

Research Questions

Research questions refer to clear, focused, concise, complex and arguable questions around which you center your research. It also refers to interrogative statements that focus on what variables or concepts are to be described and what relationships might exist among them.

Method of selecting Research Questions

Following are the step that should be taken for selecting research questions.

1. Pick a Topic.
2. Narrow the topic.
3. List all the possible questions.
4. Pick a question.
5. Focus the question.

Research Questions Rules of Thumb

Following are the rules of thumb which should be in mind for generating research questions.

1. Avoid 'Yes' or 'No' questions.
2. Generate such questions that might have multiple answers or opinions.
3. Ask a question that will require you to explain or defend your answer.
4. Ask a question that can be tackled in within your page limit.
5. Question should not be too narrow or too broad.
6. Question must be specific.
7. Only focus on one issue in a question.
8. Question should be clear, not vague.
9. Question should be measureable within time and location.
10. Question should also reveal your method of finding answer of the question.

Research Objectives

Research objective is a clear, concise and declarative statement which provides direction to investigate the variables. Research objectives also refer to declarative statements that focus on the identification and the description of variables or concepts and sometimes on determination of relationships of variables.

The research objectives are usually divided into:

General objective/broad objective or overall objective

The general (broad) objective or goal and specific objectives are not the same and should be dealt with separately. The general objective defines the contribution of the project in a bigger context thereby defining the purpose of the project.

Specific objectives

Specific objectives are statements of precise outcomes that can be measured in support of the project's general objective. Properly written specific objectives should be SMART

S= Specific

M= Measurable

A= Achievable

R= Realistic

T= Time Bound

Verbs for Objectives

Objectives are usually headed by infinitive verbs such as:

1. To analyze
2. To articulate
3. To assess or reassess
4. To collect
5. To compare
6. To construct
7. To describe
8. To determine
9. To develop
10. To elucidate
11. To establish
12. To estimate
13. To evaluate or re-evaluate
14. To examine
15. To identify
16. To interpret
17. To provide (an understanding of ...)