

IDENTIFICATION OF RESEARCH PROBLEM

GALGOTIAS
UNIVERSITY

INTRODUCTION

- A research problem is a question that researcher wants to answer or a problem that a researcher wants to solve
- Identification & formulation of a research problem is the first step of the research process.
- Selection of research problem depends on several factors such as researcher's
- knowledge, skills, interest, expertise, motivation & creativity with respect to the subject of inquiry.

DEFINITION

- **According to *Kerlinger***, ‘A problem is an interrogative sentence or statement that asks what relation exists between two or more variable. The answer to question will provide what is having sought in the research.
- ***R.S. Woodworth*** defines problem as ‘a situation for which we have no ready & successful response by instinct or by previous acquired habit. We must find out what to do’, i.e. the solution can be found out only after an investigation.

IDENTIFICATION OF RESEARCH PROBLEM

- Identification of a research problem is the first & most important step in research process.
- Generally, a broad area is selected & then a broad topic is delimited or narrowed down to a specific one-sentence statement of the problem.
- This step of the research process is considered as the most difficult & challenging, & need slots of time.
- A research problem may come from several sources:

Personal Experiences:

- Day-to-day personal experience of a research may serve as good source of ideas to formulate a research problem.
- For example, a researcher observed domestic violence suffered by wives of alcoholic husbands.
- This experience may provide ideas to identify several research problems related to domestic violence against women.

GALGOTIAS
UNIVERSITY

Practical Experiences:

Nurses get plenty of ideas to formulate research problems from their clinical experiences.

- For example, a nurse finds that unrestricted visiting hours in surgical wards reduced the analgesic demand among postoperative patients.
- Such clinical experiences could be rich sources of ideas to identify a significant research problem.

Critical Appraisal of literature:

When we critically study books & articles relating to the subject of our interest, including research report, report, opinion articles, & summaries of clinical issues, pertinent questions may arise in our mind.

These may strike reader's mind indirectly by stimulating imagination & directly by stating what additional research is needed.

For example, a nurse reads an article on the prevalence of the pin site infection among patients with external fixators; while reading this article nurse learns that there is lack of consensus about pin site care.

Previous Experience:

- A body of knowledge should be developed on a sound foundation of research findings.
- Usually at the end of a research further research problems are suggested, based on the shortcomings of previous research, which can be investigated.

GALGOTIAS
UNIVERSITY

Existing theories:

Research is a process of theory development & theory testing.

Nurses use many theories from other disciplines in their practices.

If an existing theory is used in developing a researchable problem, a specific statement from the theory must be isolated.

Social issues:

- ‘ Sometimes, topics are suggested by more global contemporary social or political issues of relevance to the health care community.
- ‘ For example, HIV/AIDS, female foeticide, sexual harassment, domestic violence, & gender equality in health care & in research are some of the current social & political issues of concern for health care professionals.

Brainstorming:

- Brainstorming sessions are good techniques to find new questions, where an intensified discussion among interested people of the profession is conducted to find more ideas to formulate a good research problem.
- For example, ideas for studies may emerge from reviewing research priorities by having brainstorming session with other nurses, researchers, or nursing faculties.

Intuition:

- Traditionally institutions are considered good sources of knowledge as well as sources to find new research problems.
- It is believed that reflective mind is good sources of ideas, which may be used to formulate a good research problem.

GALGOTIAS
UNIVERSITY

Folklores:

- Common beliefs could be right or wrong.
- For examples, it is generally believed that studying just before the test decrease the score.
- We believe we should not study just before test to relax our mind.
- Researchers can conduct a research study on whether one should study before the test or not.

Exposure to field situations:

- During field exposure, researchers get variety of experiences, which may provide plenty of ideas to formulate research problems.
- For example, while working in field a researcher observed a specific traditional practice for cure of disease condition, which can be used as research problem to investigate its efficacy.

Consultation with experts:

- Experts are believed to have sound experience of their respective field, which may suggest a significance problem to be studied.
- In addition, expert may help in finding a current problem of discipline to be solve, which may serve as basis for formulation of research problem.

GALGOTIAS
UNIVERSITY

Criteria for selecting good research problem

- Original
- Current
- Feasible
- Resources
- Solvable/ researchable
- Peer Support
- Administrative support
- Ethical clearance

GALGOTIAS
UNIVERSITY

REFERENCES

- Polit Denise F., Hungler Bernadette P. Nursing research principles and methods. 6th ed. New York: Lippincott Williams & Wilkins Publishers; 2004.
- Sharma Suresh K. Nursing research & statistics. 2nd ed. New Delhi: Elsevier publications; 2015.

GALGOTIAS
UNIVERSITY

School of Nursing

Course Code : BSCN3005

Course Name: Nursing Research & Statistics



Thank you

GALGOTIAS
UNIVERSITY