

THE RESEARCH PROCESS

In the research process, there are two important decisions to make:

1) *What you want to find out about*

or what research questions (problems) you want to find answers to;

2) *How to go about finding their answers.*

There are practical steps through which you must pass in your research journey in order to find answers to your research questions. The path to finding answers to your research questions constitutes *research methodology*. At each operational step in the research process, you are required to choose from a multiplicity of *methods, procedures and models* of research methodology which will help you to best achieve your objectives. *This is where your knowledge base of research methodology plays a crucial role.* Steps in Research Process:

1. Formulating the Research Problem
2. Extensive Literature Review
3. Developing the objectives
4. Preparing the Research Design including Sample Design
5. Collecting the Data
6. Analysis of Data
7. Generalisation and Interpretation
8. Preparation of the Report or Presentation of Results-Formal write-ups of conclusions reached.

The research process can be translated in this diagram (adapted from Kothari, 2005, p.11)

			Research design		
Research Problem formulation	Literature review	Hypothesis	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Collection of data - Analysis of data 	Interpreting	Reporting

Prior to collecting any data, researchers must typically identify a topic area of interest, conduct a literature review, formulate a research question, articulate hypotheses, and determine who or what will be studied, identify the independent and dependent variables that will be examined, and choose the appropriate methodology (Marczik,G, Dematteo,G & Festinger, 2005, pp.26/27)