

# Model Research Methodology for Social Science Research

(With Special Reference to Sociological Studies in India)



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## Abstract

Research is a careful and organized study and process of solving problems and finding facts with a view to arriving at fruitful conclusions relating to the causes and effects. A research methodology involves all those specific techniques that are adopted in research process for the purpose of collection, assembling and evaluation of data. It defines the varied tools to be used for study, such as, surveys, questionnaires, schedules, interviews etc. Both the present and the past information on a topic can be included in it.

A legitimate research rests upon observation of the problem to be studied and objectivity to be maintained by the researcher while conducting research. Research begins with the selection of the problem; attempts to explore the causes and effects of the problem; interprets the cause and effect relationship of the problem, and ends with findings and generalization. Methods for the social science research and physical science research may be different depending upon the nature of the two, but the goal is the same.

Written and prepared with the purpose of suggesting a model research methodology for social science research and grounded in the secondary data available on the various sites of internet through the various research papers, the paper is a theoretical paper designed on the theme of model and approved research methodology for social science research. Ten articles relating to the various aspects of social science research formed the basis of the paper. The paper as a whole engrosses the various aspects of social science research.

**Keywords:** Model, Research, Methodology, Objectives, Hypothesis, Review of Literature, Related, Population, Sampling, Tools, Tabulation, Generalization.

## Introduction

In a broad sense, research is a systematic gathering of data and information and its analysis for advancement of knowledge in any subject. The term 'research' refers to the systematic method which consists of enunciation of the problem, formulation of a hypothesis, collection of the facts or data, analysis of the facts and the drawing of conclusions in the form of solutions to the problems and generalizations for theoretical formulation.

As defined in Webster's Collegiate Dictionary, 'research as "studious inquiry or examination; esp: investigation or experimentation aimed at the discovery and interpretation of facts, revision of accepted theories or laws in the light of new facts, or practical application of such new or revised theories or laws'. It may be called a movement from known to unknown, from explored to unexplored and from seen to unseen.

According to Clifford Woody research comprises defining and redefining problems, formulating hypothesis or suggested solutions; collecting, organizing and evaluating data; making deductions and reaching conclusions; and at last carefully testing the conclusions to determine whether they fit the formulating hypothesis. D. Steiner and M. Stephenson in the Encyclopedia of Social Sciences define research as "the manipulation of things, concepts or symbols for the purpose of generalizing to extend, correct or verify knowledge, whether that knowledge aids in construction of theory or in the practice of an art."

The American Heritage Dictionary of the English language defines methodology as 'the theoretical analysis of the methods appropriate to a field of study or to the body of methods and principles particular to a branch of knowledge'. The Collins English dictionary defines methodology as 'the

system of methods and principles used in a particular discipline.' A legitimate research methodology involves specific techniques that are adopted in research process to collect, assemble and evaluate data, along with defining those tools that are used to gather relevant information in a specific research study. It relies in scientific method which involves observation, data collection, classification, analysis, tabulation, interpretation and generalization.

#### **Types of Research**

1. Basic Research which involves the work which has not been done before, and which is purely new and authentic
2. Applied Research which involves the already done work or research.

#### **Need and Relevance of Research Methodology**

No research is possible without methodology, as it is only through it that a problem can be studied systematically and scientifically. Research methodology is adopted to check a certain theory and its application along a specific set of academic standards. Research methodology has its utmost relevance.

#### **Functions of Research Methodology**

Research methodology has the following specific functions to perform in the field of research-

1. Research methodology identifies the research activity
2. Research methodology specifies and defines the actual concepts
3. Research methodology declares the sort of methods required for inquiry
4. Research methodology offers a platform to demonstrate the various ways to communicate research activity

#### **Steps of Social Science Research**

A legitimate social science research is conducted through and under the following steps-

1. Selection of the problem
2. Study of the related literature
3. Formulation of hypothesis
4. Determination of study area, population, sample, tools
5. Collection, classification, analysis, interpretation of data
6. Tabulation and graphical presentation of data
7. Generalization

#### **Objectives of the Study**

The study was made with the following objectives-

1. To be familiar with the need of research in order to understand and control the phenomena
2. To study and differentiate the sciences in terms of their nature
3. To study the various aspects of research
4. To observe and study the ongoing trends in the field of research
5. To focus the nature and characteristics of social science research
6. To highlight the major issues of social science research
7. To highlight the different research methods meant for social science research
8. To enumerate the problems in the path of social science research

9. To be familiar with the view of various social scientists

10. To suggest a model research methodology for social science research on the basis of the implications that find room in the research papers pertaining to social science research methodology.

#### **Review of Related Literature**

DK Lal Das (2010) in the chapter entitled Processing and Analysis of Data of his book Social Work Intervention with Communities and Institutions discusses that coding of data involves assigning of numbers to each response of the question. The purpose of giving numbers is to translate raw data into numerical data, which may be counted and tabulated. The task of researcher is to give numbers to response carefully.

Nana Adu-Pipim Boaduo (2011) in the study entitled 'Systematic analysis and interpretation of collected data for a research study: A practical methodological framework for writing research report' suggests and concludes that a research of any kind is endlessly creative and interpretive. In the research process there is need for problem identification, statement of purpose with the most adequate and relevant critical questions that have to be answered clearly listed. Various sources of literature have to be consulted to be able to identify the "gap lapse" that has to be filled by the study being undertaken. A rationale for the study has to be stated as well as the provision of the theoretical framework upon which the comprehensive explanation for the whole research event is dependent. The study should be put in a relevant and applicable methodological perspective philosophically. The data collection methods and techniques should be provided by considering the research parameters within which the data required for the study will be collected.

Velany Rodrigues (2013) under the head 'Tips on effective use of tables and figures in research papers' suggests to ensure that display items are self-explanatory, use the text to draw the reader's attention to the significance and key points of the table and figure, ensure consistency between values or details in a table, give clear, informative titles.

Abdullah Ramdhani, Muhammad Ali Ramdhani & Abdusy Syakur Amin (2014) in their jointly contributed research paper entitled 'Writing a Literature Review Research Paper: A step-by-step approach' hold that a literature review can be just a simple summary of the sources, but it usually has an organizational pattern and combines both summary and synthesis. It demands a range of skills, such as learning how to define topics for exploration, acquiring skills of literature searching and retrieval, developing the ability to analyze and synthesize data as well as becoming adept at writing and reporting, often within a limited time scale.

Hulusi Karagel & Dondu Ucecam Karagel (2014) in 'Identification and Importance of Headings and Key Words in Research in the framework of Geography methodology' hold the idea that it is a skill and accomplishment to find a title for the study. It is the quality and the virtue of this skill to implement and

finalize the necessities, responsibilities and principles that the title requires.

Jaya Prasad Tripathy (2013) in his research paper 'Secondary Data Analysis: Ethical Issues and Challenges' states that research does not involve collection of data from the participants only, rather there is huge amount of data that is collected through the routine management information system and other surveys or research activities.

Anju Grewal, Hanish Kataria, and Ira Dhawan (2016) in their theoretical study on Literature search for research planning and identification of research problem hold the idea that literature search is a key step in performing good authentic research without which no feedback of the problem is possible. It helps the researcher in formulating a research question and planning the study. It is an art to choose relevant articles suitable to the study in question.

Sandeep B Bavdekar (February 2016) in his research paper entitled 'Formulating the Right Title for a Research Article' observes that it is not easy for authors to select an appropriate title; since multiple factors need to be considered while finalizing a title. A good title for a research article is the one which, on its own, is able to introduce the research work to the fullest extent, but in a concise manner.

Horn N (June 2018) in The Immense Value Behind Data Enrichment with Secondary Data suggests for the secondary data saying that a clear benefit of using secondary data is that much of the background work needed has already been carried out; secondary data have a pre-established degree of validity and reliability which need not be re-examined, and secondary data is a major key in the concept of data enrichment.

Ashley Crossman (April 2019) under the head 'Definition of a Hypothesis- What it is and how it is used in Sociology' throws ample light on hypothesis saying that 'a hypothesis is a prediction of what will be found at the outcome of a research project and is typically focused on the relationship between two different variables studied in the research. It is usually based on both theoretical expectations about how things work and already existing scientific evidence. Within social science, a hypothesis can take two forms. It can predict that there is no relationship between two variables, in which case it is a null hypothesis. Or, it can predict the existence of a relationship between variables, which is known as an alternative hypothesis'.

### **Hypothesis**

Following hypotheses formed the basis of the study, and guided the researcher to arrive at fruitful findings and conclusion-

1. Research is the key to the solution to all the problems
2. Research is helpful in the understanding of the phenomena
3. Physical science research studies the physical phenomenon, while social science research studies the social phenomenon
4. Research methodology of the physical sciences is different from that of social sciences

5. Research begins with the selection of the problem, and ends with the generalization
6. Research explores the causes and effects of problems
7. Research aims at interpreting the cause and effect relation of the problems
8. Observation is the major key point of research
9. Objectivity is the soul of research
10. Both the primary data and the secondary data are helpful in research

### **Research Methodology**

Prepared with the specific objective to suggest a model research methodology for social science researches, the paper is a theoretical study. For the purpose, the secondary data available in the various research papers on the various internet sites, were used. The steps that were followed, and that helped the researcher arrive at fruitful findings and conclusion were as follows-

1. Selection of the problem
2. Setting specific objectives for the study
3. Formulation of hypothesis
4. Internet surfing for the sake of finding published research papers on the theme
5. Review of related ten papers with a special focus on the titles of the papers, nativity of the authors, objectives of the studies selected for the purpose, hypothesis, research methodology, tools, sample, findings etc.
6. Special focus on the implications relating to social science research methodology
7. Interpretation of the findings
8. Drawing conclusion

### **Findings & Conclusion**

1. The phenomena can be understood only through research
2. The social problems can be solved only through research
3. Physical science and social science are the two types of science
4. The primary aim of research is to find out the causes and effects of the problem, and to interpret their relationship
5. Research is conducted under various steps
6. The current trends of research are enthusiastic, but need to be improved
7. Social science research involves the study and understanding of social phenomenon and problems for the sake of control
8. The major issues of social science research include deterioration, indifference of the researchers, need of enhancement of research activities at the college and university level etc.
9. Some of the research methods meant for social science research include analytical, exploratory, descriptive, experimental methods
10. Social science research creates several problems before the researchers, such as, the problem of data collection, observance and maintenance of objectivity, indifference and fear of the units of information etc.
11. A model research methodology for social science research involves a careful and scientifically planned handling of study based on primary data

to be collected through some effective tool like schedule, questionnaire, interview, case study etc.

- Experimental method is adopted in physical science research, while the other methods like exploratory, explanatory, descriptive and interpretative methods are adopted in social science research

#### **Suggestions**

- The current scenario of social science research reveals deterioration. Hence, there is an utmost need to improve it
- Zero percent plagiarism policy should be adopted
- The untouched areas of society should be encompassed in research
- New platforms for social science research should be explored

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