



A Step-by-Step Guide TO
**CONDUCTING APPLIED
RESEARCH**

THIRD EDITION

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Checklist: Introduction to the Problem

The Introduction to the Problem

- begins with the problem statement that includes evidence of the problem (with a citation).
- includes supporting evidence with citations (statistics, facts, or personal communication).
- includes what was done in the past to solve the problem, if anything.
- includes what is currently being done to solve the problem, if anything.
- is written in paragraph format.
- is written in accurate tense.

How to Write the Significance of the Research

The **Significance of the Research** section introduces practical contributions that the research makes to the stakeholders and/or the organization. It is important to specify who may benefit from the research, how they may benefit, and why the research is necessary. This section will state who the research may be significant to and how the research may be significant. Consider the following questions:

- Who may benefit from the outcome of this research?
- What difference will this research make?
- Is this a timely study or one that has been over-researched?
- Why will you conduct this research?
- How will your study contribute to solving a problem?

These are all important questions to consider when determining the significance of your research and narrowing your topic. Let's look at each of these questions in more detail.

Who may benefit from the outcome of this research?

The beneficiaries could be students, teachers, administrators, counselors, parents, district-level leaders, heads of state, military families, students with special needs, gifted students, a homeschool group, a school district, or almost any other stakeholders related to the problem or practice. For the purpose of applied research, clearly define, as much as possible, the stakeholders who *may* benefit from your research, the organization that *may* benefit, and how each *may* benefit. Notice that the word "*may*" is used. This is intentional, as you do not know, and you cannot predict who "*will*" benefit from the research, but you can state who *may* benefit and how each stakeholder or organization *may* benefit. Begin this section by stating who may benefit from this research. Cite scholarly sources to support your assertions.

What difference will this research make?

Clearly articulate the difference your research may make to solve a problem or improve a practice and may make a difference for the stakeholders of the study. The intent of applied research is to offer *possible* recommendations to a real-world problem. You want your research to make a difference, but you cannot guarantee it will.

Is this a timely study or one that has been over-researched?

Timeliness is important as practices are constantly changing. When the idea of teaching students using computers was first introduced, it became a highly researched topic. Today, research is not necessary to determine whether or not teaching students with computers is effective, but the multitude of programs and methods used to teach students with computers is still a relevant and timely topic, as this is an ever-changing and a rapidly-growing area of education.

Why will you conduct this research?

What is your motivation for conducting your study? Examine your motives to make sure they are ethical and that they lend themselves to making improvements in practice.

How will your study contribute to solving a problem?

Solving a problem of practice is the intended outcome of applied research. Is your problem of practice worthy of research? Your topic needs to be relevant and specific in order to solve a meaningful problem in practice.

The Significance of the Research section begins with a description of the practical contributions that the project may make to the stakeholders and/or organization. It addresses questions such as: Who may benefit from the outcome of this research? What difference will this research make? Is this a timely study or one that has been over-researched? Why will you conduct this research? And how will your study contribute to solving a problem? Citations from the scholarly literature are very important in this section to support the need for your research. All assertions in this subsection must be supported by the literature, and citations must be used. Note that this section does not represent how massive or important the study is. This section describes to whom the research is important and how the research proposes to make a difference. See the Significance of the Research example below.

Significance of the Research

The benefits of improving students' performance on the OEA for science may include extrinsic aspects, such as scholarship and college placement opportunities for students (Ellis, 2018), as well as intrinsic benefits, including an increased sense of pride and ability. For stakeholders, including teachers and administrators, increased scores on the OEA for science may lead to increased teacher efficacy, which has been shown to lead to even greater and improved instructional practices (Ware, 2020). An increase in test scores may be seen as a positive indicator on teacher evaluations. Administrators may benefit from increased test scores because the improvement allows them to shift their focus on other initiatives within the school, which may lead to increased state and federal funding and more community support. When students' achievement is high, the school is likely to boast a higher rating than the scores of other schools (Lynch, 2019). This this higher achievement can translate to a more desirable community in which to live, increase property values, attract businesses and companies, increase local revenue, improve employment opportunities, and make the community an ideal location for graduates to live.

Checklist: Significance of the Research

The Significance of the Research

- begins with who may benefit from the research.
- describes how each stakeholder and/or organization may benefit from the research.
- includes citations to support assertions.
- is written in paragraph format.
- is written in accurate tense.

How to Write the Purpose Statement

The **purpose statement** introduces the reader to the specific purpose of the study. The purpose of the research should be to solve a problem or improve a practice. This information should be communicated in a concisely written purpose statement. This section also includes the concisely written data collection methods and a short description of the participants.

Begin this section by stating the specific purpose of the study. There is no need to change this format since it is specific and to the point. The purpose statement includes the problem or practice, the site, and the geographical location.

Purpose Statement

Choose one of the following two formats for your Purpose Statement. Do not alter the format.

Purpose Statement: Solve

The purpose of this study is to provide recommendations to solve the problem of (insert the problem) at (insert site) in (insert geographical location).

OR

Purpose Statement: Improve

The purpose of this study is to provide recommendations to improve (insert the practice) at (insert site) in (insert geographical location).

See the Purpose Statement example below.

Purpose Statement

The purpose of this study is to provide recommendations to solve the problem of low scores on the OEA for science at Hampton High School in Ohio.