

2. Identification and delimitation of research problems

Objectives

- At the end of this chapter learners will be able to:
 - ⦿ Identify a research problem
 - ⦿ Select an appropriate research topic
 - ⦿ Write a research topic properly

WHAT IS A RESEARCH PROBLEM?

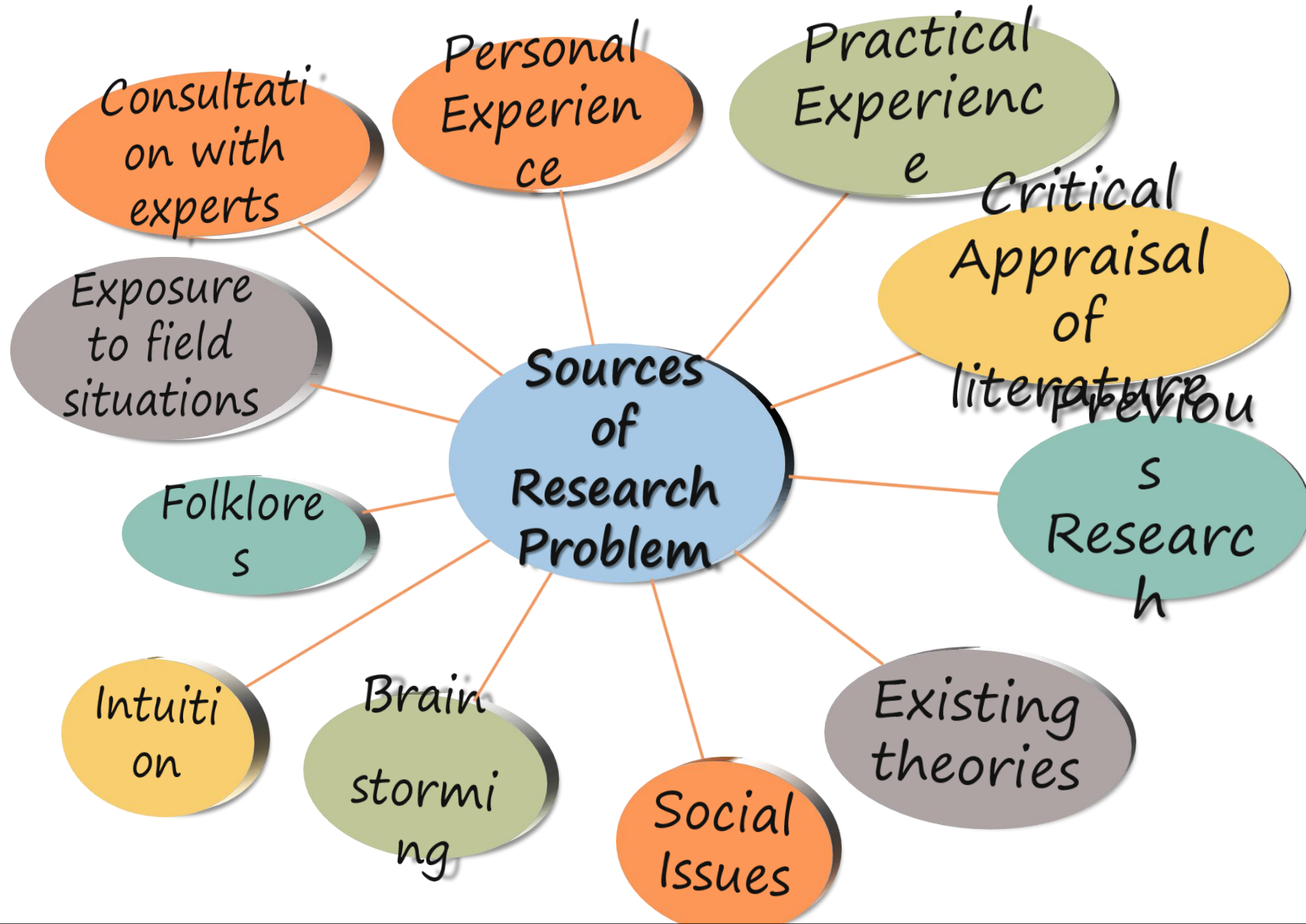
- A situation that needs a solution and for which there are possible solutions.
- May be described as
 - ⦿ an incongruence; a discrepancy between what is and what ought to be.
 - ⦿ the gap in knowledge that needs to be filled.

- A potential research situation arises when three conditions exist:
 1. A perceived discrepancy exists between what is and what should be.
 2. A question exists about why there is a discrepancy.
 3. At least two possible and plausible answers exist to the question.

IDENTIFICATION OF RESEARCH PROBLEM

- Identification of a research problem is the first & most important step in research process.
- Generally, a broad area is selected & then a broad topic is delimited or narrowed down to a specific one-sentence statement of the problem.
- This step of the research process is considered as the most difficult &

Sources of research problem



FORMULATION OF RESEARCH PROBLEM (Research topic selection)

Selection of a research areas

```
graph TD; A[Selection of a research areas] --> B[Reviewing the literature & theories]; B --> C[Delimiting the research topic]; C --> D[Evaluating the research problem]; D --> E[Formulating final statement of research problem];
```

Reviewing the literature & theories

Delimiting the research topic

Evaluating the research problem

Formulating final statement of research problem

1. Selection of a research area:

- ✧ Formulation of a research problem begins with selection of a broad research topic from personal experience, literature, previous research, & theories in which researcher is interested & has significance for a profession.
- ✧ For example, a researcher gets an idea to conduct a study on the female feticide.
- ✧ Therefore, he or she initially begins with such broad research topic.

2. Reviewing literature & theories:

- ✧ After getting a broad idea for research, he or she needs to review literatures & theories.
- ✧ Literature is reviewed to know what has already been done in this selected areas of research.
- ✧ Review of theories provides an opportunity for researcher to plan a research problem to contribute towards either testing or development of a theory/conceptual model.

3. Delimiting the research topic:

- ✧ In this step, researcher proceeds from a general area of interest to more specific topic of research to conduct a study.
- ✧ For example, initially a researcher decide to conduct a study on female feticide; later in this stage researcher limits it to specific research topic 'a study on perception of women about causes & prevention of female feticide in selected rural communities of district mehsana, Gujrat'.
- ✧ In this stage, a researcher clearly identifies