the subjects
4. Expected Results
     How will the data be analyzed
    What do you expect to find if your hypothesis is correct
   (Include a graph of expected results)
    What are alternative possible results
5. Discussion
   What would the results mean if they turn out they way you
   expect

Searching the literature

1. Science does not occur in a vacuum
   Current research reflects the contributions of previous studies
   "I can see so far only because I stand on the shoulders of giants" (Newton)
2. Published results have been reviewed by peers and judged to make significant contributions

Searching the literature: The web is your friend

1. Read current articles in reputable journals
2. Search for articles based upon keywords in their abstracts (PsychInfo)
3. Search for articles based upon the previous work they cite (Social Science Citation Index as found in Web of Science)
4. Google Scholar

Multiple sources are available

1. Searching books
   limited current but of historical interest
   Many references are irrelevant
2. Searching journal articles

Journals

1. Not all journals are equal
     Quality of peer review
   Breadth of distribution

2. General APA, APS journals –
     Psychological Review
   Psychological Bulletin
     Psychological Science

3. Field specific
   Journal of Personality and Social Psychology –
   European Journal of Personality
   Journal of Research in Personality
     Personality and Individual Differences
     Personality Science
   Journal of Personality

Searching with Google Scholar

1. Search for keywords of interest
2. Examine the abstract of the article
3. Look for the recent citations to that article
4. Rinse and repeat

Bibliographic management

1. Commerical bibliographic managers
   Endnote (free to NU students)
2. Open source bibliographic managers
   BibTex (BibDesk is the Mac Implementaton)

Bibliographic management

1. For short papers/projects, just copy the citation information into Word/TexShop
2. For longer papers/projects it is worth learning how use and build a data base
   Using Endnote (talks with WORD)
   BibTex talks with Latex

Notes on writing the paper and using references

1. Writing an APA style paper: Notes from 205:
2. Writing an APA style paper in LaTeX
3. The basic style is an hour glass.
4. Proof reading is important

Stylistic considerations

1. General style of writing
2. Specific requirements
3. Partially meant for ease of editing
   Margins and spacing
   levels of headings
   Running heads