

Chapter 2. Identifying a Research Problem

For each question below, circle the correct or best answer.

1. A research problem is
 - a. a problem that needs to be researched.
 - b. an issue or concern in education.
 - c. an important passage that begins a study.
 - d. the question being addressed in a study.

2. As you examine a published research report, you will find the research problem located
 - a. in the problem section of a study.
 - b. introduced throughout a study.
 - c. in the introduction to the study.
 - d. in the first sentence to a study.

3. A researcher seeks to study the factors that contribute to "binge" drinking on college campuses. Which of the following would be the best "problem" statement for this study?
 - a. The purpose of the study is to examine the factors that contribute to binge drinking on one Midwestern university campus.
 - b. What are the factors that contribute to binge drinking on a Midwestern college campus?
 - c. Binge drinking occurs on many college campuses, and it is a popular pastime at many social events.
 - d. When students binge drink at fraternity parties, they often humiliate and demean women attending the parties.

4. Which one of the following factors would make a research problem un-researchable?
 - a. You do not know the literature about the problem.
 - b. You cannot obtain access to a population of study.
 - c. You cannot conduct statistical tests.
 - d. You cannot add to practice through your study.

5. A researcher seeks to explore how elementary students experience being assessed in math at the 4th grade level. Prior theories provide little guidance about what the researcher would expect to find. Students have shown some anxiety during testing. This research problem is best studied using a
 - a. qualitative approach.
 - b. quantitative approach.
 - c. assessment approach.
 - d. evaluation approach.

6. A researcher introduces the central idea in the title and the opening paragraph of a published study. This idea is called
 - a. the central idea.
 - b. the central phenomenon.
 - c. the key variable.
 - d. the educational topic.

 7. Indicate the purpose of using a narrative hook in the introduction to a study.
 - a. It provides the reader with your research question.
 - b. It introduces your research design to the reader.
 - c. It encourages the reader to continue to read on.
 - d. It promotes the importance of the first sentence.

 8. In order to justify the importance of a research problem in a statement of the problem section of a study, the researcher might use all of the following sources except?
 - a. Draw on personal experiences
 - b. Rely on the advice of experts
 - c. Use results to develop an incomplete theory
 - d. Talk with colleagues in the workplace

 9. Which of the following are the best writing strategies for the statement of problem section?
 - a. Use a quote to begin the study.
 - b. Begin the section with your research questions.
 - c. Use frequent literature references throughout the section.
 - d. Begin with a specific topic and then move to the general.

 10. Why would a researcher mention the audience in a "statement of the problem" section of a study?
 - a. Because members of the audience need to use the study
 - b. Because members of the audience will vote to publish the study
 - c. Because members of the audience will want to use the study
 - d. Because members of the audience need to see the study's relevance

 11. What characterizes the best stance on using quotes from the literature in the "statement of the problem" section of a research study?
 - a. Long quotes should not be used.
 - b. Quotes should be used sparingly.
 - c. Find quotes for statistical trends.
 - d. Short quotes should be used.
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12. Below are the five components typically found in a "statement of the problem" section of a research study. Order the components as they are found by placing a number in the space before the component.

_____ justification of the problem
_____ audience
_____ the research problem
_____ the topic
_____ deficiencies of past research or practical knowledge

13. Below you will find a narrative hook presented by a researcher in a study. Unfortunately, it is not a good narrative hook. Rewrite it to be a better hook, keeping in mind the purpose of a good hook.

Poor model: AIDS education needs to be included within the school's curriculum at the junior high and high schools levels.

Good model: _____

14. Assume that you would like to study the research problem of whether students with special needs should be included in the regular classroom. What factors would you consider in determining whether this problem is researchable? List three factors.

1. _____
2. _____
3. _____

15. Look at paragraph 4 of the mothers' trust in school principals study (Shelden et al., 2010). On what basis do the authors justify the need to study the research problem?

16. Read through the opening paragraphs (1-12) of the parent involvement study (Deslandes & Bertrand, 2005). Of the major components that are typically included in a good "statement of the problem" section, which one is missing?

17. For each of the following statements, indicate whether it is a characteristic more applicable to quantitative or qualitative research problem or both. Place an "X" in the appropriate column.

QUANTITATIVE

QUALITATIVE

A study in which the author seeks to:

a. measure variables

b. study a process

c. generate theories

d. study a few sites

e. explain concepts

Chapter 2. Identifying a Research Problem

1. b
2. c
3. d
4. b
5. a
6. d
7. c
8. d
9. c
10. d
11. b
12. __3__ justification of the problem
 __5__ audience
 __2__ the research problem
 __1__ the topic
 __4__ deficiencies of past research or practical knowledge
13. The good model needs to focus on an issue or a problem, such as, "The frequency of AIDS is escalating among junior high and high school student populations today."
14. Possible answers: 1 – whether the study will contribute to knowledge and practice; 2 – whether I have access to people and sites to study; 3 – whether I have time, resources, and skills to conduct the study
15. Evidence from past research studies
16. Clearly stating an issue or a problem that leads to the study
17.
 - a. QUANTITATIVE
 - b. QUALITATIVE
 - c. QUALITATIVE
 - d. QUALITATIVE
 - e. QUANTITATIVE