

# HOW TO WRITE A STATEMENT PROBLEM

Sanjay Kulshreshtha

# WHAT IS A RESEARCH PROBLEM?

- A research problem may be described as an incongruence; a discrepancy between what is and what ought to be. It may be also described as the gap in knowledge that needs to be filled.

- Take this statement, “everybody wants to go to heaven but nobody wants to die”. Dying looks like a problem that needs a solution yet there is no possible solution to it. People must die. A research on how people can live forever makes little or no sense.

# WHAT IS A PROBLEM STATEMENT?

- A problem statement is the description of an issue currently existing which needs to be addressed. It provides the context for the research study and generates the questions which the research aims to answer.

The statement of the problem is the focal point of any research. A good problem statement is just one sentence (with several paragraphs of elaboration). For example it could be: "The frequency of job layoffs is creating fear, anxiety, and a loss of productivity in middle management workers."

A well articulated statement of the problem establishes the foundation for everything to follow in the proposal and will render less problematic most of the conceptual, theoretical and methodological obstacles typically encountered during the process of proposal development.



WHAT ARE KEY COMPONENTS OF THE  
STATEMENT PROBLEM?



Problem statements often have three elements:

1. The problem itself, stated clearly and with enough contextual detail to establish why it is important
2. The method of solving the problem, often stated as a claim or a working thesis
3. The purpose, statement of objective and scope of the project being proposed.

## Criteria for Research Problem Statements:

- The statement of the problem should clearly indicate what is to be investigated.
- The actual statement may be in a declarative or in a question form.
  - The statement should indicate the variables of interest and the specific relationship between the variables that are to be studied.

**WHAT IS THE  
ROLE OF  
PROBLEM  
STATEMENT?**

- The problem provides the context for the research study and typically generates questions which the research hopes to answer.

# Take care

- In your proposal the statement of the problem is oftentimes the first part to be read with scrutiny.
- You need to be able to clearly answer the question: "what is the problem"? And "why is this problem worth my attention"? At the same time, the problem statement limits scope by focusing on some variables and not others. It also provides an opportunity for you to demonstrate why these variables are important.

# WHERE DOES A PROBLEM STATEMENT ORIGINATE FROM?

- A literature review and
- a study of previous experiments, and research,
- good sources of research questions that are converted to statements of problem

# Question formulate

- Is there something wrong in society, theoretically unclear or in dispute, or historically worth studying?
- Is there a program, drug, project, or product that needs evaluation?
- What do you intend to create or produce and how will it be of value to you and society?

# Common sources of research problems

- • Personal experience and interests of researchers.
- • Various theories in the discipline of the researcher.
- Related Literature- Literature from one's own area of interest.
- • A reproduction of past research studies.



- Is the problem of current interest? Is it topical?
- Is the problem likely to continue into the future?
- Will more information about the problem have practical application?
- Will more information about the problem have theoretical importance?
- How large is the population affected by the problem?

-How important, influential, or popular is this population?

-Would this study substantially revise or extend existing knowledge?

Would this study create or improve an instrument of some utility?

Would research findings lead to some useful change in best practice?

Is there evidence or authoritative opinion from others to support the need for this research?

The title of this research project would be something like this:

"Fertilizer use by small scale farmers in Gwalior district and their farm productivity."

# Purpose of the literature review

- The purpose of the literature review that follows thereafter is to answer the research problem question. If the literature cannot answer the question, the research is needed to do so. An example question might be: this proposal poses the question, "What is the relationship between farm productivity and farmer use of fertilizer"? The information needed is (1) productivity levels and (2) some measure of fertilizer use

# Purpose of the literature review

- . **A bad example** might be: "What is the best way to train for use of fertilizer"? This is insufficient because:
  - What are the variables?
  - What will be measured?
  - What relationships will be examined?

- close relationship between the title of the proposal and the problem statement question.

Establishing a research problem can be a challenging yet rewarding process.

Careful selection of the research problem defines the work of the project and provides a direction for the entire process.

Establishing your research problem usually consists of distinct phases:

***Research topic > research***

***problem > problem***

***statement > research***

***design > research proposal***



# A qualitative problem statement

- Brain drain in India is increasing (**GENERAL PROBLEM**). Every year about 50 professionals migrate abroad due to unsatisfactory working conditions (***SPECIFIC PROBLEM WITH NUMBERS and supported with a citation***). This brain drain is different from previous shortages, because it involves not only fresh graduates but also seasoned professionals (quote).

# A quantitative Statement of the Problem

- ATM fraud is one of the fastest growing crimes in India( Denik Bhaskar). In 2016, at least 70 Thousand Indian were victims of ATM fraud, an increase of 50% from 2015 (News paper report2016). GENERAL PROBLEM SUPPORTED BY LITERATURE .