

**Purpose Statement**  
**TAKEN FROM EDUCATIONAL RESEARCH CRESWELL (2012) – Chapter 4**

**Based on your Research Problem – state the PURPOSE of your study**

You cannot possibly address an entire problem area in a single study, but you will be telling the readers what part of the problem that your study will address [Remember- can carry a bucket of sand—you cannot carry the whole beach]

The PURPOSE(s) of your study should relate directly to the research problem you identified. The purpose should tell the reader if you will be doing a qualitative, quantitative or mixed methods study ... You should be able to state the purpose in only 1 sentence... “**The purpose of this study is to ....**” Or “**The purposes of this study are to ....**”

**STOP - Quantitative and Qualitative Purpose Statements Are DIFFERENT – Read below to find out how...**

**Quantitative Purpose Statements:**

**RULES**

**A1. If you plan to test a theory put it in the statement**

**A2. Options exist for using variables in a statement:**

- a. To relate 2 or more variables,
- b. To compare a variable composed of two or more groups in terms of the dependent variable
- c. To describe one variable

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**Sample Script for A1 combined with A2(a):**

**The purpose of this study is to test \_\_\_\_ theory (the theory) by relating ( Ind Var) to (Dep Var) for (participants) at (research site)**

**Here is an Example:**

A1 combined with A2(a):

The purpose of this study is to test Kern’s theory (2004) by relating leadership style to autonomy for hourly employees at a major retail center in central Florida.

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**Sample Script for A1 combined with A2(b):**

**The purpose of this study is to test \_\_\_\_ theory (the theory) by comparing ( group 1) and (group 2) in terms of the (Dep Var) for (participants) at (research site)**

**Here is an Example:**

A1 combined with A2(b):

Using Tinto’s theory of student retention, the purpose of this study is to compare Junior English teachers with previous teaching experience and Junior English teachers in their first teaching assignment in terms of student scores on the English section of the Texas High School exit exam at a rural, west Texas public school district.

A2(b) Only:

The purpose of this study is to compare the academic achievement of homeschooled students and traditionally-schooled students in terms of GPA and SAT scores for entering freshmen students who matriculated into a public state university in South Florida.

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**Sample Script for A2(c):**

**The purpose of this study is describe the effect of (Ind Var) on (Dep Var) for (participants) at (research site)**

**Here is an Example:**

A1 combined with A2(b):

The purpose of this study is to describe the effect of leadership experience on sales volume produced by hourly employees at a major retail center in central Florida.

## Qualitative Purpose Statements

- B1: Use the term “qualitative” or tell the qualitative type of study you are conducting**
- B2: Use qualitative terms such as: explore, discover, understand, describe**
- B3: State the “central phenomenon” you plan to investigate**
- B4: State the participants and research site in the study**

### Sample Script:

**The purpose of this qualitative study is to (explore/discover/understand/describe) (the central phenomenon) of/for (participants) at/in (research site)**

### Examples:

The purpose of this qualitative study is to describe the impact of customer service representatives on the satisfaction of corporate customers at a major retail center in central Florida.

The purpose of this historical study is to discover the conditions that prompted the efforts of local political leaders to organize a new, public two-year college in Collin County, Texas.

The purpose of this phenomenological study is to explore the reasons for the acceptance of a recycling program by the residents in Highland Park, Illinois.

The purpose of this qualitative study is to understand how change in corporate leadership resulted in employee policy changes for hourly workers at a major retail center in Atlanta, Georgia.

The purpose of this narrative study is to understand how institutional philosophy impacted educational programs and key policies at a public, state university in Virginia.

The purpose of this biographical study is to describe the contributions of Oral Roberts and his impact on religious higher education in the United States.

## Purpose Statements for “Other Dissertation Types”

**MIXED METHOD** - If you have a Study that has both quantitative and qualitative purposes, you should state each as a separately and state it is a mixed methods study. Let’s look at this example:

“The purposes of this mixed method study are to (a) relate the effects of diversity training of college developmental math teachers to student pass rates and (b) explore how this training impacted student perceptions of isolation at a public, four-year university in Pennsylvania.”

Do you notice that I used the appropriate quantitative verb and qualitative verb?

**ACTION RESEARCH** – This is used to improve either professional practice or policy is an example of an “Other” dissertation type:

“The purpose of this action research study is to describe the impact of using expert program models on AP Computer Science scores in a large, urban high school in Illinois.”

### YOU HAVE A GOOD PURPOSE STATEMENT IF

There are NO dissertations or major studies that have already fulfilled your purpose

There ARE articles, dissertations and other existing research that will help address this area

Data are available that YOU CAN ACCESS legally

YOU HAVE PERMISSION to conduct the research at the research site you listed