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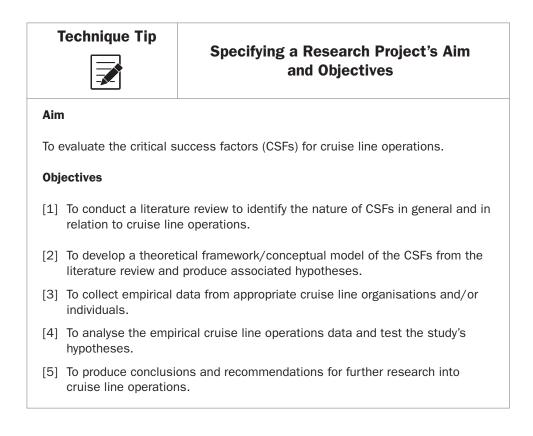
DEVELOPING THE RESEARCH PROPOSAL AND PLAN

TABLE 3.1 Different ways that research may make a contribution to the literature

Type of issue	Example
Select a hypothesis that is viewed as important by the literature but that is one for which no one has completed a systematic study. Any evidence discovered that supports the hypothesis, or not, will be considered to be a contribution	This might be something like 'increased levels of inbound tourism in developing countries help to stimulate economic growth in these countries'
Finding a hypothesis that appears to be	This could be something along the lines of 'The
accepted in the literature which we	speculation that the banning of smoking in
contend may be false, or one that lacks	public places, such as bars, pubs and
appropriate verification, and investigate it	restaurants, will result in a decline in business'
Discover a controversy in the literature	For example, an ongoing debate in hospitality
and undertake a study to either	is the conflict between the views that, on the
substantiate one side of the argument	one hand, hospitality has unique features not
against the other, or conclude that the	found in other types of business and, on the
controversy is unfounded	other hand, that it does not
Identify assumptions in the literature that	The commonly held assumption that 'High levels
have not been questioned and undertake	of labour turnover in hospitality/tourism
research to determine their efficacy	businesses are due to low pay' could be explored
Identify a gap in the existing literature	An example of this would be my research into
characterised by an important issue that	critical success factors (CSFs) in hospitality
has either been ignored or inadequately	businesses because, although CSFs had been
addressed and undertake a study to	researched in many other contexts, there were no
remedy this	systematic studies on this in a hospitality context
Identify theories, models or evidence	An example of this would be the SERVQUAL
existing in another body of literature	studies, which were developed and tested in
that could be tested for their	other service industry contexts, but the
applicability and efficacy in another	researchers claimed that this model could be
field or domain	used in any service business context
Replicate a study conducted in one	This might be a study conducted in another
context, or time period, and repeat this	industrial context, such as banking or retailing,
in another context or time period	or in another country or culture



To get you thinking even more about this aspect of the research proposal you may wish to view the two videos via the Video Links Section of the Companion Website (study.sagepub.com/brotherton) that deal specifically with developing good research questions.





To develop your thinking on this task you may find it useful to view the video dealing with the issues, stages and questions involved in developing a research proposal and plan that is available via the link in the Video Links Section of the Companion Website (study.sagepub.com/brotherton) and the links in the Web Links section relating to this process.

Research Action Checklist **Checking Your Research Proposal Does my proposal** provide a clear and appropriate context for the research question/s? \checkmark make the boundaries/parameters of the research clear and are these \checkmark appropriate and feasible? \checkmark include a clear and focused research question(s) and appropriate aim and objectives? provide a clear, coherent and persuasive rationale for undertaking the \checkmark research? cite landmark studies and researchers? \checkmark present accurately and succinctly the major theoretical and empirical contributions from previous studies? ✓ focus sufficiently on the major issues and not include unnecessary detail on the minor ones? contain appropriate text and bibliographic citations? \checkmark \checkmark make it clear how I am going to design the data collection process and instruments? \checkmark indicate what type/s of data will be collected and why? contain sufficient detail to inform the reader of how the data collection \checkmark process will be implemented? specify and explain the sampling strategy and techniques that will be used \checkmark to select and obtain the sample/s? \checkmark

- ✓ indicate and justify the procedures and techniques that will be used to analyse the data?
- ✓ hang together as a coherent document?
- ✓ And finally, if someone gave me this proposal would it make sense to me, could I follow it easily and understand exactly what the person was planning to do and why?

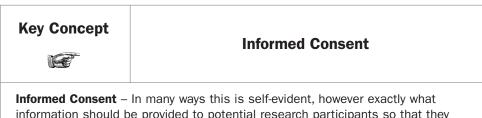


See also the video, available via the Video Links Section of the Companion Website (study.sagepub.com/brotherton), dealing with the issues facing a researcher attempting to navigate this journey.



Non-Harm

Non-Harm – It is a basic principle of research regarded as ethical that the participants should not be open to any potential harm as a consequence of their decision to participate. This, of course, includes physical harm but it is a much wider concept than that. For example, unless otherwise agreed at the outset, it is a basic tenet of research that participants are not named, or able to be identified, from the data they provide and the way the results are presented. Such anonymity not only protects the privacy of the participant but it also tends to encourage them to provide more truthful responses, for obvious reasons. The non-harm principle also applies to potential psychological and/or social harm. Some topics and questions could be highly sensitive and have the potential to distress or embarrass the participant; some might put them in a difficult position in relation to their superiors/subordinates or social networks; some may cause them to lose face or lose their jobs. Similar issues may arise with corporate participants; although you may be unlikely to ask for, or be given, commercially sensitive information there still may be information obtained from companies/organisations that needs to respect the anonymity principle.



informed **Consent** – In many ways this is self-evident, nowever exactly what information should be provided to potential research participants so that they are able to make an 'informed' decision is not always self-evident. Naturally you would tell people what the research is about, what it is designed to achieve, why it is being undertaken, what the participant will be expected to do, how much time will be required, who, if anyone, is sponsoring the research and what will happen to the results but would you think about how you are going to record and store the data you collect? Apart from potential legal issues associated with data protection/disclosure legislation the anonymity principle equally applies to this. Although you may feel that using personal descriptors to enter your data into electronic, or any other type of, files is not a problem because they are private to you, this may not be the case. If others could potentially access these files without your consent or knowledge then your actions could, albeit inadvertently, cause harm to those individuals or organisations.

	Re	esearch Action Checklist	Ethical Issues to Consider in Planning Research
Have you considered			
	~	✓ potential risks to the researcher, participants, the data collected, your institution?	
	\checkmark	what these risks might be and how they can be addressed?	
	\checkmark	how the data you collect will be protected?	
	\checkmark	✓ how the participants will be identified and recruited?	
	\checkmark	how informed consent will be managed and obtained?	
	\checkmark	how you will ensure that no harm comes to anyone involved in the research?	
	\checkmark	what will be done to ensure anonymity and confidentiality?	
	\checkmark	✓ how you will record, store and, eventually, dispose of the data?	
	\checkmark	the extent to which you may need ethical approval for your work?	
	✓	if there are likely to b	e any 'sensitivities' you may need to address?



For further assistance on ethical issues see the 'Research Ethics Guidebook' link in the Web Links section of the Companion Website (study.sagepub.com/brotherton).