

Selecting a thesis topic



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Step 1

Has it been done earlier in our University?

- Last 5 years
- GGSIP University – PGIMER, Dr RML hospital
VMMC, Safdarjung hospital
- List of thesis topics which have previously been done
 - Your own department
 - From VMMC, Safdarjung hospital

Step 2

Generate a research question / hypothesis

- Research question: statement of the problem as a question. e,g.
 - Is osteoporosis more common in patients with rheumatoid arthritis?
 - Are abortions more frequent in patients with SLE?
 - Do smokers have anterior wall MIs more often than non-smokers?

Step 2

Generate a research question / hypothesis

- Research hypothesis:
Is an intelligent guess based on observations.
It predicts the likely answer to the research question. e,g.
 - Osteoporosis is more common in patients with rheumatoid arthritis compared to the general population.

Where do research questions come from?

- Clinical observations
- Supervisors / co-supervisors
- Review of literature

Improving research hypotheses

- Specific
- Quantifiable
- Defined outcome

Improving research hypotheses: an example

- Bone mineral density as defined by DEXA is lower in patients with newly-diagnosed rheumatoid arthritis (ACR 2010 criteria) as compared to age and sex matched healthy controls.

Step 3

Feasibility

- Are resources available for conducting the study?
 - Patients
 - Laboratory tests
 - Equipment
 - Funds
 - Manpower
 - Time

Step 4

Collaborators

- Will you need the help of another department?

Diabetic retinopathy → Ophthalmology

MRI scanning → Radiodiagnosis

Anti-CCP antibodies → Biochemistry

- Keep them in the loop – discuss with them from the outset
- Include as Co-supervisor / co-investigative dept
- Clearly define responsibilities / expectations
- STATISTICIAN – consult him in the beginning

Step 5

What to avoid!

- Rare diseases
- Complex / invasive / expensive investigations
- Drug trials
- Long duration of follow up

Thank
You!

