
HOW TO CHOOSE A GOOD RESEARCH TOPIC ?

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1. Introduction :

Choosing an interesting research topic is your first challenge. Successful research must be based on successful topic selection. We do research every day! Example: Compare cell phone models. Methods used: -ask people for their opinions (survey) -read user reviews - search the internet (reads up different sources), etc.

2. What is a research paper?

A research paper is a piece of written *work* which represents the results of an *investigation* of a selected *topic*. A research paper is more than the sum of your sources, more than a collection of different pieces of information about a topic, and more than a review of the literature in a field.

Regardless of the type of research paper you are writing, your finished research paper should present your own thinking backed up by others' ideas and information. A research paper is an expanded essay that presents your own interpretation or evaluation or argument.

3. Purpose of research:

We carry out research to:

- ✓ Answer a certain question,
- ✓ Solve an identified problem,
- ✓ Understand the world around us,

- ✓ Respond to current social demands,
- ✓ Create and develop technology,
- ✓ Meet academic requirements, etc.

4. Why is it important to choose a good research topic?

- Being able to choose suitable research topics is an important skill to have for any student. Not only it is the difference between writing a good paper and falling flat on your face, it's imperative if you want the process to run smoothly.
- The importance of writing a good paper can lead students to feel an enormous and looming weight hanging over their heads as time passes, however, if you know a few crucial steps, choosing the right research topics can be quick, easy and even fun.

5. Elements of a good research topic:

ELEMENTS OF A GOOD TOPIC	IF MISSING
INTEREST	Lose interest, no motivation to work on the project
FOCUS	The project is too broad and ends up being superficial
SIGNIFICANCE	The project will not be as interesting and outstanding compared to others
REASONABLE SCOPE	The project will run the risk of not being completed on time or impossible to implement
LITERATURE	The project may lack evidence to support claims

A- INTEREST IN THE TOPIC

CHOOSING A GENERAL TOPIC THAT MEETS THE TASK REQUIREMENTS

- ✓ Choose a general topic that you have a **genuine interest in**.
- ✓ Your **curiosity** is your greatest intrinsic **motivation** to embark on the research paper task and complete it well.

WHERE TO FIND IDEAS FOR AN INTERESTING TOPIC?

- ✓ Newspapers and magazines
- ✓ Articles from journals
- ✓ Internet
- ✓ Radio / Television programmes / Movies
- ✓ Personal interests / Passion
- ✓ Common beliefs or practices (observation)
- ✓ Everyday Life events
 - Example : Social networking

B- FOCUS THE TOPIC

DEFINING A GENERAL TOPIC TO BECOME CLEAR AND FOCUSED

- ✓ Ask who, what, when, where, why and how about the topic to arrive at some sub-topics.
- ✓ Focus the sub-topic further to form a specific question for your project work.

Example:

General Topic: Social Networking. **Sub-topic:** Facebook. **Specific topic:** Facebook Addiction

Focusing the sub-topic further:

- **Who** are addicted to Facebook?
- **Why** are they addicted?
- **What** are the effects of their addiction?
- **Where** and **when** do they use Facebook?
- **How** can they overcome their addiction?

Specific scope from sub-topic:

How does Facebook addiction affect students' academic performance?

Why is a focused topic important?

- It helps you to be clear about exactly **what your research paper seeks to investigate**.
- It guides you whenever you are **confused or lost**.

C- SIGNIFICANCE OF THE TOPIC

- When you choose a certain topic for research, you need to give a **reason** for your choice.
- A good reason is one that can explain the **significance** of the chosen topic.

HOW TO BRING OUT THE SIGNIFICANCE OF A TOPIC?

1) Set your research project in an **important context**.

Example:

- ✓ “*Curbing Facebook addiction*”
 - ✓ “*Curbing Facebook addiction among 2nd year students*”
- 2) Show how your research paper **adds value** to what others already know.
 - 3) Clarify how your research project **addresses certain knowledge gaps**

Example: People generally know the harmful effects of Facebook usage, but they may not be clear about the reasons why addiction occurs in the first place.

- 4) Explain the **implications** of your research for society, community, and/or certain groups of people

D- REASONABLE SCOPE

When considering the scope of the topic, you have to examine three elements:

- **Feasibility**: can be conveniently done. Example:
 - Does it employ useful research tools?
 - Does it propose some solutions?
 - Are solutions cost-efficient and easy to implement? Etc.
- **Manageability**: do you have enough time and resources to undertake this project work?
- **Accessibility**: do you have access to relevant literature and data?

E- AVAILABLE LITERATURE ON THE TOPIC

What is literature?

- ☐ Information from previous studies that can be found in books, chapters, journal articles, newspapers, magazines, and websites, etc.
- ☐ This information should help you establish the theoretical basis of your research.

6. SUMMARY

A good research topic is one which:

- ☐ You are interested in,
- ☐ Meets the task requirements,
- ☐ Is focused, i.e., has specific scope,
- ☐ Is significant, i.e., there is a good reason to examine the topic,
- ☐ Is feasible, information is accessible and the project is manageable,
- ☐ Has available literature on the topic.