

Developing Your Title, Introduction, Problem Statement, Theoretical Framework and Research Questions

In this unit, you have the opportunity to develop and refine your research topic, problem statement and research question. You will also be adding your theoretical framework—the theory or theories that will guide the development of this research, along with any sub questions related to your major research question.

Once you finalize your research title, you find background and theoretical research –especially theoretical studies that will support your proposed research (remember theory guides research and practice). Therefore, your reading will focus on 2 areas: learning the mechanics of research but also reading theoretical background studies related to your specific research problem.

- Use this time to read more about the mechanics of developing the problem statement and research questions—from the assigned readings, from the handouts that I have attached, from the related learning links that I provided and from any other sources you identify that will help you understand the mechanics of research.
- Also use this time to continue to develop the background and problem prompting you to conduct this research for your particular topic. This means that you will also identify scholarly and theoretical articles that can provide you with an understanding about the theoretical background, need and problem areas for your proposed area of research. Finding such background material helps you to tell a reader, why you chose to focus on your inquiry area.

Developing the Problem Statement

- The problem statement allows you to identify the background leading up to your study. You are providing evidence and statements about your rationale for wanting to pursue this topic. You are raising questions, such as: Can I provide background the reader with background information on why this is an important topic; and, is there is a need for study of this particular area?
- Developing the problem statement in greater detail will help you see clearly or confirm whether the direction and your current thinking about your proposed research is appropriate.
- Your problem statement will become a part of the introduction and background leading up to your proposed research in a formal research proposal and in your actual research report or dissertation.
- Therefore, the problem statement relies on a brief review of the literature and a documentation of the need based on as much empirical evidence you can provide.
- Therefore, the problem statement contributes to your conceptual framework for your study.
- This is critical because it is the backdrop to your study and supports why your study is important.

Theoretical Framework

- Based on your background statement leading up to your study, you should present the theoretical framework out of which you are developing your research. Can you describe the theory or set of theories that guide your research?

- After presenting this theoretical framework, you take a look at your research framework now and answer such questions as:

--Does your research generate a new theory?

--Does your research refine or add to a new theory?

--Does your research test to confirm theory or to refute theory?

--Does your research expand theory (that is, make a meaningful contribution to the body of knowledge) by telling us something new about application or processes?

Answer the specific questions as they apply to your particular study.

Modify Your Topic, Research Question and Sub questions, if needed and add your Definition of Terms

- After you construct this problem statement, then you should re-evaluate your research title, research question and sub questions. This is a time that you can revise, modify or clarify them because you now have more background understanding about the problem and needs of your particular research study.

- Use the following outline: **Research Title; Introduction, Background and Statement of the Problem; Purpose of Study; Theoretical Framework; Research Question; Sub Questions; and, Definition of Terms.**