

# What is a Research Problem?

- *A research problem is an educational issue or concern that an investigator presents and justifies in a research study.*
- *Researcher must discover and define a specific topic\problem from a broad and general problem area.*
- *The specific topic is the Research Problem*



# Key Concepts

- ◆ **What is a research problem and why is it important?**
- ◆ **Can and should the “problem” be researched?**
- ◆ **How does the “problem” differ for quantitative and qualitative research?**
- ◆ **What are the five elements that comprise the “statement of the problem” section?**

# Characteristics of Research Problem

- ◆ It should ask about a relationship between two or more variables.
- ◆ It should be clearly stated (precise and concise)
- ◆ It can be stated as a question or as a statement, indicating the primary objective of the study.
- ◆ It should be testable by empirical methods - should be possible to collect data to answer the questions(s) asked.

# Why is the Research Problem Important?

- ◆ Establishes the importance of topic
- ◆ Creates reader interest
- ◆ Focuses reader's attention on how study will add to literature

# Where is the Research Problem Located?

- ◆ Look in the opening paragraphs, and ask yourself:
  - What was the issue or problem that the researcher wanted to address?
  - What is the concern being addressed “behind” this study?
  - Why was the study undertaken in the first place?
  - Why is this study important?

# How Does It Differ from Other Parts of Research?

- ◆ A **research problem** is an *issue* or *problem* in the study
- ◆ A **research topic** is the broad subject matter being addressed in a study.
- ◆ A **purpose** is the major intent or objective of the study.
- ◆ **Research questions** are questions the researcher would like answered or addressed in the study.

# Differences Among Topic, Problem, Purpose and Questions

