

As part of your research proposal in this course, you will need to develop testable hypotheses and identify the independent and dependent variable in each hypothesis. The purpose of this part of the assignment is for you to practice writing well-stated hypotheses.

1. State the research question you wish to explore. Then, propose two hypotheses that pertain to this research question. For each hypothesis, identify the independent and dependent variable. You may choose to do multiple research questions, but you need a hypothesis for each.
2. For each variable you identified in Question 1, write a conceptual definition for the variable. If possible, this definition should come from the existing literature. Be sure to cite any references you use for this definition.

Part 1: Literature Review Step Two

1. This is your first step in integrating the articles into a cohesive literature review—your paper should be organized by theme, common findings, discrepancies in findings, clear gaps in the literature, etc, NOT by article or author. Your first step to a cohesive, well-structured literature review is to organize your notes into themes, topics, or any other way that helps you make connections between articles and see gaps in the literature. List out at least THREE to FIVE different topics or themes that related to your research that are addressed in literature. For each theme or topic, list at least three DIFFERENT findings from three DIFFERENT sources that support that topic or theme. An example of this is provided on the second page of this assignment. Be sure to use your own words as much as possible (keep quotes to a minimum), and use APA format for ALL citations.
2. Operationally define all variables included in your research question(s)/hypothesis(es) as well as any terms used throughout your study/paper that lack precise meaning. If possible, these definitions should come from the existing literature. Be sure to cite any references you use for these definitions. Definitions can be written in a bullet-point list rather than paragraph form.
3. Identify areas, topics, or themes for which you need to find additional articles or other sources. By the time you finish this proposal at the end of the semester, you should have at least 15 sources.

Part 2: Writing the Problem Statement

As part of your research proposal, you will need to write a problem statement. Given your research topic and review of the literature thus far, the purpose of this part of the assignment is for you to draft a problem statement. The problem statement should introduce and describe the problem.

1. Include a brief description of the background and nature of the problem (in other words, why does your research need to be done?). Be sure to effectively and concisely communicate the importance of the problem.

2. Include an explicitly stated purpose of the study. Be sure to indicate the variables of interest and the specific relationship between those variables.

EXAMPLE FOR QUESTION 1

TOPIC: Service Utilization and Awareness Among Grandparents Raising Grandchildren (GRG)

TYPE: Quantitative

RQs: 1) How do African Americans, Native Americans, and Whites differ on service utilization measures?

2) How does ethnicity interact with well-being to predict service utilization?

HYPOTHESES: 1) African Americans, Native Americans, and Whites formal service utilization scores will differ from one another.

2) Controlling for income, well-being will be predictive of service utilization among African Americans, Native Americans, and Whites.

THEME 1: General Info on Prevalence of GRG

- As the lifespan increases, becoming a grandparent has emerged as a common role for older adults, and more and more grandparents have assumed the role of caregiver for their grandchildren (Edwards & Mumford, 2005; Hayslip & Kaminski, 2005; Park, 2006).
- Of children who do not live with their parents, the majority live with grandparents (Brandon, 2005).
- After the 2000 census, it was determined that at least 2.4 million grandparents are responsible for raising their grandchildren and the majority of grandparents raising grandchildren are 65 years or younger (US Census Bureau, 2001).

THEME 2: Minority Status and GRG

- Edwards and Mumford (2005) reported that of custodial grandparents, 39% are from African American households, 25% are from Caucasian households, and 23% are Hispanic; this translates into approximately 5% of all children in the United States being raised by their grandparents.
- The differences in the number of grandparent-headed households for these minority groups is important to note because the population is not evenly divided, so although more Caucasians are custodial grandparents, African Americans and Hispanics are disproportionately more likely to care for grandchildren than are Caucasians (Hayslip & Kaminski, 2005; Minkler & Fuller-Thomson, 2002).
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THEME 3: Grandparent Well-being

- There are a variety of personal, social, physical, emotional, psychological, financial, and legal problems that grandparents raising grandchildren face (Hayslip & Kaminski, 2005; Kelley et al., 2001; Park, 2006).
- Women report an increased risk of coronary heart disease when caring for grandchildren for nine or more hours per week, and many custodial grandparents face negative problems such as marriage strain, role overload, role confusion, and greater incidence of depression, diabetes, hypertension, and insomnia (Hayslip & Kaminski, 2005).
- Edwards and Mumford (2005) found that custodial grandparents face role conflict when their desire to enjoy their 'golden years' conflicts with the needs of their grandchildren and family obligations.

****NOTE:** This example only lists three topics/themes with supporting documentation, whereas your answer to Question 1 should include FIVE topics/themes and supporting documentation.