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## **Introduction**

Welcome to the Indian Journal of Legal Affairs and Research (IJLAR), a distinguished platform dedicated to the dissemination of comprehensive legal scholarship and academic research. Our mission is to foster an environment where legal professionals, academics, and students can collaborate and contribute to the evolving discourse in the field of law. We strive to publish high-quality, peer-reviewed articles that provide insightful analysis, innovative perspectives, and practical solutions to contemporary legal challenges. The IJAR is committed to advancing legal knowledge and practice by bridging the gap between theory and practice.

## Preface

The Indian Journal of Legal Affairs and Research is a testament to our unwavering commitment to excellence in legal scholarship. This volume presents a curated selection of articles that reflect the diverse and dynamic nature of legal studies today. Our contributors, ranging from esteemed legal scholars to emerging academics, bring forward a rich tapestry of insights that address critical legal issues and offer novel contributions to the field. We are grateful to our editorial board, reviewers, and authors for their dedication and hard work, which have made this publication possible. It is our hope that this journal will serve as a valuable resource for researchers, practitioners, and policymakers, and will inspire further inquiry and debate within the legal community.

## Description

The Indian Journal of Legal Affairs and Research is an academic journal that publishes peer-reviewed articles on a wide range of legal topics. Each issue is designed to provide a platform for legal scholars, practitioners, and students to share their research findings, theoretical explorations, and practical insights. Our journal covers various branches of law, including but not limited to constitutional law, international law, criminal law, commercial law, human rights, and environmental law. We are dedicated to ensuring that the articles published in our journal adhere to the highest standards of academic rigor and contribute meaningfully to the understanding and development of legal theories and practices.

# **FORMULATION OF RESEARCH PROBLEM**

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## **Abstract**

The first and most important step of a research is formulation of research problems. It is like the foundation of a building to be constructed. To solve a problem someone has to know about the problem. So, the problem identification and formulation is very crucial for the researcher before conducting a research, and this is perhaps one of the most difficult aspects of any research undertaking. The "problem" is stated in the opening passages of a study and, in effect, provides a reader the rationale for why the study is important and why it is necessary to read. This paper discusses the concepts and activities for identifying, specifying, and stating a research problem in both quantitative and qualitative research and positioning it within a section that introduces a study, i.e., the "statement of the problem" section. By the end of this paper, readers should be able to: (1) Differentiate a research area of interest from a research topic and research problem; (2) Identify one's own area of interest; (3) Determining the most suitable topic to study; (4) Explain the importance of a research problem in a study; (3) Distinguish between a research problem and other parts of research process; (5) Identify criteria for deciding whether a problem can and should be researched; (6) Describe how quantitative and qualitative research problems differ; (7) Write a good problem statement section; and (8) Write research questions and hypothesis.

**Key words:** English Language Teaching, area of interest, research topic, research problem, research question, hypothesis, knowledge gap.

## **INTRODUCTION**

Research, in a very general term, is a systematic way for finding things you and other people did not know which are called as research problems. In this sense, as what the discussion on the research process in previous modules has indicated, research is a process consisting of the identifying and defining research problem, formulating and testing the hypothesis through data

collection, organization and analysis, making deductions and reaching of conclusion from the test results of the hypotheses, and reporting and evaluating the research. Viewing its process, research is essentially a problem driven activity.

Since research is problem driven, the first thing to deal in undertaking a study is to identify and determine the problem to study. Identifying a research problem is important because, as the issue or concern in a particular setting that motivates and guides the need for conducting a study, it lays the foundation for an entire project. If the foundation is shaky the entire project is doomed to failure. This is why no vice researchers necessitate absolute caution in the initial stages of a research project. Professional researchers could easily identify a research problem because they have been quite familiar with the phenomena in which a problem generally presents itself. By considering the phenomena which include (1) a difficulty or deficiency to be overcome; (2) a condition to be improved upon; (3) a gap in knowledge that exists in scholarly literature that is to be filled; (4) a theory that requires meaningful understanding; or (5) a body of knowledge or views held in different clime that requires validation or confirmation for local application, professional researchers could easily recognize suitable problem to study. To make the concepts in this module clearer and more realistic, read the following four research articles: (1) Use of Mother Tongue in EFL Classes of Secondary Schools in Jabodebek: Students' and Teachers' Perception (Pardede, 2018); (2) The Effect of Edmodo on EFL Learners' Writing Performance (Shams-Abadi, Ahmadi and Mehrdad, 2015), Attitudes of Pre-Service EFL Teachers toward Research (Pardede, 2012), and The Contribution of Students' Beliefs about Language Learning, Learning Styles, and Language Learning Strategies toward The English Achievement of The Eleventh Grade Students of State Senior High Schools in Singaraja (Angelianawati, 2012).

### **RESEARCH FIELD, AREA OF INTEREST, TOPIC AND PROBLEM**

Why could professional researchers identify a research problem relatively easy but novice researchers find it difficult? The answer, as it has previously been indicated, is that professional researchers are familiar with their field of the study, while novice researchers still have a relatively familiarity to it. Thus, to be able to identify a research problem, you should first make English language teaching (ELT) research, the field in which you are undertake a research well known to you. To achieve this, overviewing the ELT research and its area is worth doing. Before making an

overview of ELT research field, it a good idea first to clarify the four terminologies in this subsection: research field, area, topic and problem. Research field refers to the whole areas of research undertaken in a specific scientific discipline. Thus, ELT research field covers the whole studies carried out in English teaching discipline. A research area is a specific part or section of a research field. A research area covers many topics researchers can study in the context of a scientific discipline. A research topic is "the broad subject matter addressed in a study" (Creswell, 2012, p. 60). Since it is the broad subject matter of a research, many investigators begin here. A research problem, as mentioned previously, is the issue being addressed. It helps in narrowing the topic down to something that is reasonable for conducting a study. Creswell, 2012) defined research problem as "a general educational issue, concern, or controversy addressed in research that narrows the topic" p. 60). The relationship of research field, area of interest, topic and problem is illustrated by Figure 1. It shows that ELT research field is divided into many research areas. Each research area is divided further into many topics, and each topic could is divided into some research problems.

### **Identification of Research Problem**

After choosing a specific topic for your academic paper, you need to state it as a clear research problem that identifies all the issues that you'll address.

It's not always simple for students to formulate it. In some fields, they may end up spending a lot of time thinking, exploring, and studying before getting a clear idea of what research questions to answer.

### **Research Topic**

As mentioned earlier, after having research interests, it will be easier for you to determine the topic or "the broad subject matter addressed in a study" (Creswell, 2012, p. 60). Pardede (2018), for instance, might have decided "Translation in ELT" as one of his research area. Based on this, he selected "the use mother tongue in foreign language learning" the topic of his study. In the same way, Angelianawati (2012) might have decided "Psychology, Anthropology, and Sociology in ELT" as her area of interest. Then she selected "students' beliefs about language learning, learning styles, and language learning strategies" as her research topic.

What should you do to identify and select a topic based on your interested research area? Just follow these three steps. First, broaden and deepen your understanding about the research area. Second, make a list of possible topics to study based on the research are. Third, choose the best topic by putting the eleven points below into consideration. The first step could be accomplished by reading literature review, research articles, handbooks and encyclopedias related to the research areas. After having broader and deeper knowledge about the research areas, you are ready to take step two, i.e. listing the possible topics to study. After that, use the eleven considerations proposed by Reis (1999):

1. Can it be enthusiastically pursued?
2. Can interest be sustained by it?
3. Is the problem solvable?
4. Is it manageable in size?
5. Will it lead to other research problems?
6. Is it worth doing?
7. What is the potential for making an original contribution to the literature in the field?
8. If the problem is solved, will the results be reviewed well by scholars in your field?
9. Are you, or will you become, competent to solve it?
10. By solving it, will you have demonstrated independent skills in your discipline?
11. Will the necessary research prepare you in an area of demand or promise for the future?

As indicated by the eleven points, there are some factors to consider when selecting a research topic. Some of them are related to your particular interests, capabilities, and motivations. Some others have to do with the areas that will be of greatest interest to both the academic and private sectors.

### **Research Problem**

A research problem, as mentioned previously, is the issue being addressed in a study. The issue can be a difficulty or conflict to be eliminated; a condition to be improved; a concern to handle; a troubling question, a theoretical or practical controversy (or a gap) that exists in scholarly literature. A research problem helps in narrowing the topic down to something that is reasonable for conducting a study. Creswell, (2012) defined research problem as "a general educational issue, concern, or controversy addressed in research that narrows the topic" p. 60). Continuing with the

topic identified by Pardede (2018), he looked at the perception of secondary schools students and teachers of the use of Indonesian in EFL classes. The problem is that very little attention has been given to the issue of first language use in English classes in Indonesia so that there is no appropriate empirical data to prepare the ground for a more reasoned use of Indonesian in the English classroom. By researching this problem, such necessitated data could be obtained. Based on the topic she identified, Angelianawati (2012) focused on the contribution of students' beliefs about language learning, learning styles, and language learning strategies on students' English achievement as the problem of her study. By knowing the role of those students' beliefs it would be easier to facilitate them to succeed their learning.

Identify broad field >Dissect the subareas>Select interested sub-area> Raise research questions  
>Formulate objective>Assess objective>Double check

### **Steps in Formulating Research Problem**

This is a great idea to thinking about the subject area of your interest. You should identify the field in which you would like to work a long time after your academic study or graduation. It will help you tremendously to get an interesting research topic. In this stage, researcher needs to dissect and specify your research broad study area into some subareas. It is almost impossible to study all subareas. That's why you must identify your area of interest. You should select issues in which you are passionate about. In this step in formulating a research problem, you would point out your research questions under the area of interest as you decided in the previous stage. Set out conspicuously your research root objectives and sub-objectives. Research objectives essentially come from research questions.

### **Sources of Research Problem**

- Personal Experience
- Practical Experience
- Critical appraisal of literature
- Previous research
- Existing theories
- Consumer feedback

- Performance improvement activities
- Social issues
- Brainstorming
- Intuition
- Exposure to field situations
- Consultations with experts

Look for inspiration in published literature

Seek help from your research advisor

Use digital tools to seek out popular topics or most cited research papers

Check the websites of influential Journals

Make a note of your queries

Research each question

Identification of Research Gap



## CONCLUSION

Identifying and determining the research problem, is the issue being addressed in a study, is the first and most important step in undertaking a research. A research problem is derived from a topic, or the broad subject matter addressed in a study. Since a topic is selected by considering the factors of interests, capabilities, motivations, manageability, and contribution to literature, the research problem is supposed to have fulfilled these factors. The fulfillment of this factor can indicate that the problem can and should be studied. Before writing the research problem statement, the investigator also needs to consider whether the problem will better suit a quantitative or qualitative approach. If the problem concerns with the issue that needs to be explained, it is best addressed by quantitative research. If the problem concerns with the issue that needs to be explored, it is best addressed by the qualitative approach. A research problem is succinctly stated in one or more concise paragraph (but not exceeds one page by including five elements: the actual research problem, justification of the importance of the problem as found in current studies and practice, deficiency (gap) in literature about the problem, method (timeframe, participants, location and trend), and the organization, and/or the individuals that will benefit from a better understanding

or solution to the problem. The problem statement is then followed by purpose, research questions. Exclusively, the research questions of a quantitative research are followed by the hypothesis.

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