**1. Introduction to Research Problem**

* A **research problem** is a specific issue, difficulty, contradiction, or gap in knowledge that a researcher aims to address.
* It forms the **foundation of any research study** and determines the direction and purpose of the research.

**🔹 Definition:**

A research problem is a statement about an area of concern, a condition to be improved, or a troubling question that exists in scholarly literature, theory, or practice, and points to the need for meaningful understanding and deliberate investigation.

**2. Characteristics of a Good Research Problem**

* Clear and unambiguous
* Researchable (solvable through data collection and analysis)
* Feasible in terms of time, scope, and resources
* Significant to contribute to knowledge or practical use
* Ethical to study

**3. Selecting a Research Problem**

Choosing the right problem is crucial. A well-chosen problem:

* Reflects the **interest and expertise** of the researcher
* Aligns with **available resources and time**
* Has **scope for data collection**
* Is **novel and contributes** to academic or practical improvements

**✅ Points to Consider When Selecting:**

1. **Area of Interest** – Choose a domain you're passionate about.
2. **Review of Literature** – Analyze past research to find gaps.
3. **Feasibility** – Check if the research is doable with your resources.
4. **Social/Practical Relevance** – Choose a problem with impact.
5. **Clarity and Focus** – Avoid vague or too broad topics.

**4. Necessity of Defining the Research Problem**

Properly defining the problem ensures:

* The **research has a clear direction** and purpose.
* Selection of **appropriate methodology and tools**.
* The researcher **avoids confusion** during the study.
* Focus on **specific objectives** and **relevant data collection**.
* Helps in formulating **research hypotheses**.

**📝 Example:**

Instead of saying:

* *“Study of education in India”*  
  Define it clearly as:
* *“A study on the impact of digital learning tools on secondary school students in urban India”*

**5. Technique Involved in Defining a Research Problem**

**🔍 The process includes the following steps:**

1. **Identify a Broad Topic or Area of Interest**
   * Example: Climate change, Online education, Cybersecurity.
2. **Conduct Preliminary Literature Review**
   * Review existing theories, findings, and gaps.
3. **Narrow Down the Focus**
   * Move from a broad topic to a specific issue.
4. **Define the Problem Statement Clearly**
   * Frame it as a question or statement with clear variables.
5. **Specify the Objectives and Scope**
   * What you aim to achieve, and what will be included/excluded.
6. **Operational Definition of Terms**
   * Clearly define key terms and variables involved.
7. **Evaluate Feasibility**
   * Consider constraints like time, cost, data availability, and ethical concerns.

**6. Format of a Well-Defined Research Problem**

A well-defined research problem should include:

* **Title** of the problem
* **Background** and context
* **Statement of the problem**
* **Objectives** of the study
* **Scope and limitations**
* **Key variables/constructs**

**7. Example of a Defined Research Problem**

**Title**: “Impact of Social Media on Academic Performance of College Students”

**Problem Statement**: Despite the increasing use of social media, its impact on students’ academic performance remains unclear.

**Objective**: To examine the relationship between time spent on social media and students’ grades.

**Scope**: Final-year undergraduate students in urban colleges.

**Limitations**: Self-reported data may contain bias.