Brief overview of the Research Design
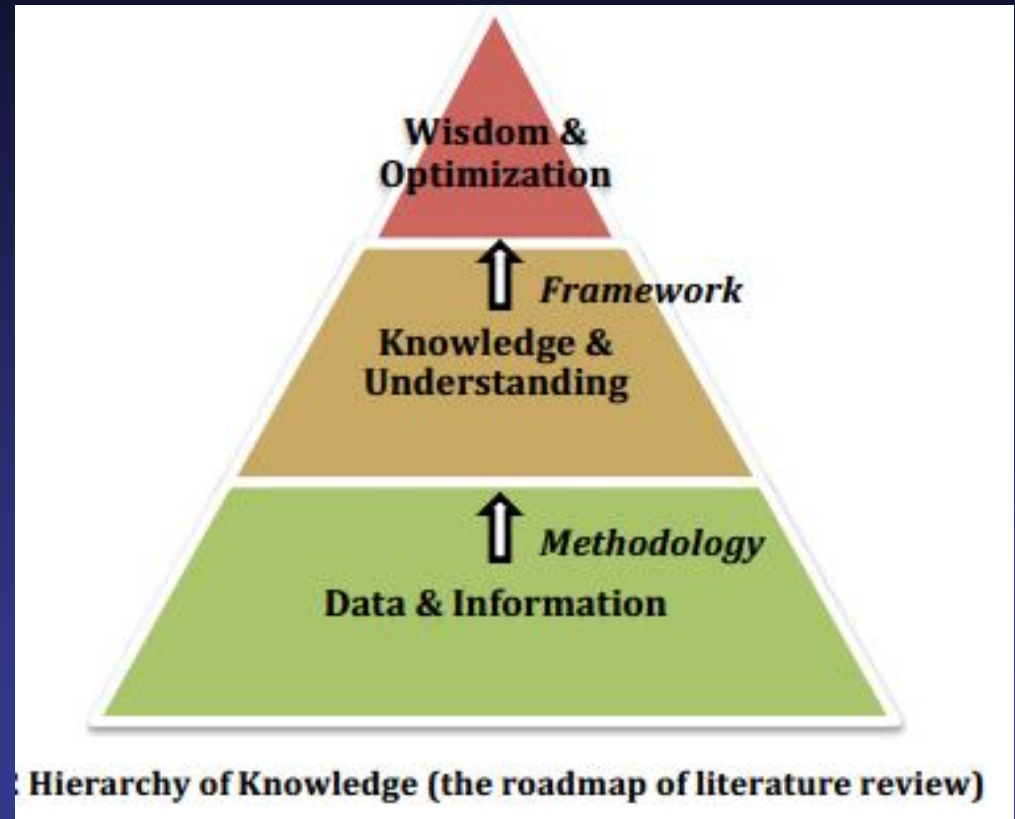
Carl Middleton

Research Design structure

- Your research design report will detail what your research aims to address, why it is important, and how you will do it … it is based on (and expands) your fellowship application

- **<u>Title</u>**
  - Concisely captures the content of your research in an interesting way

- 1. Statement of Research Problem [300 words]

  - This should be is a 'real world' problem viewed through a theoretical or conceptual lens
  - It should be a *significant* problem

Research Design structure

- 2. Literature Review [1000 words]

  – Relate the literature to your research
  – Identifies knowledge gaps in the field
  – Is not a treatise on the field itself!

Hierarchy of Knowledge (the roadmap of literature review)

Research Design structure

- 3. Conceptual Framework [300 words]
  - What are the key concepts (or School of Thought) that you will work with?

    - "Sustainable Development"
    - "Urban Political Ecology"
    - "Politics of Identity" *etc…*
  - This section may also identify key "independent" and "dependent" variables as a "model" from a theory (e.g. Resource Mobilization Theory"…)

Resource Mobilization Theory

Political Opportunity
Democracy, legitimacy, media freedom

Community Organization Skills
Leadership skills
Strategy
Ability to reach out to outside resources

Outside resources
Funding, equipment, supporters, media, legal consultancy

Social Movement

Successful Outcomes

Research Design structure

- 4. Research Questions

  - **<u>What</u>** questions entail a *descriptive* answer
  - **<u>Why</u>** questions ask for *causes* or *reasons* for a particular phenomenon
  - **<u>How</u>** questions ask *how to bring about change* with practical outcomes and intervention

  - Generally, you will have 2-3 central questions (I recommend with one over-arching question)

- 5. Research Objectives

  - State exactly what you will do, stating the outcome of the research

Research Design structure

- 6. Research Methods (1000 words)

  – What data do you need? How will you collect it?
  – Which research tools will you use? (documentary research, questionnaires, surveys, site visits etc…)
  – Where, when, talking to who, how, …

  – Your research method will be scrutinized carefully by your mentor! – <u>Detail is necessary at this stage</u>.

Research Design structure

- 7. Research scope (300 words)

  – Unit of analysis
  – Conceptual, physical, subject, temporal…

- 8. Significance of the research (300 words)

  – What contribution will your research make and why is it important

- 9. Ethical issues (no limit)
  – Is the researcher or those interviewed at risk?
  – What forms of consent are required?
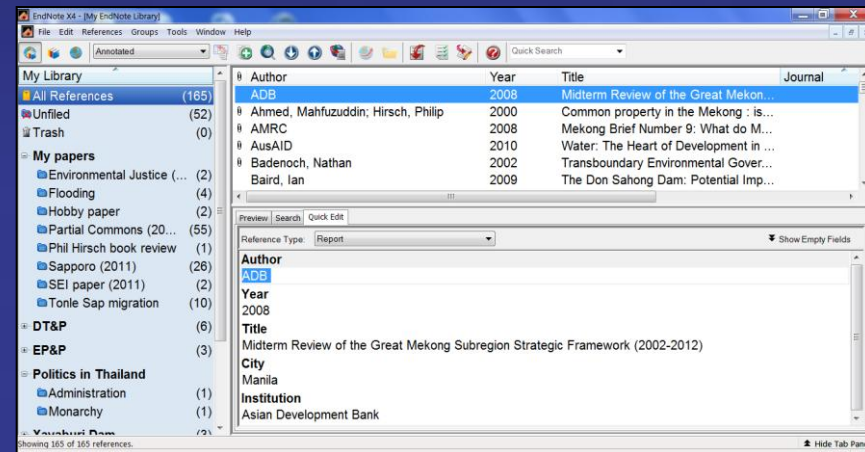 – Is anonymity required?

Research Design structure

- 10. Gender perspective (300 words)

- 11. Expected outcomes (300 words)

- 12. How will you communicate your research and to who?
  - Forum on Food Water and Energy
  - Other policy-related events
  - Conference paper/ policy brief/ blogs …. and other

- 12. Timeline

- 13. Budget

- Appendices
  - References, sample questionnaires, interview schedule…

Referencing

- ## We use the **APA System**

  - Useful tutorial: http://lib.monash.edu.au/tutorials/citing/ .
  - Useful guide: http://www.seas.at/wp-content/uploads/2009/01/apa-citation-guide-aseas.pdf

- ## You can use EndNote or another reference management tool to manage your references

  - http://www.endnote.com/training/

Research Design structure

- We request that you submit by no later than Monday 6th July 2015

- We will then share with your (proposed) mentor and buddy mentor, and they will provide feedback to you