

How to Develop a Good Research Question? — Types & Examples

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Cecilia is living through a tough situation in her research life. Figuring out where to begin, how to start her research study, and how to pose the right question for her research quest, is driving her insane. Well, questions, if not asked correctly, have a tendency to spiral us!

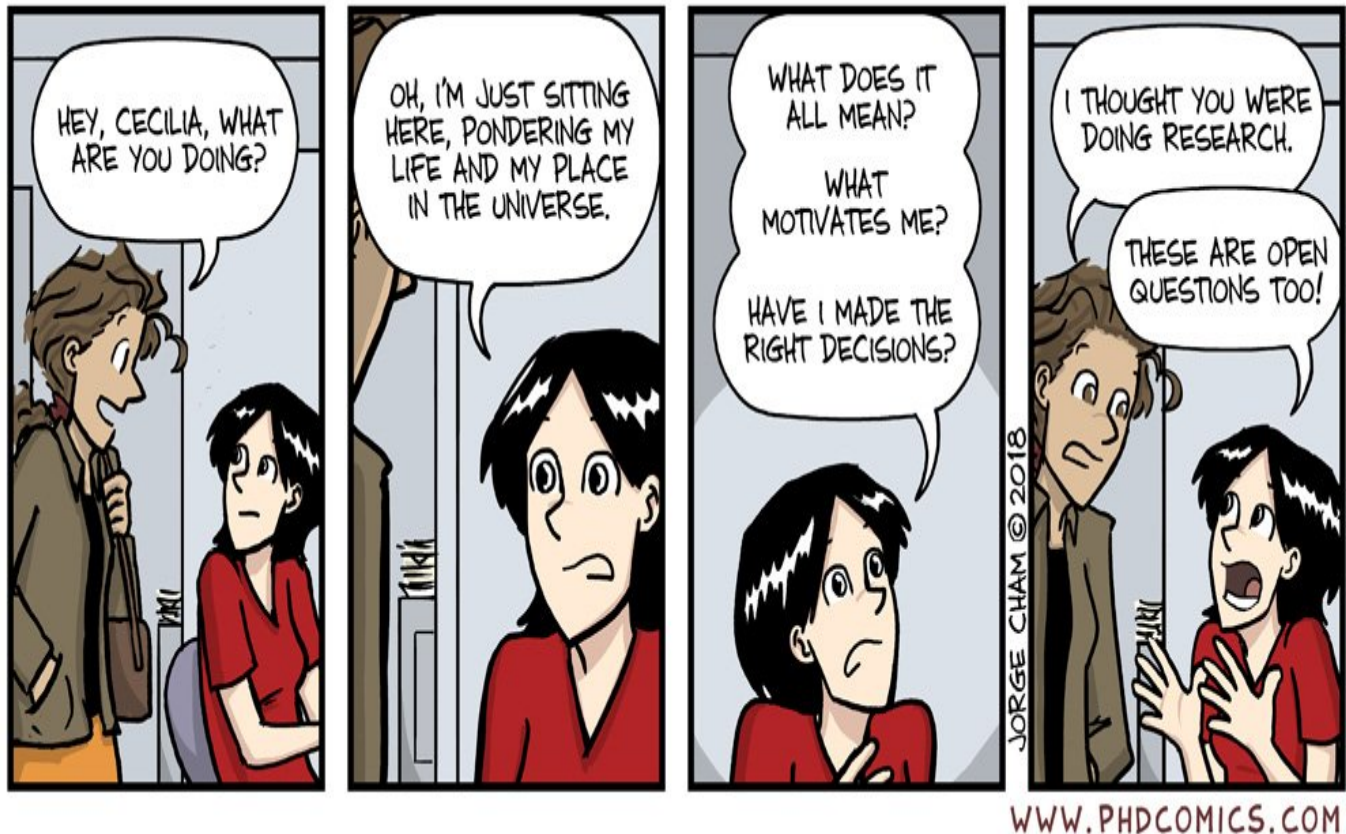


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Questions lead everyone to answers. Research is a quest to find answers. Not the vague questions that Cecilia means to answer, but definitely more focused questions that define your research. Therefore, asking appropriate question becomes an important matter of discussion.

A well begun research process requires a strong research question. It directs the research investigation and provides a clear goal to focus on. Understanding the characteristics of comprising a **good research question** will generate new ideas and help you discover new methods in research.

In this article, we are aiming to help researchers understand what is a research question and how to write one with examples.

What Is a Research Question?

A **good research question** defines your study and helps you seek an answer to your research. Moreover, a clear research question guides the [research paper](#) or thesis to define exactly what you want to find out, giving your work its objective. Learning to write a research question is the beginning to any thesis, [dissertation](#), or research paper. Furthermore, the question addresses issues or problems which is answered through analysis and interpretation of data.

Why Is a Research Question Important?

A strong research question guides the design of a study. Moreover, it helps determine the type of research and identify specific objectives. Research questions state the specific issue you are addressing and focus on outcomes of the research for individuals to learn. Therefore, it helps break up the study into easy steps to complete the objectives and answer the initial question.

Types of Research Questions

Research questions can be categorized into different types, depending on the type of research you want to undergo. Furthermore, knowing the type of research will help a researcher determine the best type of research question to use.

1. Qualitative Research Question

Qualitative questions concern broad areas or more specific areas of research. However, unlike quantitative questions, qualitative research questions are adaptable, non-directional and more flexible. Qualitative research question focus on discovering, explaining, elucidating, and exploring.

i. Exploratory Questions

This form of question looks to understand something without influencing the results. The objective of exploratory questions is to learn more about a topic without attributing bias or preconceived notions to it.

Research Question Example: Asking how a chemical is used or perceptions around a certain topic.

ii. Predictive Questions

Predictive research questions are defined as survey questions that automatically predict the best possible response options based on text of the question. Moreover, these questions seek to understand the intent or future outcome surrounding a topic.

Research Question Example: Asking why a consumer behaves in a certain way or chooses a certain option over other.

iii. Interpretive Questions

This type of research question allows the study of people in the natural setting. The questions help understand how a group makes sense of shared experiences with regards to various phenomena. These studies gather feedback on a group's behavior

without affecting the outcome.

Research Question Example: How do you feel about AI assisting [publishing process](#) in your research?

2. Quantitative Research Question

Quantitative questions prove or disprove a [researcher's hypothesis](#) through descriptions, comparisons, and relationships. These questions are beneficial when choosing a research topic or when posing follow-up questions that garner more information.

i. Descriptive Questions

It is the most basic type of quantitative research question and it seeks to explain when, where, why, or how something occurred. Moreover, they use data and statistics to describe an event or phenomenon.

Research Question Example: How many generations of genes influence a future generation?

ii. Comparative Questions

Sometimes it's beneficial to compare one occurrence with another. Therefore, comparative questions are helpful when studying groups with dependent variables.

Example: Do men and women have comparable metabolisms?

iii. Relationship-Based Questions

This type of research question answers influence of one variable on another. Therefore, experimental studies use this type of research questions are majorly.

Example: How is drought condition affect a region's probability for wildfires.

How to Write a Good Research Question?



HOW TO WRITE A GOOD RESEARCH QUESTION?

1. Select a Topic
2. Conduct Preliminary Research
3. Consider Your Audience
4. Generate Potential Questions
5. Review Your Questions
6. Construct Your Research Question

ASK THE RIGHT RESEARCH QUESTION

1. Select a Topic

The first step towards writing a **good research question** is to choose a broad topic of research. You could choose a [research topic](#) that interests you, because the complete research will progress further from the research question. Therefore, make sure to choose a topic that you are passionate about, to make your research study more enjoyable.

2. Conduct Preliminary Research

After finalizing the topic, read and know about what research studies are conducted in the field so far. Furthermore, this will help you find articles that talk about the topics that are yet to be explored. You could explore the topics that the earlier research has not studied.

3. Consider Your Audience

The most important aspect of writing a **good research question** is to find out if there is audience interested to know the answer to the question you are proposing. Moreover, determining your audience will assist you in refining your research question, and focus on aspects that relate to defined groups.

4. Generate Potential Questions

The best way to generate potential questions is to ask open ended questions. Questioning broader topics will allow you to narrow down to specific questions. Identifying the gaps in literature could also give you topics to write the research question. Moreover, you could also challenge the existing assumptions or use personal experiences to redefine issues in research.

5. Review Your Questions

Once you have listed few of your questions, evaluate them to find out if they are effective research questions. Moreover while reviewing, go through the finer details of the question and its probable outcome, and find out if the question meets the research question criteria.

6. Construct Your Research Question

There are two frameworks to construct your research question. The first one being **PICOT framework**, which stands for:

- Population or problem
- Intervention or indicator being studied
- Comparison group
- Outcome of interest
- Time frame of the study.

The second **framework is PEO**, which stands for:

- Population being studied
- Exposure to preexisting conditions
- Outcome of interest.

Research Question Examples

- How might the discovery of a genetic basis for alcoholism impact triage processes in medical facilities?
- How do ecological systems respond to chronic anthropological disturbance?
- What are demographic consequences of ecological interactions?
- What roles do fungi play in wildfire recovery?
- How do feedbacks reinforce patterns of genetic divergence on the landscape?
- What educational strategies help encourage safe driving in young adults?
- What makes a grocery store easy for shoppers to navigate?
- What genetic factors predict if someone will develop hypothyroidism?
- Does contemporary evolution along the gradients of global change alter ecosystems function?

How did you write your first [research question](#)? What were the steps you followed to create a strong research question? Do write to us or comment below.

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