



The research question is the overriding question that the study seeks to answer. It is a specific, measurable question. ***It is the driving force behind the entire research process.*** You may include several sub questions or areas to explore that relate to the overriding question.

Example:

How has the integration of technology X impacted student learning?

Sub questions could include:

- How are students using technology X in the classroom?
- Have students test scores improved since the integration of technology X?
- How have teachers used technology X in their classroom?
- Have different student groups used the technology differently/more? Etc.

Question Tip: Questions should be SMART...

- Specific
- Measurable
- Attainable
- Relevant
- Timely

Types of Research Questions:

Exploratory: Seeks to gain an understanding of a new topic that has not had much research on it before. Exploratory research typically addresses the “What” questions.

- What types of professional development opportunities would teachers find helpful?
- What types of extra curricular activities are students involved in?
- What types of learning aids are effective with students who have learning disabilities?

Descriptive: Presents a picture of a specific situation. Descriptive research asks the How? and Who? questions.

- How did Aboriginal students score on the grade 3 provincial test?
- How do students from X school use X technology?
- How did the implementation of X program effect X student group?
- How did teachers rate “named” professional development opportunity?

Explanatory: Builds on exploratory and explanatory research. It goes beyond exploring a topic or providing a picture of it. The goal is to identify the reason certain things occur.

Explanatory research asks the “Why” questions.

- Why do some teachers integrate new technology X into their classroom, and other do not?
- Why did “student group” achieve “x-result” on the provincial test?

Helpful Web link:

[Developing a Research Question](#)