

Identifying the Research Gap: A Guide to Articulating Scholarly Contribution in Blog Format

Md. Abu Hasnat^a, Khandakar Kamrul Hasan^b, Hissan Khandakar^c

^a Managing Partner, HHH Research Consultancy & Development, Dhaka, Bangladesh

^b Chairman, HHH Research Consultancy & Development, Dhaka, Bangladesh

^c Technical Partner, HHH Research Consultancy & Development, Dhaka, Bangladesh

Abstract

This blog explains how to identify and articulate a research gap in a clear and accessible way for blog writing. It argues that a research gap is not simply a missing topic, but a meaningful absence in theory, method, context, or practice that shows where knowledge remains incomplete. The discussion highlights how blog writers can make scholarly contribution visible by asking what is known, what remains unclear, why that uncertainty matters, and how a study or post responds to it. The blog also emphasizes the importance of using a respectful tone, specific language, and real-world implications when presenting gaps. By framing gap identification as both an intellectual and communicative skill, the piece shows how blog writing can help researchers express contribution more clearly and strengthen their broader academic writing.

Keywords: Research gap, scholarly contribution, blog writing, literature review, academic communication

To cite this article:

Hasnat, M. A., Hasan, K. K., Khandakar, H. (2026). Identifying the Research Gap: A Guide to Articulating Scholarly Contribution in Blog Format. HHH Research Blog, 1(1). <https://doi.org/10.66246/2yfmj747>



In research writing, we often hear that a study must “identify the gap.” But what does that really mean. And how can we explain it clearly in a blog format.

A research gap is not simply a missing topic. It is a meaningful absence. It may be a question that has not been asked. It may be a method that has not been applied. It may be a population that has been overlooked. It may even be a theory that has been used but never fully examined. When we identify a gap, we show where knowledge is incomplete and why that incompleteness matters (Bans-Akutey & Tiimub, 2021).

In journal articles, this process is often formal and structured. Writers review the literature, summarize debates, and then position their study as a response to a limitation. In blogs, the task is similar, but the presentation must be more visible and more direct. Readers need to see the gap clearly and early.

A simple way to think about gap identification is to ask four questions. What do we already know. What remains unclear. Why does that uncertainty matter. How will this post or study address it. These questions help move from summary to contribution. They also prevent the blog from becoming only a literature overview.

Research gaps can take different forms. Some are theoretical. A theory may explain part of a phenomenon but ignore another dimension. Some are methodological. Studies may rely heavily on surveys but lack qualitative insight. Some are contextual. Research may focus on one region or industry while neglecting others. Some are practical. Scholars may describe a problem but offer no clear implications (Farooq, 2017).

For example, in systematic literature reviews, scholars often identify patterns of concentration and omission. Raes et al. (2020) showed how reviewing studies on synchronous hybrid learning revealed areas that were well studied and areas that were underexplored. This kind of mapping makes gaps visible. It does not criticize past work. It builds on it by showing where the next step can be taken.

Gap identification is also deeply connected to theory development. In fields like international servitization, researchers have traced theoretical roots and then highlighted where conceptual integration is still weak (Bıçakcıoğlu-Peynirci & Morgan, 2023). Here, the gap is not a missing topic. It is a need for stronger theoretical alignment. When explained clearly, this becomes a strong scholarly contribution.

In blog writing, the challenge is tone. We must avoid sounding dismissive of existing scholarship. A research gap is not proof that others failed. It is evidence that knowledge is always evolving. Good blog writers acknowledge prior contributions and then explain why further work is needed (Almusaed et al., 2025).

One effective strategy is contrast. A writer may begin with a widely accepted claim. Then the writer gently introduces complexity. For instance, many studies may agree on the importance of innovation in organizations. However, few may explore how innovation operates in small public institutions. That shift from “many studies show” to “few studies examine” makes the gap clear without confrontation.

Another strategy is synthesis. Instead of pointing to one missing piece, the writer shows fragmentation. Studies may exist, but they are scattered across disciplines. They may use different definitions. They may not speak to each other. In this case, the gap lies in integration. The blog can argue for a framework that connects these strands (Bans-Akutey & Tiimub, 2021).

Blogs also allow space for reflexivity. A writer can explain how reading the literature revealed a pattern of silence or imbalance. This human element makes the process transparent. It shows readers how scholarly contribution is constructed, not discovered by accident.

Clarity is essential. Avoid abstract phrases like “there is limited research.” Instead, specify what is limited. Is it limited in geographic scope. Is it limited in methodological diversity. Is it limited in longitudinal evidence. Specific language builds credibility.

It is also helpful to link the gap to consequences. Why should anyone care that this gap exists. Does it affect policy decisions. Does it influence professional practice. Does it shape public understanding. When the gap is connected to real implications, it becomes more compelling (Farooq, 2017).

A blog post does not need to provide a full literature review. But it should provide enough context to make the contribution visible. Two or three key studies can be referenced to show the current state of knowledge. Then the writer can explain how their work extends, refines, or challenges that state.

Importantly, identifying a gap is not only about absence. It is also about potential. A gap signals opportunity. It invites exploration. It encourages collaboration across fields. It opens space for new questions and new methods (Almusaed et al., 2025).

For early career researchers, learning to articulate the gap clearly can strengthen both blogs and journal submissions. Practicing this skill in blog format can be especially helpful. Blogs require concise explanation. They force the writer to express contribution in plain language. This discipline can improve formal academic writing as well.

In the end, identifying the research gap is about responsibility. Scholars contribute not by repeating what is known, but by clarifying what remains uncertain. A well framed blog post makes that uncertainty visible. It shows readers where knowledge stands and where it can move next.

When done carefully, articulating the research gap does more than justify a study. It demonstrates intellectual awareness. It respects prior scholarship. It guides future inquiry. And in blog format, it makes scholarly contribution accessible to a broader community of readers.

Funding

This research received no external funding.

Acknowledgements

This Research Blog post was written by the founding members of HHH Research Consultancy & Development

Conflict of Interests

The authors declare that there is no conflict of interests.

REFERENCES

- Almusaed, A., Almssad, A., & Yitmen, I. (2025). Identifying research gaps. In *Practice of research methodology in civil engineering and architecture: A comprehensive guide* (pp. 35 to 66). Springer Nature Switzerland. <https://www.springerprofessional.de/identifying-research-gaps/51597034>
- Bans-Akutey, A., & Tiimub, B. M. (2021). Identifying research gaps in scholarly work: A review. *Academia Letters*, Article 3237. <https://doi.org/10.20935/AL32377>
- Bıçakcıoğlu-Peynirci, N., & Morgan, R. E. (2023). International servitization: Theoretical roots, research gaps and implications. *International Marketing Review*, 40(2), 338 to 364. <https://doi.org/10.1108/IMR-07-2020-0140>
- Farooq, R. (2017). A framework for identifying research gap in social sciences: Evidence from the past. *IUP Journal of Management Research*, 16(4), 66 to 75. https://www.researchgate.net/publication/325285640_A_Framework_for_Identifying_Research_Gap_in_Social_Sciences_Evidence_from_the_Past
- Raes, A., Detienne, L., Windey, I., & Depaepe, F. (2020). A systematic literature review on synchronous hybrid learning: Gaps identified. *Learning Environments Research*, 23(3), 269 to 290. <https://doi.org/10.1007/s10984-019-09303-z>