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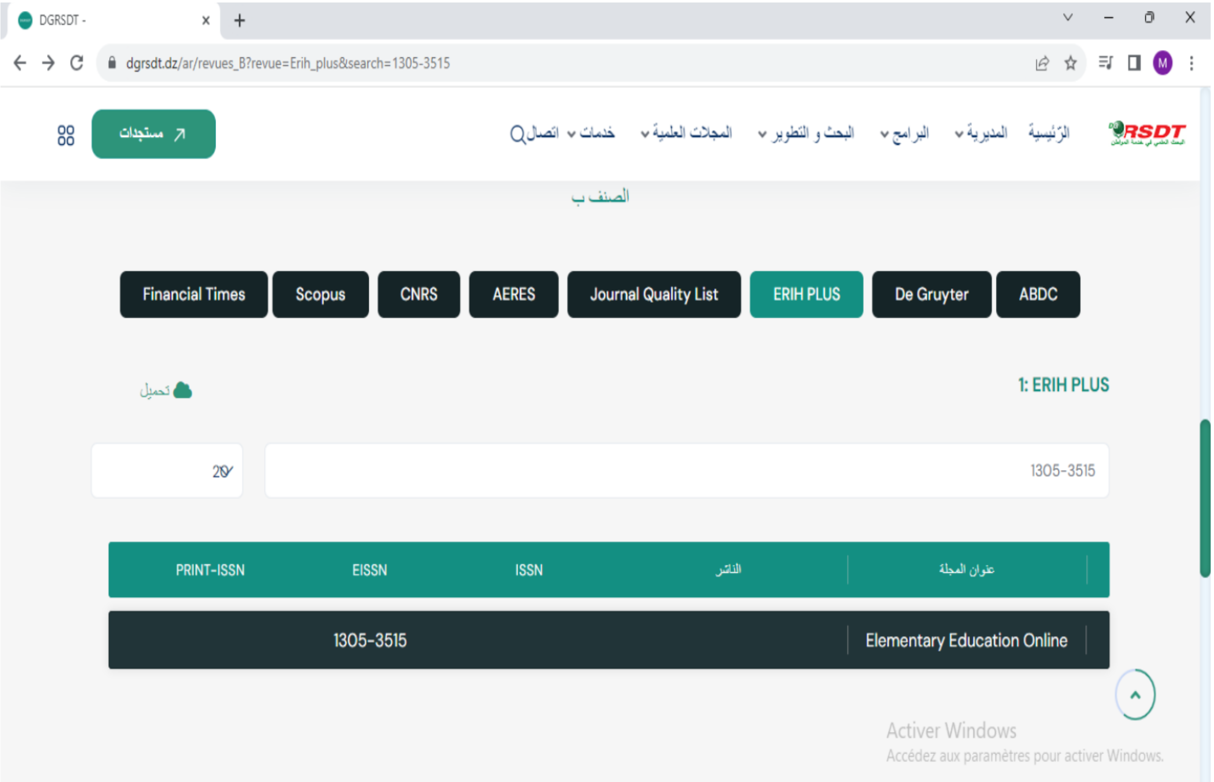

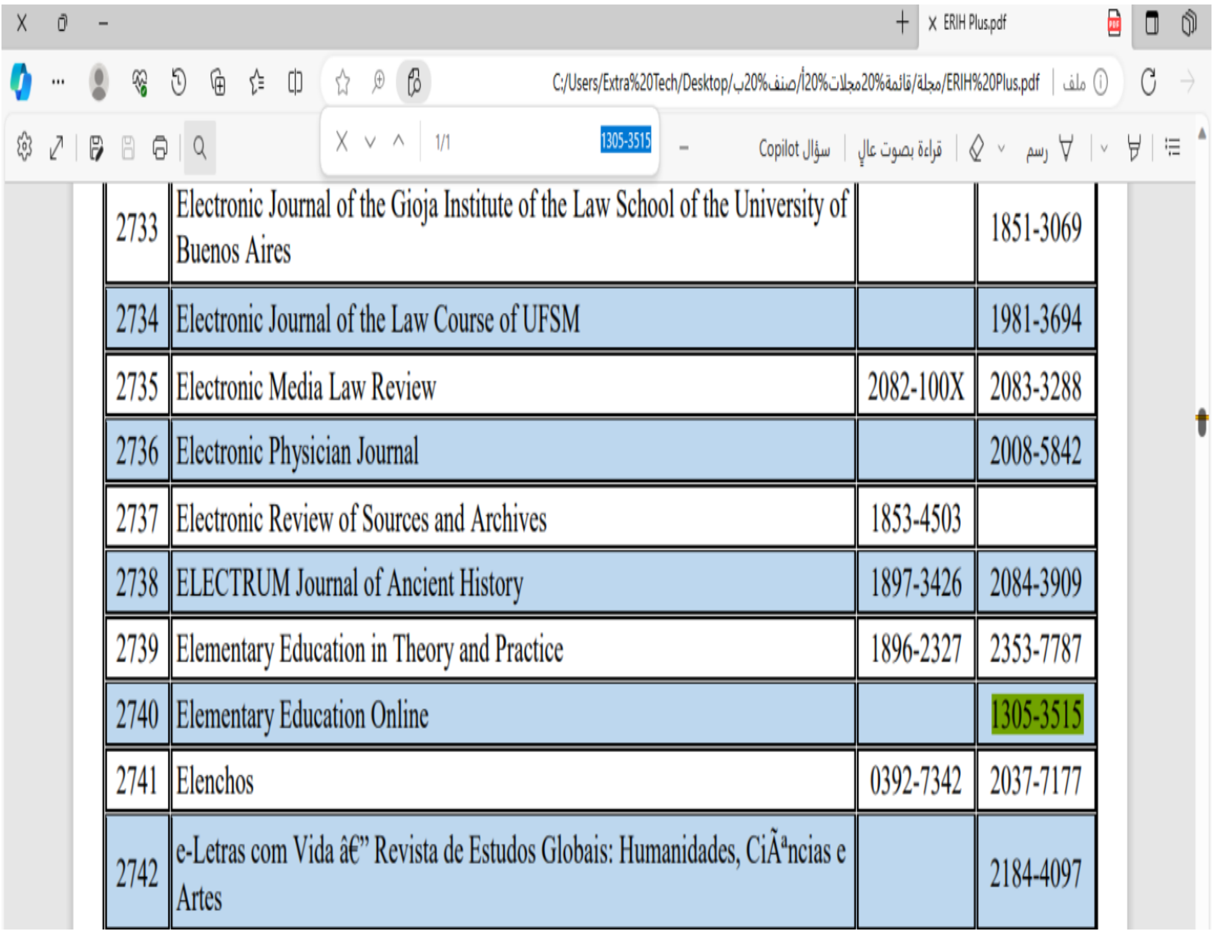

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2735	Electronic Media Law Review	2082-100X	2083-3288
2736	Electronic Physician Journal		2008-5842
2737	Electronic Review of Sources and Archives	1853-4503	
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2739	Elementary Education in Theory and Practice	1896-2327	2353-7787
2740	Elementary Education Online		1305-3515
2741	Elenchos	0392-7342	2037-7177
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Home / Archives / Vol. 24 No. 1 (2025) / Articles

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Engineering The Scientific Problem In Media And Communication Research -An Approach To Formulation And Employment Mechanisms

Maiza Salim , Saidani Salami , Feguiri Leila

Abstract

One of the most important stages of scientific research is defining the research problem, due to its great importance in defining, and controlling the topic. However, the matter is not without difficulty and complexity sometimes; there are conditions and standards that the researcher must adhere to in order to succeed in defining his research problem and formulating it well; among these conditions; the sources through which the researcher obtains the research problem, such as the researcher's scientific experience, periodicals, magazines and previous studies that have addressed the topic, in addition to the fact that the research problem must be formulated in clear, understandable and specific phrases that express the content and scope of the problem. There are also standards that must be taken into consideration, such as formulating the problem in an interrogative or declarative manner, and the problem must express a relationship between two or more variables, and it must be testable and experimental. Then we have the process of evaluating the research problem; in terms of the limits of the problem raised by the research and the value of the results that can be reached and the extent to which this topic contributes to scientific additions and the extent to which the research problem can be studied and analyzed.

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Engineering The Scientific Problem In Media And Communication Research -An Approach To Formulation And Employment Mechanisms

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Abstract:
One of the most important stages of scientific research is defining the research problem, due to its great importance in defining, and controlling the topic. However, the matter is not without difficulty and complexity sometimes; there are conditions and standards that the researcher must adhere to in order to succeed in defining his research problem and formulating it well; among these conditions; the sources through which the researcher obtains the research problem, such as the researcher's scientific experience, periodicals, magazines and previous studies that have addressed the topic, in addition to the fact that the research problem must be formulated in clear, understandable and specific phrases that express the content and scope of the problem. There are also standards that must be taken into consideration, such as formulating the problem in an interrogative or declarative manner, and the problem must express a relationship between two or more variables, and it must be testable and experimental. Then we have the process of evaluating the research problem; in terms of the limits of the problem raised by the research and the value of the results that can be reached and the extent to which this topic contributes to scientific additions and the extent to which the research problem can be studied and analyzed.

Keywords: - Research problem, scientific research, defining the problem, formulating the scientific problem.

Introduction:

There is no doubt that the research problem is considered one of the most important stages of scientific research ever; there is no study without a research problem. By defining the research problem, the researcher can start his research work in a sound scientific way that enables him to reach correct and objective results; in addition to making him determine with precision what he wants to research and what he wants to reach with extreme precision; passing through the ease of choosing the appropriate method and the necessary research tools that enable him to control the phenomenon or subject of the study, in addition to the ability to control his subject and not deviate from it. It is worth noting that the researcher's definition of his research problem is not an easy and simple matter; as this process is characterized by difficulty and complexity at times; there are also specific conditions and standards that the researcher adheres to in order to succeed in defining his research problem and controlling it well, in addition to the sources and standards that must be adopted to obtain the research problem and control it well. The research problem may be theoretical or applied, and this is done according to the qualifications of the researcher who starts from the initial studies related to the topics about which scientific facts are to be found and also starts from his personal observations. When determining the gray or ambiguous situation that requires an analysis process, the researcher begins to collect facts about variables related to the subject (which consist of dependent variables, independent variables, and other supporting variables), and link them to objective relationships through "hypothetical interpretations" that are to be verified through various tests, which must serve the important and prominent justifications for the research project. Of course, the research problem must address complementary scientific issues in the same direction in which the research topic is involved. From the above, we can pose the following question: What do we mean by a scientific problem in media and communication research? **What are its most important sources and formulation criteria?**

Questions:

1- What do we mean by the research problem in media and communication sciences?

2- What are the sources of the research problem in media and communication sciences?

3- How do we define the research problem in media and communication sciences?

4- How is the research problem formulated in media and communication sciences?

5- What are the criteria for formulating the research problem in media and communication sciences?

Research objectives:

1- Defining the concept of the research problem in media and communication sciences.
2- Presenting the sources of the research problem in media and communication sciences.
3- Understanding how to define the research problem in media and communication sciences.
4- Identifying the method of formulating the research problem in media and communication sciences.
5- Shedding light on the criteria for formulating the research problem in media and communication sciences.

1- The scientific problem in media and communication (nature and importance):

1.1. Definition of the research problem in media and communication sciences:

There are several definitions of the research problem, as defining the research problem means setting an accurate and clear framework, and ensuring that the problem is researchable with the possibility of deriving hypotheses that are also testable and subject to practical measurement to determine their validity or not. There is no harm in reformulating the research problem and some of its components according to the formulation of the hypotheses and some test results. We note that the research process is interconnected, such that concepts are employed in formulating the topic, and defining the research problem greatly helps in deriving hypotheses. "Formulating hypotheses" represents an essential step in designing the research problem and building its initial structure. The research problem is considered specific when we know its framework, dimensions and objectives clearly, and that the content of the research is

inseparable from the main problem of the research with the following broad outlines: title, reasons, motives and expected scientific benefit, previous studies, theoretical and applied aspects, methodology followed to complete the research, conclusions and most important research results, summary, most important references.
The problem is a translation of the French word "problème", and the word has equivalents in different languages. It is sometimes translated as the word “question,” which is a common term in the language of mathematics, and as the word “issue,” which is a common term in the language of politics and law. As for the language of social research, the term “problem” is the one that is commonly used and circulated among researchers (AL-Maaroufi, 2019, p. 119).

It is a topic or issue surrounded by ambiguity, or a situation or phenomenon that needs interpretation or analysis, or an issue that is the subject of controversy; such that the scientific method can be used and applied when studying it. The problem is also the objective field or issue that the researcher studies and examines in order to discover its aspects, employ its various dimensions, and identify its various causes and the nature of the overlap and relationships of its elements (BenLoussif, 2022, p. 834).

The research problem represents all the human, social and natural problems that the individual and society suffer from, or that are related to the theoretical fields of scientific research and are subject to study; in order to solve them by collecting data and facts (Benmorsli, 2010, p. 68).

Dr. Youcef Tammar provided a definition of the research problem; in which he tried to combine problems related to applied field research related to humans and society and theoretical research that investigates the validity of knowledge reached in the form of scientific theories and laws, and works to discover new ones; as he sees that the research problem is represented in all human, social and natural problems that the individual and society suffer from, or that are related to theoretical fields of scientific research and are subject to study, in order to solve them by collecting data and facts (Tammar, 2017).

2.1. The importance of the research problem in media and communication sciences:

The researcher often seeks to address an existing problem, which concerns an aspect of economic, social, political, or cultural life, etc., and to try to find appropriate solutions for it. Therefore, the importance of the research problem lies in its actual existence and the extent of its impact on one aspect or another of the life that society lives (Qandildji, 2012, p. 52).

3.1. Sources of obtaining the problem in media and communication sciences:

The scientific problem has a set of sources, the most important of which are as follows (Gharib & Helmy, 2019, pp. 77-78):
1- Scientific experience: It comes through the researcher's scientific experiences, life, enthusiasm, activity, and desire to identify the reasons that lead to these problems.

2- Specialized scientific periodicals and magazines: They help the researcher obtain research ideas through which he can discuss the most important research problems that some researchers have faced. They suggest topics that can be studied and discussed; thus, these topics may be the nucleus of many questions through which research problems can be formulated.

3- Previous studies and research: Researchers in universities in various theoretical and scientific fields resort to such research and studies in order to review them, discuss them, and research their results, in order to reach a definition of the research problem. Thus, studies and research are an important source that provides researchers with various topics worthy of study.

4- Research summaries: They contain a brief summary of what researchers have done in their studies, and through them, other researchers learn about the methods, tools, approaches, results, recommendations, and references of studies, which provides the researcher with new research ideas.

5- The Internet: The Internet is considered one of the important means of collecting research information, as it contains a number of research sites and search engines specialized in the research field, which helps the researcher to obtain information in the fastest time and with the least possible means. Also, browsing and continuous viewing of social networking sites suggests to the researcher, especially in the field of media and communication, many scientific problems that need to be studied.

2: Defining and formulating the problem in media and communication sciences:

1.2. The scientific importance of the problem in media and communication sciences (Gharib & Helmy, 2019, pp. 80-81)**:**

Research that is devoid of a specific problem is not worthy of scientific character. The basic focal point around which any scientific research revolves is a specific "problem" that requires a solution. The problem of the study is formulated in clear, understandable and specific phrases that express the content and scope of the problem and direct the researcher to directly address his problem, collect information and data related to it, and guide the researcher to sources of information related to his problem, which requires the researcher to choose words and terms for the problem phrases or questions that it poses for the research in a way that accurately expresses the content of the problem; so that it is not broad, multi-faceted and full of details, or very narrow and specific, and it is difficult to understand what is meant by it accurately and clearly.

2.2. Formulating the problem in media and communication research:

The research problem can be formulated in a sentence or in the form of one or more questions, but we should avoid twisting phrases or ambiguity in expression (AL-Irin, 2016, p. 24).

The problem is formulated in one of the following two ways: There are two ways to formulate the research problem (Gharib & Helmy, 2019, p. 81)**:**

1- The declarative formula: This is done by expressing the problem in a declarative sentence, such as:

- **The relationship between university students' exposure to social networking sites**

2- The interrogative formula: The problems are formulated in this formula as follows:

- To what extent does Facebook contribute to political awareness among university students?

It is worth noting that formulating the problem in the form of a question clearly justifies the relationship between the two main variables in the study (dependent and independent) and this formulation means that the answer to the question is the purpose of the scientific research, and therefore this formulation helps us determine the main objective of the research.

Criteria for formulating the problem (Gharib & Helmy, 2019, p. 81)**:** There are a set of conditions and criteria that must be taken into account by the researcher when formulating the research problem, which are as follows:

- The problem is formulated in a specific and clear way so that a solution can be reached.

- The problem expresses a relationship between two or more variables.

- The problem is formulated in the form of a question or in the form of a report.

- The problem includes the possibility of testing and experimenting.

There are also other terms and criteria (AL-Irin, 2016, p. 25)**:**

- Not to violate public morals: The problem should not be exposed to the prevailing morals or social norms or those related to values and ideals, and should not cause harm to the feelings of others or the station environment.

- Not to carry a prejudgment: When formulating the research problem, the researcher must take into account the desire to find a solution or answer through research, testing, analysis and observation, while avoiding prejudgments as much as possible.

- To have cognitive and applied importance: The researcher must ensure that the solution to the research problem contributes to enriching scientific knowledge in the field.

3.2. Problem evaluation in media and communication research:

The scientific problem can be evaluated through several criteria, the most important of which are:

- What are the limits of the problem raised by the research and the value of the results that can be reached?

- To what extent does this topic contribute to specific scientific additions?

- To what extent is the research problem amenable to study and analysis?

- What are the limits of the time available to implement the research and the capabilities available to the researcher?

- Will this problem lead to directing the attention of other researchers to other research and studies?

- Can the results that can be reached through researching this problem be generalized?

- To what extent does the topic or problem agree with the researcher's trends, opinions and ideas?

3. Factors affecting the selection of the scientific problem in media and communication research (Bousnan, 2019, pp. 85-86)**:**

Many researchers in the field of scientific research methods have addressed the factors that influence the choice of the problem. This is done according to the elements of the extent of interest, the scientific value of the topic, its novelty, the availability of sufficient information and sources about it, and taking into account the time and material limits available to the researcher. They will be presented briefly:

A- The extent of interest in the problem:

It means a sincere and urgent desire to accomplish the research topic, and it is a basic incentive that pushes the researcher to work on its details. It is clear that the absence of desire and an actual feeling about the problem will not enable the researcher to work in an organized manner and complete his research even if the rest of the apparent conditions are available, such as the presence of sources and previous studies, and self-preparation.

B- The topic should be of scientific value and importance:

It means that the researcher should choose a topic that is distinguished by originality and depth, has scientific significance, achieves general personal goals, and presents in the research results and information that can be used and relied upon and its results can be generalized, and that this research contributes to solving the various problems and phenomena that are prevalent in society.

C- Novelty of the topic and avoiding imitation and repetition:

The researcher avoids repeating the researched topics due to his lack of familiarity with what has been accomplished, thus creating a second version that does not contain anything new on the methodological or theoretical level. If the researcher happens to address a topic with the same title, he must study it from angles that have not been studied, in order to reach different results, or he must study it in a time period completely different from the first period.

D- Providing important sources, documents and required data:

The researcher cannot establish a problem out of thin air. Sources, documents and data are necessary to complete a proposed topic, regardless of its type or field. Reviewing them and understanding the information contained therein is an important necessity in the process of completing and writing the problem.

E- Taking into account the available material and time limits:

As important as the problem at hand is, and other factors are included in this factor, including that the problem be within the framework of scientific specialization and that it be clear, not complex, complicated, or loose, a researcher, for example, cannot write about the effects of the media on the values of young people, because it is a broad topic that requires double the effort, a very long period of time, and material costs, which leads to its failure.

G -Knowing the difficulties surrounding the researcher and the research:

The researcher neglects, while proposing the research topic, the difficulties that will confront him, and after starting to complete the research, he realizes the size of these difficulties that stand as an obstacle to completing it, and sometimes he completely backs down. Therefore, studying the difficulties and anticipating them by the researcher is very important in choosing the type of research and its problem (AL-Labban & AbdelMaksoud, 2008, p. 125).

Conclusion:

From what was previously presented, we can conclude that the research problem is considered one of the most important stages of scientific research, and the researcher's success in his study and reaching correct results depends on the extent of his control over his problem and its dimensions, and defining it accurately, understandably and clearly. This will not be achieved unless the various standards and conditions for defining and formulating the research problem are taken into account; thus, the researcher ensures control over his research and thus ensures reaching correct and objective results. The scientific problem in media and communication expresses a position or situation that places a person in front of an obstacle that requires a solution. At first, the situation is ambiguous and it is difficult to find a convincing explanation for it. This arouses the desire of the researcher to reach an explanation and propose appropriate solutions for it. To determine the research problem and its framework, the researcher relies on previous studies, meaning that he carefully reviews published scientific research, as some of them indicate research dimensions that have not been explored. Also, a careful and accurate reading of a number of researches in a specific field leads to the emergence of new ideas due to the existence of exciting situations that have not been explained sufficiently or have been passed over quickly. This indicates that there is no convincing evidence for several scientific constructs for specialists, and these are research opportunities or research issues that can be exploited to present new research that contributes to scientific knowledge. The researcher’s personal experience and field of work also help to identify the problems facing scientists in a particular field of knowledge, which arouses the desire among some of them to study issues for which there is no clear and obvious explanation.

FOOTNOTES:

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