

B. A. Part - II - SOCIOLOGY
Paper - III (Methods of Social Research)

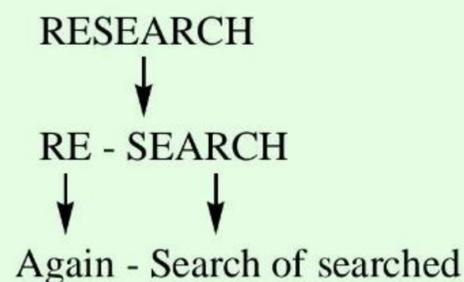
Topic : Social Research – AIMS,. STEPS
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SOCIAL RESEARCH

● **Introduction**

Research is a process in which a series of steps are used to collect and analyze the information of increase our understanding of a topic or issue.



The term RE - SEARCH means to make know of an existing thing.

The Research means (search of searched) means to elicit some facts out of known thing.



Research in all fields of human activity means, continued search for knowledge and understanding. But, not, all knowledge and understanding is scientific. Scientific research is essentially made up of two elements –

- (1) Observation by which knowledge of certain facts is obtained through sense perception.
- (2) Reasoning by which the meaning of these facts, their interrelation, and their relation to the existing body of scientific knowledge are ascertained as far as the existing state of knowledge and investigator's ability permit.

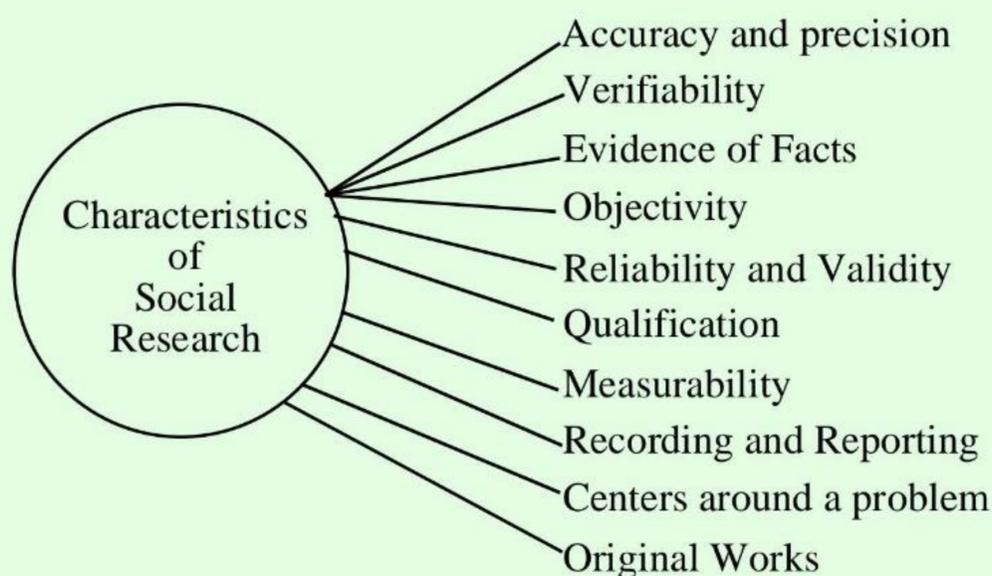
● **Meaning of Social Research**

A social research is a systematic procedure to seek explanation of unexplained social phenomena to clarify the doubtful and misconceived facts. A research is a scientific process to discover new facts and verify old facts in attempt to explain causal relationship of a phenomenon. Research is aimed to generating concepts, theories and reliable explanation.

DEFINITION

- **According to Pauline V. Young :** “We may define social research as a scientific undertaking which, by means of logical and systematized methods, aims to discover new facts or old facts, and to analyze their sequences, inter - relationships, casual explanations and the natural laws which govern them.”
- **C. A. Moser :** “Systematized investigation to gain new knowledge about social phenomena and problems, we call social research.”

Whitney : “Sociological research includes a study of human group relationships.”



AIMS OF SOCIAL RESEARCH

The important aims of social research are :

- (a) To understand the functioning of society.
- (b) To study individual behaviour and social action.
- (c) To evaluate social problems, their effects open society, and to find out possible solutions.
- (d) To explore social reality and explain social life.
- (e) To develop theories

Becker (1989) and Sarantakos (1998 : 16) have referred to the following foals of social research :

- **General goals :** Understanding for its own sake.
- **Theoretical goals :** Verification, falsification, modification or discovery of a theory.
- **Pragmatic goals :** Solution of social problems.
- **Political goals :** Development of social policy, evaluation of programmes, planning of reconstruction, empowerment and liberation.

● **Steps of social Research**

A social research involves the following steps :

- (1) **Selection of Research Problem** : Research problem is simply the topic of the research. Selection of research problem involves selecting a broad area and then narrowing it down to a specific topic.

Example

A Researcher may select a broad area for his research such as Domestic Violence. He splits this broad area into sub - areas to select one sub area from them as a topic for his research. For instance, the broad area 'Domestic Violence' is split into following sub - areas :

- Causes of Domestic violence
- Impact of Domestic Violence of Family
- Impact of Domestic Violence on children
- Services available to victims of Domestic Violence
- Extent of Domestic Violence in a Society

One of the above sub-areas is selected as a research topic. The purpose of narrowing down the broad area into sub-areas is to select a specific and manageable topic for the research.

- (2) **Review of Related Literature** : The next step is to study available literature on the topic – all the previously done work on the topic including research thesis, research paper, books, reports and publications.

- **According to Kimball Young** : This procedure may :

- (a) Provide general orientation essential in creating insight into, and a sense of integration of the subject as a whole.
- (b) Point to the employment of certain methods of study not thought of at the onset.
- (c) aid in conceptual thinking and testing of tentative assumptions.
- (d) help to avoid unnecessary duplication and help to focus attention on significant questions not touched upon by others.

- (3) **Formulation of Research Objectives** : Objectives are aims that you want to explore in the research. The simple way to make objectives is to first make questions that what do you want to explore about the topic and then convert these questions into objectives.

Example

I select 'Impact of Domestic Violence on children' as my research topic. I can raise the following question about this topic.

- What is the impact of Domestic Violence on the emotional development of a child ?
- How Domestic Violence affects the Child's academic performance ?
- How Domestic Violence influences the social behaviour of Children ?

Now, convert the above questions into objective by using action - oriented words as follows :

- To understand the impact of Domestic Violence on the emotional development of a Child.
- To examine the influence of Domestic Violence on the Child's academic performance.
- To explore the impact of Domestic Violence on the Child's social behaviour.

- (4) **Formulation of Hypothesis** : A hypothesis is a testable assumption showing a relationship among certain variables. It can be a false or true statement. It is put to test in the research to check its authenticity. It becomes a base for the research. It makes it easier for the researcher to carry on the research to generate productive findings.

Example

- Higher the poverty in a society, higher will be the crime rate .
 - Higher the illiteracy in a society, higher would be the discrimination against woman.
- (5) **Making Research Design** : The Research design is a plan for a research. It outlines the methods and procedures used in the research. It tells how the researcher wants to conduct the research. Which methodology will be used ? Which tool of data collection will be used ? Who will be the respondents and how many respondents ? etc.
- (6) **Sampling Procedure** : Sampling procedure means how to select respondents from population to make a sample which is true representative of the entire population. It is difficult for a researcher to study all the population of an area due to limited resources time, money and energy. There are various sample procedures such as Random sampling, stratified sampling, purposive sampling, Probability sampling, Non Probability sampling and so on.
- (7) **Data Collection** : Data collection is an important phase of the research. The data is collected for deriving, finding, results and theories.

There are two types of data – **Primary data and Secondary data.**

- (8) **Data Analysis and interpretation** : The collected data is properly analyzed to generate findings. Data analysis involves data editing, data coding, data classifications, measurement and interpretation. The data is classified on the basis of relevancy and is presented in the forms of tables, graphs charts diagram or texts so that it can be easily analyzed by the researcher.
- (9) **Hypothesis Testing** : The hypothesis of the research is tested in the light of analyzed data. For example – the hypothesis ‘Higher the poverty in a society, higher will be the crime rate’. The relationship of poverty and crime rate in the analyzed data will either verify or reject this hypothesis.
- (10) **Deriving findings, conclusion and suggestions** : Data analysis generates findings of the study . The research has to derive conclusion and suggestions on the basis of the finding the study. The conclusion is usually a summary of the findings which include only the most significant findings.
- (11) **Report Writing** : After conducting a research, all the details of the research (i.e. – basic concepts, literature studied, methodology, findings, suggestions etc.) are compiled into a research report. The purpose of writing the research report is to reword your work as well as to present your work in written form to the audience.

CONCLUSION

In short, the conclusion is where you should place your research within a larger context - Visualize your paper as an hourglass – start with a broad introduction and review of the literature, move to the specific analysis and discussion, conclude with a broad summary of the study’s implications and significance
