

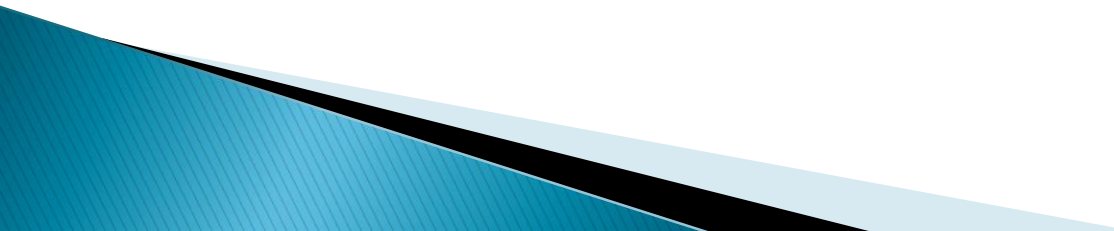
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MLIS Semester II
(Paper – 1)

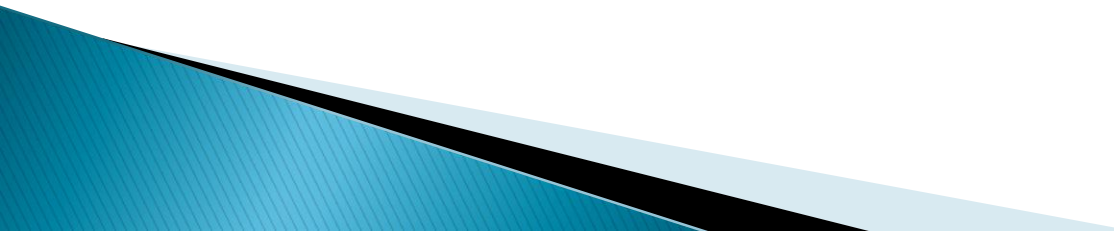
Research Methods And Statistical Techniques
topic – Identification and Formulation Of Research Problem
e-content

Identification of Research Problems

Research forms a cycle. It starts with a problem and ends with a solution to the problem. The problem statement is therefore the axis which the whole research revolves around, because it explains in short the aim of the research. Prospective researchers can search within their own subject field for suitable problems. What should, however, be mentioned, is that not all identified problems within a scientific field of study is suitable for research.



The prospective researcher should think on what caused the need to do the research (problem identification). The question that he/she should ask him/herself is: Are there questions about this problem to which answers have not been found up to the present? The research problem should be stated in such a way that it would lead to analytical thinking on the part of the researcher with the aim of possibly concluding solutions to the stated problem.

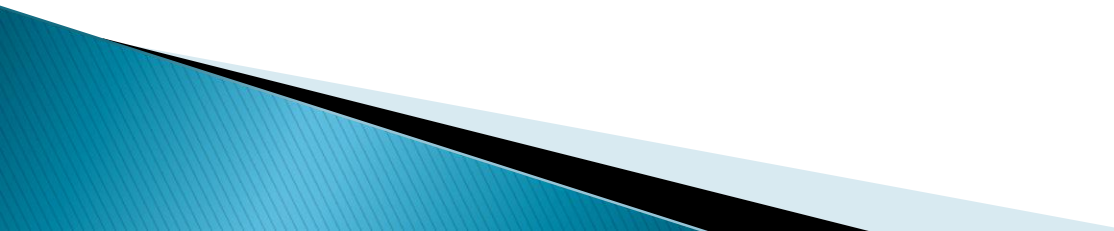


Formulation of Research Problems

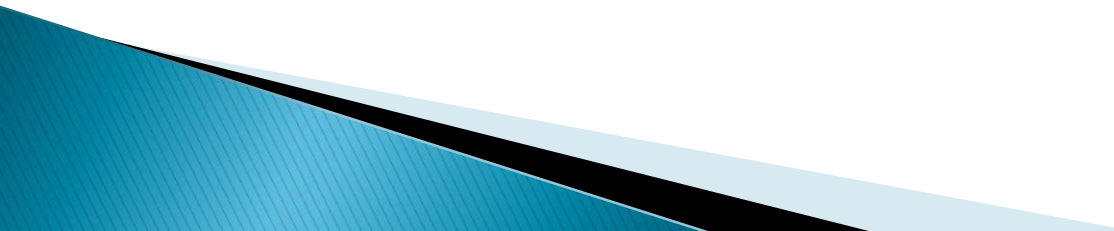
Formulation of a research problem refers to state the problem in a researchable manner. It means to portray the topic in a way that it becomes ready for scientific investigation. A research problem is simply research topic. The researcher needs to refine the topic clearly state what is intended to explore about the topic. Formulation of the research problem basically includes narrowing down the research area and formulating the objectives. Once the research problem is formulated, the topic becomes ready to undergo a scientific inquiry – the research.

The following aspects are important when formulating a research problem:

The research problem should always be formulated grammatically correct and as completely as possible. You should bear in mind the wording (expressions) you use. Avoid meaningless words. There should be no doubt in the mind of the reader what your intentions are. Demarcating the research field into manageable parts by dividing the main problem into Sub problems is of the utmost importance.



Steps of formulation of a research problem

- ▶ The formulation of a research problem consists of the following steps :-
 - ▶ Identify a broad research area of your interests.
 - ▶ Dissect the broad area into sub-areas.
 - ▶ Select one of the sub-areas.
 - ▶ Raise research questions.
 - ▶ Formulate the objectives.
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- ❖ Identify a broad research area of your interests

A researcher always starts with identifying a broad area depending on his interest, knowledge, specialty, expertise and profession. Hence, you should first select a major area which you want to investigate. Such an area must have a wide significance and must be according to your interest, knowledge and specialty. For instance, a researcher in social science may select areas such as poverty reduction, over population, conflict resolution, crime control, unemployment, political instability, economic fluctuations, human rights and so on. These are broad areas. Each of these areas can be split into many research topics.

❖ Dissect the broad area into sub-areas

Once you select a broad area, you need to narrow down the area into a specific topic that is researchable and manageable for the researcher. For this, dissect the broad area into sub-areas to select one specific topic from them. For instance, you have selected broad area “Domestic Violence” for your research. This broad area can be split into following sub-areas:

- Profile of families in which DV occurs.
- Profile of victims of DV.
- Causes of DV.
- Types of DV.
- Impacts of DV on family etc.

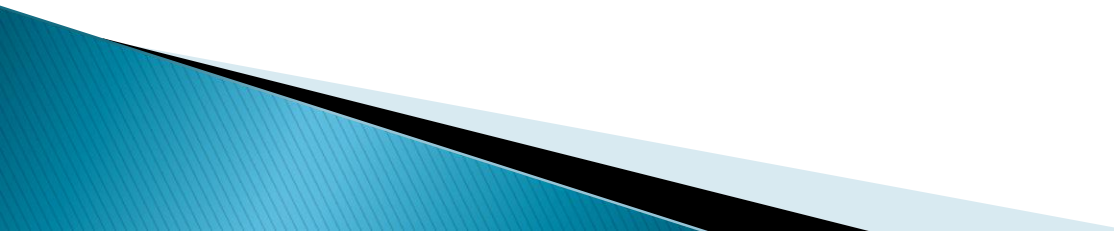
- ❖ Select one of the sub-areas

It is not feasible for the researcher to study all the sub-areas due to limited resources – time and monetary resources. Hence, select one of the sub-area that interest you more and is more feasible and manageable for you. This area should be relevant to your subject knowledge. It should also have research significance.

❖ Raise research questions

After selecting a specific sub-area, start thinking about what should you explore about this sub-area (topic). In other words, raise important questions about the chosen sub-area which need to be answered in your research. There can be many questions but you have to choose the most important and relevant ones. Similarly, the number question will determine the length of your research and thesis. Hence, make a few questions depending upon the length of your research.

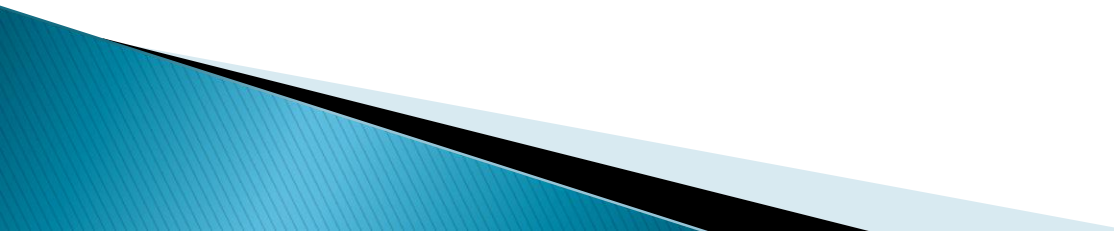
For instance, we select one sub-area from the above that is 'Causes of domestic violence'. We may raise the following questions:

- How does illiteracy influence DV?
 - Is poverty responsible for DV?
 - How do long held traditions lead to DV?
 - What are the socio cultural causes of DV?
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❖ Formulate the objectives

Now, you should formulate the objectives your study that you intend to explore. The objectives of the study basically stem out of the research questions. The difference between research questions and objective is the way they are written. Research questions are interrogative sentences. On the other hand, Objectives action or aim-oriented statements consisting of words such as to explore, to investigate, to examine, to find out and so on. The simple way to write you objectives is to transform your research questions into objective.

For instance, we transform the above research questions for 'Causes of domestic violence' into objectives as follows :-

- To examine the influence of illiteracy on DV.
 - To explore the impact of poverty on DV.
 - To know long held traditions leading to DV.
 - To investigate the socio cultural causes of DV.
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THANK YOU