

HOW TO PREPARE ETHICS COMMITTEE FILE?

The research protocol requires a cover page with the student's first and last name, number, title of the study, and advisor information. The length depends on several factors, but on average, it is about 5-6 pages, excluding the bibliography and appendices. It is recommended that the title of the research should not exceed 12 words. The file that the thesis students will submit to the ethics committee should include the "Ethics Committee Application Checklist" following the cover page and the "Application Petition" written and signed in an appropriate format. The content of the protocol should cover the following items, depending on the relevance of the study:

1. Purpose of the Research

- a. Objective (aim) of the Research
- b. Disclosure of the Originality (importance and limitations of the study)
- c. Hypothesis(es)

2. Scientific Basis of the Research and Related Literature

- a. Theoretical Framework and Definitions
- b. Related Literature Search

3. Methods

- a. Sample
- b. Data Collection Tools
- c. Research Pattern

4. Data Analysis

a. Statistical Analyzes Planned to be Used (Which analysis will be used for each hypothesis should be specified individually.)

5. References (in APA format)

6. Appendices

- a. Informed Consent Form (parental consent form for under 18)

- b. Sociodemographic Characteristics and Information Form**
- c. A Copies of the Scales to be Used**
- d. Permission from the authors for the scales to be used (email printout or written consent, etc.)**
- e. Basic Sources Forming Scientific Basis (addition of articles related to model, method, and research)**

Now let's examine these sections in more detail:

TITLE PAGE

The Title Page gives the first impression of your research protocol to the readership. The title should be the focus of the research. Make sure the title gives an idea of the content and key considerations of the proposed research.

1. Your title should serve as a mini summary of the research and include the most important words.

For example:

- "The Relationship of Cigarette Use with Depression and Anxiety Levels in University Students" implies that the focus of the research will be on smoking.
- "The Relationship Between Depression and Anxiety Levels of University Students and Smoking" implies that the focus of the research will be on depression and anxiety levels.

2. Word choice and syntax is a very important issue. The following list contains examples for thesis proposal titles in various fields. Review the examples of sentences often used on title pages.

- Examining the Relationship between Substance Use and Personality and Mental Symptoms in University Students
- The Effects of Perceived Parental Acceptance or Rejection on Child's Psychological Adjustment in Married and Divorced Families
- The Relationship of Alexithymia Dimensions with Depression and Anxiety Symptoms

SAMPLE TITLE PAGE

Alexithymia, Hopelessness, and Depression in Patients with Social Phobia:
A Controlled Study

Research Protocol
(Ethics Committee File)

Name, Number
Thesis Advisor

Clinical Psychology Master's Program
Işık University
(Date)

1. Purpose of the Research

The introduction is very important, in fact it is the most important part of the protocol. If the introduction catches the attention of readers, they will read the rest of your protocol with a more positive impression. An effective introduction tells the meaning of the study as well as the presentation of the topic covered. It also serves as a proof that you should work on the chosen topic, giving the reader a clear perspective on your tendencies and thoughts. Thus, the introduction provides a context and background description for your research. The rest of your protocol supports this part. While it doesn't need to be overly long, one or two paragraphs will suffice, but it is the most critical section as it is the section where you reveal the nature, content, and scope of your research. Although these parts of the introduction have been described separately, some parts can be written together.

Items of Purpose Section

- a. Purpose of the research.
- b. Explaining the originality and its importance (mentioning the knowledge gap supported by the literature/explaining the benefits to be gained from researching the problem/research question, if any).
- c. Hypotheses and research questions if any.

Strategy Examples

- Bring up the topic/question that interests you. What do you want to know or understand? Why did this topic interest you? What is the problem with this issue and what does it cause?
- Cite references to the need for research in this area or the lack of attention paid to the topic.
- Explain why such a study is needed. What is the importance of your research topic? Explain why this research is worth pursuing.
- Why is it so important to answer this research question? Explain in your own words how this study could be useful.
- Describe the target audience of the research (For example: the public, family therapist, etc.).
- Explain the benefit you think you will gain from the research.
- Conclude the paragraph with the purpose of your research and your hypotheses.

- The goal usually begins with a single statement that describes what you intend to accomplish in the work. Some typical expressions:

The aim of this study is...

... discovering what it is...

... understanding causes or effects...

To improve our current understanding of ...

To make a new interpretation of ...

- A hypothesis represents a statement in a sentence that explains the direction of relationship between two or more variables. Make a clear and careful distinction between dependent and independent variables and make sure it is clear enough for the reader. Be very consistent when using terms. If appropriate, use the same phrase model and word order in all hypotheses.

There are three types of hypotheses:

1. An explanatory hypothesis should identify and explain some phenomenon.

Example: Investigation of the relationship between eating attitudes and demographic characteristics (gender, age, department of study) in university students.

Descriptive research design is used in such hypotheses (see item 3.c.).

2. If there is thought to be a difference between the case groups, to investigate the differences, a hypothesis is formed about the differences.

Example: Patients with Borderline Personality Disorder who experienced childhood trauma, they are expected to show higher treatment resistance than non-experienced patients.

In such hypotheses, causal/comparative research design is used (see item 3.c.).

3. A hypothesis about **relationships** is formed to investigate whether two or more events are related in a systematic way.

Example: As the level of depression increases, it is expected that the level of social skills will decrease.

Relational/correlational research design is used in such hypotheses (see item 3.c.).

2. Scientific Basis of the Research and Related Literature

a. Theoretical Framework and Definitions

Make sure your protocol is clear to the reader. This section gives definitions of important terms and concepts that are usually mentioned in the objectives and hypotheses. Define topic-specific and technical terms and state what theory you are dealing with. If you are using words with meanings other than traditionally accepted meanings, define those terms. Be sure to cite authoritative sources in your descriptions.

If you have any operational definitions (a definition that describes concepts according to their intended use) that you have created just for this study, be sure to define them. An example of an operational definition: "**Progress** in this research was operationally defined as the difference between the posttest score and the pretest score".

The best way to organize the Definitions page is to define terms in alphabetical order and in complete sentences.

Below you will see examples from the definitions section of a thesis proposal titled "Self-directed (Self-Oriented) Learning Readiness and Life Satisfaction Among Older Adults".

Definition of Key Terms

Life Satisfaction – It is a person's evaluation of himself/herself as generally good in psychosocial terms. It is a combination of factors such as (a) personality factors such as mood and self-esteem, (b) social factors such as one's social interactions, (c) perceived health status, and (d) financial security.

Adult Elder – In the proposed study, Adult Elder was defined for people who are at least 65 years old.

Self-directed Learning – A process in which individuals take initiative, in with or without help from others, diagnosing learning needs, arranging learning goals,

determining the human and material resources needed for learning, selecting, and implementing appropriate learning strategies, and evaluating learning outcomes.

Readiness for Self (Self-Oriented) Learning – The degree to which a person perceives that he or she has the attitudes and skills necessary to be an effective, self-directed learner.

b. Related Literature Search

The literature review includes existing studies that reveal relationships between your variables, highlighting any theory that might support emerging hypotheses for research. It is necessary to show that you have looked at the literature and found the latest updates in the field so that the thesis proposal is convincing to the target audience.

3. Method

a. Sample

In this section, the sampling method (appropriate sampling, stratified sampling, cluster sampling, etc.) where the sample will be selected; demographic characteristics of the sample and exclusion criteria, if any; projected or calculated sample size should be explained in detail.

b. Data Collection Tools

This section should contain information about which tools and techniques you will use to measure your variables in your hypotheses. Which of these techniques to choose depends on the characteristics of the data and the opportunities of the researcher? Data can be collected by self-assessment tests as well as by interview and observation. Since most of you will use self-assessment tests, this section will focus on how tests should be reported.

Information to be given when reporting the tests to be used:

1. What does the test measure? Who developed the original test and, if any, Turkish standardization?
2. The structure of the test (How many items? How is the test answered? If it is Likert type, what are the response intervals? How is it scored? What do high scores and low scores mean? If any, which items are reverse coded? If any, what are the subscales?)
3. Internal consistency coefficients (Given separately for the original and the Turkish version. If necessary, the internal consistency coefficient of each subscale can also be specified.)
4. Contacting the authors to get approval for the use of the scale/questionnaire, obtaining permission to use the forms by e-mail or similar communication materials, documenting the received consent by an e-mail printout or similar methods. (printing it out and attaching it to the file)

c. Research Pattern

The overall design of a research project includes methods and procedures. Research design can be described as a QUALITATIVE or QUANTITATIVE approach. It is also possible to use a mixture of the two approaches, both in the general design and in the specific methods used in the research. Since the quantitative approach will be used in your theses, only the methods for this approach will be discussed in this section.

What Kinds of Basic Quantitative Approaches Are There for Research?

There are four main types of quantitative research: Descriptive, Correlational (Relational), Causal-Comparative/Semi-experimental, and Experimental Research. Experimental design is not included in the table below. While defining the design of the study, the model of the study (**longitudinal, cross-sectional, or retrospective**) must be specified in addition to the following information.

Descriptive Research	Correlational Research	Causal-Comparative/ Semi-experimental Research
It is used to describe the current state of a specified variable. These research projects are designed to provide systematic information about a phenomenon. Systematic collection of information requires careful selection of units of study and careful measurement of each variable.	It tries to determine the degree of relationship between two or more variables using statistical data. In this design, the relationship between a set of phenomena is explored and interpreted. This type of research considers data trends but does not go into deep analysis to prove reasons for observed patterns. There is no cause and effect on the basis of such observational studies. Only the data, relationships and distributions of the variables are studied. Variables are not manipulated; they are only detected and studied as they occur in a natural setting.	It tries to establish cause-effect relationships between variables. Such designs are very similar to real experiments, but there are some important differences. An independent variable is determined but not manipulated by the experimenter, and the effect of the independent variable on the dependent variable is measured. The researcher cannot randomly assign groups and must use naturally created or pre-existing groups. The experimental group exposed to the research variable is studied and compared with the unexposed group(s).

In addition to the information above, all the steps envisaged regarding the collection of relevant data within the framework of the research design chosen in line with the hypotheses should be explained in detail in this section. The general principle can be summarized as follows: “Every step followed in the data collection process should be clear enough to enable another researcher to repeat this or similar research in the same way.”

5. Data Analysis

a. Statistical Analyzes Planned to Use

In this part of the research protocol, information should be given on how the collected data will be analyzed and which analysis techniques will be used with the help of which program.

Sample:

In research,

1. Correlation to determine the relationship between the perceived social support scale and the self-acceptance inventory
2. One-way ANOVA to analyze whether there is a difference between perceived social support and self-acceptance levels among 3 different research groups.
3. Independent groups t-test will be used to analyze whether perceived social support and self-acceptance levels differ by gender.
4. The SPSS version in which the analyzes will be made should be specified.
5. The analysis to be used for each hypothesis should be determined.

For example:

Hypothesis 1- As the level of depression increases, the level of social skills is expected to decrease:

Correlation analysis will be used in the testing of this hypothesis.

6. Resources

All sources used in the research and referenced in the text should be included in the bibliography section. In addition, all sources in the bibliography should be cited in the text. The citation format for the text and the bibliography should be made in accordance with the 6th APA version.

7. Appendices

The materials that should be included in this section are listed below:

- a. Informed Consent Form (parental consent form for under 18)
- b. Sociodemographic Information Form
- c. Copies of the Scales to be Used
- d. Basic Sources Forming a Scientific Basis

The format of the appendices is as follows:

A. PAGE: Each Appendix begins on a separate page.

B. TITLE: If there is only one appendix, the text "Appendix" is centered on the first line under the page title. If there is more than one appendix, use Appendix A (or B or C, etc.). Double space(line) and header (uppercase, lowercase, centered).