

Example Phrases for Research Proposals

Research Problem

- Effective coordination between local and central governments is **a key factor in the success of** decentralization initiatives. **According to Smith (1999)**, a lack of coordination may cancel out most of the benefits of decentralization. **This is because** various problems, such as duplication of efforts, delays in processing, and mistakes made due to improperly communicated instructions, waste the time and resources saved by decentralizing.
- Customs unions **are defined as** “arrangements among countries in which the parties do two things: (1) agree to allow free trade on products within the customs union, and (2) agree to a common external tariff (CET) with respect to imports from the rest of the world” (OECD, n.d., Definition). Customs unions **are important components of** trade facilitation efforts between trading partners **as** they streamline the importing and exporting processes. **In recent years, research on** the effects that customs unions have on their members and other players in the trading environment **has intensified. This is due to the fact that** more and more countries are entering these agreements as free trade agreements become more common around the world (Jones, 2007).
- Asset price bubbles **represent a significant threat to** macroeconomic performance and financial market stability, **yet** their nature and policy implications are not fully understood. **In a recent analysis of** the Chinese real estate market, **Smith (2011) argued that . . .**
- Innovation **has been recognized as the driving force behind** economic growth in modern market economies. To enhance their innovation competitiveness, a

number of countries have followed the US by strengthening their intellectual property rights protection. **For example, . . .**

- Intellectual assets **play an important role in fostering** innovation and economic growth in a knowledge-based economy.

Knowledge Gap

- **Although there has been significant attention paid to the issue of helping** developing countries to progress beyond low-income status, **there has been very little research on** the appropriate macroeconomic policies to complement this growth.
- **Existing literature on the topic of administrative reform has often focused on the** restructuring of individual government ministries in efforts to improve efficiency (Smith, 1999; Wilson, 2001; Zane, 2000); **however, there is a dearth of research dealing with** the possibility of restructuring the government structure as a whole.
- **The issue of aging population has been well-researched for** many developed economies (Barry, 1997; Crow, 1992; Tanner, 2004); **however, few researchers have explored this phenomenon in** transition economies.
- **There are a number of existing studies that have looked at** the impact of free trade agreements on SMEs; **however, there is little consensus in the findings. Therefore, in this paper, the issue will be revisited using a more up-to-date dataset and a new methodological approach.**

Describing the Purpose

- **This paper complements existing literature on decentralization** by comparing and analyzing the decentralizing processes involved in two case studies . . .
- This study **contributes to the literature on forest management by examining** the community participation in . . .
- This is a **replication of an earlier study conducted by Smith (1999) to extend** the general theoretical models of technology adoption, such as TAM, **to different contexts.**
- **In this study, I will attempt to extend what is known about** customs unions **by** applying the methodology used by Henry (2009) to predict the impact on trade of unions that have yet to be made.

This paper/study . . .

deals with the obstacles to trade facilitation in Sub-Saharan Africa.

demonstrates that current thinking on the real estate market's reaction to sudden dips may be inappropriate for transition economies.

focuses on the relationship between corruption and efficiency in a mix of developing and developed countries.

highlights some of the issues that hamper efforts at decentralization in Cambodia.

identifies three alternatives to the current policy regarding settlement of disputes between ASEAN members.

uses the latest data to test if what was found to be true in previous research is still the case today.

In this paper, I . . .

aim to answer the question of whether or not membership of ASEAN has contributed to the economic growth of the member countries equally, or whether membership is particularly beneficial to only a few countries.

argue that in order for a low-income country to graduate to middle-income status, its primary area for investment must be human resource capacity building.

ask what the relationship is between FDI and ODA in newly graduated middle-income countries.

attempt to discover the root causes of the persistent corruption in customs.

describe the processes involved in transferring powers from the central government to local governments and some of the challenges involved.

discuss the current thinking on free-trade agreements in order to ascertain their impact on domestic production.

examine the strengths and weaknesses of the recruiting processes.

explore the impact of trade embargoes on domestic demand . . .