

Module-9

SOCIAL RESEARCH



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SOCIAL RESEARCH

INTRODUCTION

Man by nature is inquisitive, and humans have an extraordinary capacity to exercise rational judgment and probe the realities of the world around us. Inherent in humans is the urge to find out the truth and to make a sense out of the things going around us. You might have observed how a child observes, comprehends and understand the world. While you take this first step towards the course in research methodology at the end of this course you will come to a realization that all these things are already in your behavior and you in fact practice these things every day, perhaps without realizing it. Social research is that domain of human inquisitiveness which primarily deals with the structures and processes of the social world, in both their enduring and changing dimensions. Man's quest to reflect and probe the social realities at ever deeper levels gives rise to new perspectives which are then questioned by future researchers, further probed and ultimately lead to social theories. In an earlier unit you studied the eminent philosophers in the different parts of the world who have tried to understand and analyze the social realities. This unit takes you further and gives you an understanding about how modern concepts of social research have developed over the years and helps you to differentiate between research methodologies, research methods and techniques. End part of the unit provides you a bird's eye view of research process which researchers have developed over the years to probe the social realities.

DEFINITION OF SOCIAL RESEARCH

We can define research as a systematic and logical pursuit made by human beings to find out knowledge from any "phenomenon or relationship". This tendency is deep rooted in human behavior. Understandably, any human activity, can develop errors and therefore the pursuit of research should use systematic methods so that errors can be brought to minimum .There is no single prescribed method in research. In fact there are variety of methods which can be used seeing the nature of phenomenon or relationship – which we investigate.

Different social scientists & researcher has defined the word differently. Some of their views are as under. According to Goode & Hatt, It is a systematic method of discovering new facts and verifying old ones with their sequence interrelationship and caused explanation. Webster's Dictionary defines social research as a careful and critical investigation in the light of newly discovered facts. According to Johoda It is a continuous investigation for facts in order to solve a problematic situation. Roger Bennet argued that research is the discovering of facts through systematic and scientific process. According to Fogg It is the systematic process of pre-planned inquiry. In the light of the above definitions & meaning concluded that, research is a systematic

& scientific method of discovering new facts & verifying old ones in order to solve a problematic situation.

IMPORTANCE OF SOCIAL RESEARCH

Research is carried on in the social field not just with academic interests. It has both academic and non-academic purposes and importance. Importance of research can be briefly stated here.

1. Research is essential to diffuse knowledge and to expand its horizon.
3. Research provides practical clues, to undertake measures that lead to social improvement, social change and social progress.
4. Research by probing into the perplexing problems of the day... provides new insight regarding their nature. Research helps us to know the nature and the magnitude of the problems.
5. Researchers have commercial importance also. Industries, business firms and commercial establishments can get lot of information and clues about their endeavors in society.
6. Research can provide all the required data and facts to the administrators to adopt and undertake appropriate policies, plans and programmes.
7. Research has educational importance. It is mainly an intellectual activity. Information obtained through research may have their educational importance.
8. Research motivates interdisciplinary studies. It stresses the interdependence of different sciences. It thus strengthens the “interdisciplinary approach” which is emerging out these days.
9. Other uses and Importance
 - (i) Those working in the academic field can obtain a new degree known as Ph.D. [Doctor of Philosophy] by successfully carrying out research as per the stipulated rules.
 - (ii) Those working in the research department attached to industries, other types of establishments have made research their profession and obtain salary for their service. It provides job opportunities for a few intellectuals.
 - (iii) For the philosophers and scientists research can be intellectually delighting and mentally satisfying, and
 - (iv) Those who are in the field of literature, art, architecture, etc., can seek to establish new styles and trends through research.

FEATURES OF SOCIAL RESEARCH

- a) It is directed towards the solution of problems. The ultimate goal is to discover cause-and-effect relationship between social problems.
- b) It emphasizes the development of generalizations, principles or theories that will be helpful in predicting future occurrences.
- c) It is based upon observable experience or empirical evidence.
- d) It demands accurate observations and description. Researchers may choose from a variety of nonqualitative description of their observations.
- e) It involves gathering new data from primary sources or using existence data for new purpose.
- f) Although social research activities may at times be somewhat random and unsystematic, it is more often characterized by carefully designed procedure that applies rigorous analysis.
- g) It requires expertise. The researcher knows what is already known about the problem and how others have investigated.
- h) It strives to be objective and logical applying every possible test to validate the procedure employed, data collected and conclusion reached.
- i) It involves the quest for answer to unsolved problems.
- j) It is characterized by patient and unhurried activity. Researcher must expect disappointment and discouragement as they pursue the answer to difficult question.
- k) It is carefully recorded and reported. Each important term is defined, limiting factors are recognized, procedures are described in detail, reference are carefully documented, results are objectively recorded and conclusions are presented with scholarly caution and restraint.
- l) It is interdisciplinary in nature •

TYPES OF SOCIAL RESEARCH

a) Qualitative and Quantitative Research

Qualitative research is a broad term that encompasses a variety of approaches to interpretative research. It can be historical, sociological, education and much more. Qualitative research style in social research is not much related to the scientific logic of research, but more close to the world around. Quantitative research focus upon human behavior for better understandings about the world around them. So the emphasis given by quantitative researchers in their studies

involves an examination of the perspectives of the people or groups; e.g. their ideas, attitudes, motives, and intentions.

b) Pure and Applied Research

Pure research is focused to collect knowledge without any intention to apply it. It is purely intellectual in character. It is also known as basic or fundamental research. Intellectual curiosity is the only motivational factor behind it. It is not necessarily problem oriented. It aims at extension of knowledge. It may lead to either discovery of a new theory or refinement of an existing theory. The development of various sciences owes much too pure research. The findings of pure research enrich the store house of knowledge. Pure research lays the foundation for applied research. The findings of pure research formed the basis for innumerable scientific and technological inventions like steam engine, auto mobiles and telecommunication etc, which have revloutionalized and enriched our human life.

Applied research is focused up on a real life problem requiring an action pr policy decision. It tries to find out practical and immediate result. It is thus problem oriented and action directed. According to Kerlinger (1979) applied research is research directed towards the solution of specified practical problems. Julian Simon has pointed out that applied social sciences help in making policy decision. Applied research methods are sometimes more sophisticated than any methods used in pure research (touffers: 1950) There is vast scope for applied research in the fields of technology, management, commerce, economics and other social sciences. Innumerable problems are face in these areas. They need empirical study for finding solutions. The immediate purpose of an applied research is to find solutions to practical problems, it may incidentally contribute to the development of theoretical knowledge by leading to the discovering of new facts or testing of a theory or to conceptual clarity.

c) Action Research

Conventional social scientific research is concerned to analyse and explain phenomena. The role of research is detached, in order to minimize disturbance of the phenomena under investigation. In action research, research is jointed with action. Researcher became participants in planned policy initiatives. It is an action programme launched foe solving a problem or for improving an existing situation. Government institutions and voluntary agencies undertake action programmes for achieving specific goals or objectives. Social welfare programmes human resource development programmes, research for improving the qualities of life in factories an offices etc, are some examples of action research programme.

MAJOR STAGES OF SOCIAL RESEARCH

Research process contains a series of closely related activities which has to carry out by a researcher. Research process requires patients. There is no measure that shows your research is

the best. It is an art rather than a science. Following are the main steps in social or business research process.

1. Selection of Research Problem
2. Extensive Literature Survey
3. Making Hypothesis
4. Preparing the Research Design
5. Sampling
6. Data collection
7. Data Analysis
8. Hypothesis Testing
9. Generalization and Interpretation
10. Preparation of Report

1. Selection of Research Problem

The selection of topic for research is a difficult job. When we select a title or research statement, then other activities would be easy to perform. So, for the understanding thoroughly the problem it must have to discuss with colleagues, friend, experts and teachers. The research topic or problem should be practical, relatively important, feasible, ethically and politically acceptable.

2. Literature Review or Extensive Literature Survey

After the selection of research problem, the second step is that of literature mostly connected with the topics. The availability of the literature may bring ease in the research. For this purpose academic journals, conference and govt. reports and library must be studied.

3. Making Hypothesis

The development of hypothesis is a technical work depends on the researcher experience. The hypothesis is to draw the positive & negative cause and effect aspects of a problem. Hypothesis narrows down the area of a research and keep a researcher on the right path.

4. Preparing the Research Design

After the formulation of the problem and creating hypothesis for it, research Design is to prepare by the researcher. It may draw the conceptual structure of the problem. Any type of research design may be made, depend on the nature and purpose of the study. During R. Design the information about sources, skill, time and finance is taken into consideration.

5. Sampling

The researcher must design a sample. It is a plan for taking its respondents from a specific areas or universe. The sample may be of two types:

1. Probability Sampling
2. Non-probability Sampling

6. Data collection

Data collection is the most important work, is researcher. The collection of information must be containing on facts which is from the following two types of researcher.

Primary Data Collection: Primary data may be from the following.

- 1.Experiment
- 2.Questionnaire
- 3.Observation
- 4.Interview

Secondary data collection: it has the following categories:

- 1.Review of literature
- 2.Official and non-official reports
- 3.Library approach

7. Data Analysis

When data is collected, it is forwarded for analysis which is the most technical job. Data analysis may be divided into two main categories.

Data Processing: it is sub-divided into the following.

Data editing, Data coding, Data classification, Data tabulation, Data presentation, Data measurement

Data Exposition: Date Exposition has the following sub-categories.

Description, Explanation, Narration, Conclusion/Findings, Recommendations/Suggestions

8. Hypothesis Testing

Research data is then forwarded to test the hypothesis. Do the hypothesis are related to the facts or not? To find the answer the process of testing hypothesis is undertaken which may result in accepting or rejecting the hypothesis.

9. Generalization and Interpretation

The acceptable hypothesis is possible for researcher to arrival at the process of generalization or to make & theory. Some types of research has no hypothesis for which researcher depends upon on theory which is known as interpretation

10. Preparation of Report

A researcher should prepare a report for which he has done is his work. He must keep in his mind the following points:

Report Design in Primary Stages

The report should carry a title, brief introduction of the problem and background followed by acknowledgement. There should be a table of contents, grapes and charts.

Main Text of the Report

It should contain objectives, hypothesis, explanations and methodology of the research. It must be divided into chapters and every chapter explains separate title in which summary of the findings should be enlisted. The last section would be clearly of conclusions to show the main theme of the R-study.

Closing the Report

After the preparation of report, the last step in business research process contains of bibliography, references, appendices, index and maps or charts for illustration. For this purpose the information should more clearer.