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Formulation of Problems, Variables, and Focuses in Scientific Research

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ABSTRACT
The formulation of variable problems and focus in research often makes mistakes for researchers of scientific papers. The purpose of this research is to see research techniques and understanding related to formulating problems scientifically, variables and research focuses in a research. The approach in this study uses a literature study approach, data collection techniques that are carried out using documentation from various books and scientific articles that are relevant to the theme raised. In a research, the main main thing of thought and the essential thing is the problem. Research problems that have been identified and limited in order to obtain problems that are worthy of research must still be formulated in order to provide direction for the researcher. A good problem formulation must be able to include and show all variables and the relationship of one variable to another that is to be studied. The source of research problems can be obtained from variables related to problems that are often faced by humans. A problem is a description of the gap between theory and practice, between rules and practice, or between expectations and reality. Problems arise due to challenges, doubts about phenomena, ambiguities, obstacles or gaps. The focus of research is a series of form of problem structure that is described as the center or subject of discussion in a research topic. The focus of this research is expected so that the research has the right focus, so that it is able to collect data and analyze data in accordance with the research objectives.

Introduction

Every research must have a research problem to be solved. Formulating this problem is not an easy job, even for experienced researchers. Even though problems always exist in the environment around us.

In a research, the main main thing of thought and the essential thing is the problem. Research problems that have been identified and limited in order to obtain problems that are worthy of research must still be formulated in order to provide direction for the researcher. A good problem formulation must be able to include and show all variables and the relationship of one variable with another variable to be studied. The formulation of the problem is the correct thing is very important, because it is the central theme of the research. Besides the possibility of a positive impact if

researched, or a negative impact if left unresearched, it certainly will not be a writing. It is also important for us to link the basic support of the theoretical foundation, and the availability of other supporting information. For this reason, the most commonly reliable source is literature.(Darmalaksana , 2020; Purbha Sakti, 2022; Saryono & Devianty , 2016)(Bella, 2021; Permata Hati Hasibuan et al., 2023; Warahmah et al., 2023)

One of the most common problems we often encounter in proposals is first, the research topic is too broad, in other words, the focus of the research is not strict enough (or just not clear enough), produces a proposal that is not clear in its direction or tries to take too much, for example, a research project that aims to investigate trust in the workplace will be considered very broad, This topic has no specific focus and leaves many questions unanswered. A researcher must know exactly the research problem at hand, so that he knows the steps that must be taken. Problems are the gap between what should be (hope) and what exists in reality. The gaps that occur refer to science and technology, education, economics, socio-culture, politics, and so on. A clear and sharp formulation of the problem will be a reference point that guides the researcher to develop a theoretical and thoughtful framework to formulate the objectives, hypotheses, data analysis, and conclusions of the research.(Bamanty et al., 2020; Munandar, 2022; Trihudiyatmanto, 2019)

Researchers must know how to formulate a problem and how the research variables and research focus are part of the research whose formulation is based on quantitative and qualitative which is expected to make the research have the right focus, so that it is able to collect data and analyze data in accordance with the research objectives. Objectives of the Study, to identify the factors that foster organizational trust in insurance brokers in the UK, the objectives of the research were to measure the level of trust of organizations across different demographic groups in the UK, and to investigate the causes of differences in the level of trust of organizations between groups, research question: What factors affect organizational trust between customers and insurance brokers in the United Kingdom. As researchers, we must know what style and taste in research we are capable of and interested in. If the researcher prefers to use text and narrate, it is certainly easier for him to use qualitative data. If the researcher likes writing with the right processing of numbers and data and according to the numbers in the field findings, it is certainly easier for the researcher to use the data.

The purpose of this study is to find out the understanding and technical research related to formulating problems scientifically, variables and research focuses in a research, with the results of this study hopefully helping researchers in determining problems, variables and focuses in a scientific research. For this reason, the researcher formulated the title in this article, namely the formulation of scientific problems, variables and research focuses in a research.

Materials and Methods

This study uses a literature review approach. Literature review is an effort made by observers/researchers to collect all information or information that is appropriate and relevant to the problem or topic that will or is being researched. This information in question can be obtained from scientific books, the results of other people's research, research reports, encyclopedias, facts, yearbooks and written or electronic sources. The theories that underlie the problem in the field that will or want to be researched can be found by conducting a literature review. The method of collecting sources in this paper uses literature reviews on books and scientific articles published online and research related to the formulation of variable scientific problems and research focuses.

Results and Discussions

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Research is scientific work that intends to reveal the secrets of science objectively, with complete and solid evidence. Research is based on the existence of problems, which we want to solve or are forced to solve. Not all problems can be properly researched, why should we solve them, what are the goals and benefits.(Scott, 2017)

Problematics comes from the word problem which can be interpreted as a problem or problem. Problems according to KBBI are defined as "things that are still unsolved". Meanwhile, the problem itself based on KBBI is "something that must be solved". So what is meant by problematics or problems is something that needs to be solved because there is a discrepancy between the existing theory and the reality that occurs.

The formulation of a problem or research question or also known as a research problem, is interpreted as a formulation that questions a phenomenon, both in its position as an independent phenomenon, and in its position as an interrelated phenomenon between one phenomenon and another, both as a cause and as a result.

There are several experts who define the formulation of the problem, including:

1. According to Pariata Westra (1981) that "A problem occurs when a person tries to try a goal or his first attempt to achieve that goal until it succeeds."
2. According to Sutrisno Hadi (1973) "Problems are events that raise the question of why and why".

The formulation of the problem is a question that will be answered through the collection of data on the forms of formulation of this research problem based on research according to the level of explanation. (Salim, 2019; Ulfatin, 2022)

The formulation of this problem is essentially a description of the scope of the problem, the limitation of dimensions and the analysis of the variables covered in it. Thus, the formulation of the problem also shows the focus of observation in the research process later. (Ash'ari et al., 2023; Haryono, 2023; Prasetyo et al., 2022)

The form of the problem can be grouped into the form of descriptive, comparative, associative problems

1. Descriptive Problem Formulation
   Descriptive problem formulation is a problem formulation that concerns the question of the existence of independent variables, either on only one or more variables.
2. Comparative Problem Formulation
   Comparative problem formulation is a research problem formulation that compares the existence of one or more variables on two or more different samples, or at different times.
3. Formulation of Associative Problems
   Associative problem formulation is a formulation of research problems that are in the nature of asking about the relationship between two or more variables.

Some things that must be considered in the formulation of the problem are:

1. Clearly formulated
2. Using question sentences by proposing alternative actions to be taken
3. Empirically testable
4. Contains a description of the existing reality and the desired state
5. Composed in clear and concise language
6. Clearly the scope
7. It is possible to answer using certain methods or techniques.

The problem formulation section contains the problems to be solved through research. Of course, the resulting problems cannot be separated from the background of the problems stated in the introduction.

The formulation of the problem has the following functions, namely:

1. As a driver for a research activity to be held or in other words to function as the cause of the research activity to exist and can be carried out.
2. As a guideline, the determinant of the direction or focus of a research. The formulation of this problem is not worth dying for, but it can develop and change after the researcher arrives in the field.
3. As a determinant of what kind of data needs and should be collected by researchers, as well as what types of data are not necessary and should be set aside by researchers. The decision to choose which data is necessary and which data is not necessary can be made by the researcher, because through the formulation of the problem, the researcher becomes aware of what data is relevant and what data is not relevant to his research activities.
4. With the formulation of research problems, researchers can be made easier in determining who will be the population and research sample

Then there are conditions that indicate that a question can be developed, namely:

1. There is a gap between what should be (both theoretical and empirical) and the reality at hand.
2. The gap can be developed the question of why the gap occurs.
3. The question is possible to answer and the answer is more than one possibility.

Furthermore, Sources of Research Problems Research problems can be explored, identified, and developed from a wide variety of sources, including:

1. Personal experience
2. Extension or expansion of previous research
3. Literature resources
4. Scientific meeting forum
5. Observation or direct experience
6. Changing the paradigm of education
7. Educational phenomena
8. Deduction from theory.

Characteristics of a Good Research Problem Research problem is said to be good if it has:

1. Contributions, both the development of new theories, the improvement of methods, benefits and applicative implications.
2. Originality is not a repetition of other research, whether it is a problem being researched, a conceptual framework, or an approach.
3. Problem statements, in the form of research statements and descriptions of measurable variable associations.
4. Feasibility aspects, such as answerable, time and cost, level of knowledge and skills, carrying capacity of facilities, and other resources.

Common Mistakes in the Formulation of Research Problems Various common mistakes that are made by many include:

1. Immature concepts, Finding problems without first examining the results of previous research on similar topics and not discussing many concepts and theories, so that research problems are not supported by a good theoretical framework.
2. The ideas offered are not accurate, The ideas in the selected research problem are not equipped with data and facts, thus making the ideas offered less or even inaccurate. The data and facts that support the idea must be accurate both in time, place, event, and source so that it can be proven to be true.
3. Less contributing, The research results of the selected problems do not contribute to the development of theories and/or practical problem solving.
4. The incompatibility of research variables with the analysis method, The determination of the analysis method carried out must be in accordance with the problem being studied, for example, the problem is analyzed qualitatively, whereas on the other hand it is more appropriate if it is done quantitatively.

Forms of Problem Formulation

The form of problem formulation is developed based on the level of explanation. The form of the problem can be grouped into descriptive problems, comparative problems, and associative problems.

Formulation of descriptive problems

Descriptive problem formulation is a problem formulation related to the question of the existence of independent variables, either on only one or more variables. In studies that used descriptive problem formulations, researchers did not make comparisons with other samples nor did they look for relationships with other variables. The study only describes the data of the research results with either tables or graphs, so that the findings become easier for readers to understand. Research with problem formulation like this is called descriptive research. In the formulation of descriptive problems, it is necessary to add specifics to the research problem being conducted, for example, a certain school is designated as the place where the research is conducted. Examples of descriptive problem formulations include:

1) How to improve the results of the Fiqh subject school exam in MTsN 2 Jambi City?
2) How do parents of students respond to the plan to implement five school days in MTsN 2 Jambi City?
3) How big is the role of parents in motivating their children to excel in MTsN 2 Jambi City?
4) What is the level of parental satisfaction with the service of accepting new students at MTsN 2 Jambi City?

Comparative problem formulation

Comparative problem formulation is a formulation of research problems that compares (compares) the existence of one or more variables in two or more different samples. The difference can be judged by method, treatment, or time. Example of a descriptive problem formulation:

1) Is there a difference in the learning achievement of religious subjects between public and private junior high school students in Jelutung District, Jambi City?

Here there is one research variable, namely the achievement of learning religious subjects. Comparisons were made on two samples, namely the status of private junior high schools and public junior high schools.

2) Is there a difference in the work motivation of religious teachers between urban and rural high schools?
   Here there is one research variable, namely the work motivation of religious teachers. Comparisons were made between two samples, namely urban and rural areas.
3) Is there a difference in motivation and learning outcomes of religious subjects between students who live in dormitories and students who are not in dormitories at MAN 2 Jambi City.
   Here there are two research variables, namely learning motivation and learning outcomes. Comparisons were made on two samples, namely the domicile of students in the dormitory and not in the dormitory.

Formulation of associative problems

An associative problem formulation is a formulation of a research problem that asks the relationship between two or more variables. There are three forms of relationships, namely:

1) Symmetrical relationship A symmetrical relationship is a relationship between two or more variables whose appearance is simultaneous or parallel. In this kind of study, there are no variables that affect the other variables, or both variables have the same strong or equal position.
2) Causal relationship Causal relationship is a causal relationship that has a cause-and-effect relationship. In this relationship there are independent variables (independent variables or influencing variables) and dependent variables (bound variables or affected variables). However, in this form there is only one variable that affects the other variables, these conditions cannot be considered to be the other way around.
3) Interactive (reciprocal) relationships are relationships that influence each other. In studies like this, it is not known which are independent variables or dependent variables. The formulation of interactive problems is not only characterized by the form of relationship between the two variables that are reciprocal, but also characterized by the use of the conjunction "between" between two or more variables.

   Those are the 3 forms of problem formulation developed based on the level of explanation.

Research Variables

When conducting research, it will not be possible to escape from the problem that will be scientifically researched. To do so, it is necessary to determine research variables so that the research remains in accordance with its goals and objectives.

Research variables are everything in the form of anything that is determined by the researcher to be studied so that information about it is obtained, then conclusions are drawn.(Scott, 2022)

Variables are concepts that have a variety of values. So the concept of "body" is not a variable, because the body does not contain the notion of the existence of values because it has varying values. "Weight" is variable because it has different values. Sex is variable because it has a value, namely men and women. Age, Education, Marital status, number of children, land ownership status, are all variables. Concepts that do not contain a diverse sense of value can usually

be transformed into variables by focusing on specific aspects of the concept. So, the concept of contraceptive behavior can be changed to variables by changing it to the use of contraception.

Most experts define research variables as conditions that researchers manipulate, control, or observe in a study. In addition, several other experts stated that research variables are everything that will be the object of research observation. From these two definitions, it can be explained that the research variables include factors that play a role in the events or symptoms being studied.

Research variables are characters, attributes, or everything that is formed, or that is of concern in a study so that there is a variation between one object and another in a certain group and then a conclusion is drawn. Research variables are a quantity that can be changed or changed so that they can affect research events or results. Research variables are everything that will be the object of research observation. In a study, there is something that is targeted, namely variables, so variables are phenomena that are the center of research attention to be observed or measured.

Examples of qualitative variables include marital status, fear, hunger, beauty, happiness, ignorance, creativity, exam qualifications, and others. Examples of quantitative variables include the number of family members, the number of animals in the cage, the value (price) of an object, height, weight of the animal, vehicle speed, test result score, and others.

How to formulate research variables:

1. Determine the main problem
2. Find the problem factors
3. Prepare a research theory
4. Prepare research needs.

That's how to formulate variables

Macam – Macam Variable

Independent Variables

Independent variables are variables that are suspected to be the cause of the appearance of bound variables. Independent variables are also called stimulus, predictor, antecedent variables. An independent variable is a variable that affects or that is a change in the bound variable. Variables are freely manipulated, observed, and measured to find out their relationship/influence with other variables.

For example, a study on the relationship between two variables: The relationship between the application of peer tutors in the implementation of Mastery Learning (variable X) to the learning outcomes of Information and Communication Technology subjects of students (Variable Y) MTsN 2 Jambi City. In this study, variable X as an independent variable is manipulated or changed to change or affect variable Y. Changes in values in variable Y are dependent/bound by changes in variable X.

Bound variables

A bound variable or called a dependent variable is a response variable or output or a criterion or consequence. This variable is a variable that is affected or that is a consequence due to the existence of an independent variable. The bound variable is not manipulated, but the variation is observed as the result that is predicted to come from the independent variable. The bound variable becomes a condition that the researcher will explain. In experiments, it is the independent variables that are manipulated/played by the experiment creator.

For example, in a study the relationship between two variables: The relationship between the application of peer tutors in the implementation of Mastery Learning (variable X) to the learning

outcomes of Information and Communication Technology subjects of students (Variable Y) MTsN 2 Jambi City. In this study, the question is what will happen to variable Y if variable X is made larger or smaller. In this study, the Y variable as a bound variable, because the Y variable will change as a result of the X variable being changed. It is called dependent because the value of the variable Y will change (bound/dependent) on the value of the variable X (free).

Variable control

In a study, not all variables can be studied at the same time. Some of these variables must be neutralized to ensure that the variables in question do not interfere with the relationship between the free variable and the bound variable. The variables that must be neutralized are referred to as control variables. So, control variables are factors that are controlled or neutralized by the researcher because if they are not neutralized, they are suspected to affect the relationship between the free variable and the bound variable. Control variables are different from moderator variables. The moderator variable is studied or analyzed for its influence, while the control variable is neutralized or equalized in effect.

Control variables are said to be disruptive variables because the presence of these variables can interfere with the understanding of the relationship between independent and dependent variables. For example, an analysis of "the influence of parents' education level on student learning achievement". The person's level of education is an independent variable and the student's learning achievement is a dependent variable. In the analysis, it was found that for example, independent variables have a very large influence on the dependent variable. To make sure of it, it is then controlled with a control variable. For example, after the control with these variables, it turns out that the results of the first analysis are actually incorrect, the analysis is interrupted by the variables of parental income. Therefore, the control variable is also a disruptive variable because it can obscure the analysis of the influence of parental education on children's learning achievement.

Variable moderator

The moderator variable is an intermediate variable which is a special type of independent variable, which is a secondary independent variable that is raised to determine whether the moderator variable affects the relationship between the primary independent variable and the bound variable. Moderator variables are factors that researchers measure, manipulate, or select to uncover whether they change the relationship between independent variables and bound variables. In the event that the researcher wants to study the relationship between the free variable and the bound variable, but is unsure about the relationship between the two variables, then the Z variable can be analyzed as a moderator variable.

The moderator variable can be referred to as the second independent variable. The moderator variable has basic characteristics that are more difficult to change over a certain period of time. A moderator variable is a third-party variable that motivates the relationship between variable X and variable Y to measure the strength of the relationship between variable X and variable Y.

In addition to the various variables as described above, there are still other variables such as variables based on their measurement scale consisting of nominal variables, ordinal variables, interval variables, and ratio variables. There are also variables based on their acquisition, namely discrete variables and continuous variables. Variables based on manipulation treatment consisting of dynamic variables and static variables.

Then further seen from their nature, research variables can also be distinguished into two types, namely discrete variables (Categorical variables) and continuous variables. 1. A discrete

variable is a concept that contains values horizontally or in other words, a concept that has a variety of values into shapes and types. 2. A continuous variable is a concept that contains values that vary in levels or levels.

Research Focus

Because the research problem is too broad, qualitative research needs to be limited to one or more variables. The limitations of the problem in qualitative research are called focus that is

The main problem is still common. The limitation of the research object carried out is so as not to be trapped in the large amount of data obtained in the field.

The focus of research is a series of form of problem structure that is described as the center or subject of discussion in a research topic. The focus of this research is expected so that the research has the right focus, so that it is able to collect data and analyze data in accordance with the research objectives.

The focus of research can also be interpreted as the center of concentration of the research objectives that are being carried out by a researcher. The focus of this research is useful for compiling a scientific report, be it a thesis, thesis, or dissertation. Therefore, the focus of the research must be written and described explicitly with the aim of making it easier for researchers before conducting observation activities.

The focus of this research is to limit data collection so that its benefits can be seen as a reduction in data that has been anticipated and is a pre-analysis that overrides various related variables to avoid abundant data collection. So it is not surprising why the focus of research is considered important in a scientific paper report because with a scientific focus, the goal of the researcher, whether students or academics in completing this research, is clearer and more directed, and makes him able to reach the peak of success in his research.

If there is no research focus, then the work or research carried out by students will be longer and more complicated. Therefore, you as a student must really understand what a research focus is that is very important to complete assignments, papers, and reports of scientific papers. The limitation or focus of the problem in this qualitative research is the subject matter of the general problem. The first thing to do to determine the focus of the research is to determine the focus or one domain.

Why there should be a research focusAs explained earlier, the focus of this research is to determine the limits to direct a research. Therefore, the focus of this research is important to complement the various aspects below.

1) It is important to prepare a scientific report, First, the focus of this research must be there because it is an important element and also useful for compiling a scientific report, be it a thesis, thesis, or dissertation. Therefore, the focus of the research must be written and described explicitly with the aim of making it easier for researchers before conducting observation activities.
2) As a Research Outline, Basically, the focus of research is the outline of the research itself. This means that with a research focus, the research process from observation to analysis of research results can be more directed and systematic by applying and paying attention to how the research focus has been determined.
3) Limiting Studies or Research, In addition, the focus of this research is also important to limit a study and also direct the implementation or an observation. However, the nature of the research focus in this qualitative research is abstract, meaning that it can change according to the research background.

4) Achieving Learning Goals, Lastly, why the focus of this research is important because the focus of the research is able to complete this research more clearly and in a more directed way, and make itself able to reach the peak of success in its research.

   The way to determine the focus of research according to Spradley in Sugiyono (2013) is as follows:

   1) Setting a focus on the problems raised by the informant.
   2) Set a focus based on specific domains.
   3) Establish a focus that has the value of findings for the development of science and technology.
   4) Establish a focus based on problems related to existing theories.

Conclusion

The conclusion that can be drawn is that in a study, the research problem is the most essential element and must be clearly formulated to provide the right direction for the researcher. Research problems that have been identified and limited need to be structured in such a way as to include the relevant variables and the relationships between these variables. The source of research problems can come from phenomena that humans often face, such as the gap between theory and practice, or between expectations and reality. A clear research focus will ensure that the research can collect data effectively and conduct analysis in accordance with the desired objectives. This study emphasizes the importance of formulating problems correctly so that research can provide valid and useful results. It is hoped that this research can enrich the understanding of research methodology, especially in terms of problem formulation, variable identification, and determination of research focus. Researchers are expected to be wiser in determining and formulating research problems, so that the research carried out can have a significant contribution to science. In addition, it is important for researchers to be open to constructive inputs, in order to improve the quality of future research.

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