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# Master One

## Research Methodology

### Syllabus

Section of English, Faculty of Letters and Foreign Languages

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## Lecture One:

Theme 1, Sections: 1 to 4

### I. Objectives

At the end of the theme, you should be able to:

- explain what research is and what it is not, and the different definitions of research;
- introduce the objectives of research, and set the motivation in research;
- present some aspects of the debate about the nature of knowledge and the value of scientific method; and
- discuss the criteria of good research and the different types of research.

### II. Content

1. Meaning of Research
2. Definition of Research
3. Objectives of Research
4. Motivation in Research

#### 1. Meaning of Research

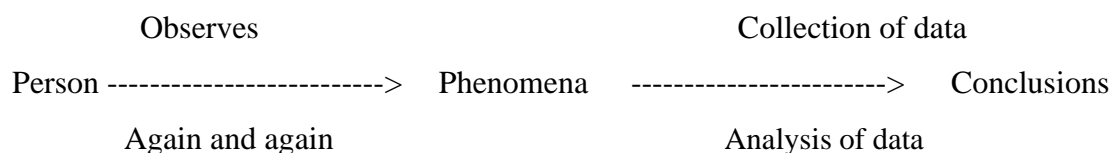
Research seeks the answer of certain questions which have not been answered so far, and the answers depend upon human efforts. In common parlance, it refers to a search for knowledge. The Advanced Learners' Dictionary of current English lays down the meaning of research as a careful investigation or inquiry specially through search for new facts in any branch of knowledge. In this sense, it is a voyage of discovery. We all possess the vital instinct of inquisitiveness for, when the unknown confronts us, we wonder our inquisitiveness makes us probe and attain full and fuller understanding of the unknown. This inquisitiveness is the mother of all knowledge and the method that we employ to obtain the knowledge that can be termed research (Kothari, 1990).

#### 2. Definition of Research

The term 'research' consists of two words:

*Research: Re+ search*

'Re' means again and again and 'search' means to find out something. The following is the process:



Therefore, research means to observe the phenomena again and again from different dimensions. It is a process of which a person observes the phenomena again and again and collects data on the basis of data s/he draws some conclusions.

Research is oriented towards the discovery of relationship that exists among phenomena of the world in which we live. The fundamental assumption is that invariant relationship exists between antecedents and certain consequents so that under a specific set of conditions certain consequences can be expected to follow the introduction of a given antecedent:

- **According to Rusk**

"Research is a point of a view, an attitude of inquiry or a frame of mind. It asks questions which have hitherto not been asked, and it seeks to answer them by following a fairly definite procedure. It is not a mere theorizing, but rather an attempt to elicit facts and to face them once they have been assembled. Research is likewise not an attempt to bolster up pre-conceived opinions, and implies a readiness to accept the conclusions to which an inquiry leads, no matter how unwelcome they may prove. When successful, research adds to the scientific knowledge of the subject".

- **According to George J. Mouly**

"Research is the systematic and scholarly application of the scientific method interpreted in its broadest sense, to the solution of social [...] problems; conversely, any systematic study designed to promote the development of social studies as a science can be considered research".

- **According to Francis G. Cornell**

"To be sure the best research is that which is reliable, verifiable, and exhaustive, so that it provides information in which we have confidence. The main point here is that research is, literally speaking, a kind of human behaviour, an activity in which people engage".

- **According to C. Woody**

“Research is a carefully inquiry or examination in seeking facts or principles; a diligent investigation to ascertain something; and this definition makes clear the fact that research is not merely a search for truth, but a prolonged, intensive, purposeful search. It constitutes a method for the discovery of truth which is really a method of critical thinking; it is comprising defining and redefining problems; formulating hypotheses or suggested solutions; collecting, organizing and evaluating data; making decisions and reaching conclusions to determine whether they fit the formulating hypotheses”.

- **According to C.C. Crawford**

“Research is simply a systematic and refined technique of thinking, employing specialized tools, instruments, and procedures in order to obtain a more adequate solution of a problem than would be possible under ordinary means. It starts with a problem, collects data or facts, analyses these critically and reaches decisions based on the actual evidence. It evolves original work instead of mere exercise of personal. It evolves from a genuine desire to know rather than a desire to prove something. It is quantitative, seeking to know not only what but how much, and measurement is therefore, a central feature for it”.

- **According to P.M. Cook**

"Research is an honest, exhaustive, intelligent searching for fact and their meanings or implications with reference to a given problem. The product of findings of a given piece of research should be an authentic, verifiable, and contribution to knowledge in the field studied”.

He has emphasised the following characteristics of research in his description:

It is an honest and exhaustive process.

The facts are studied with understanding.

The facts are discovered in the light of a problem. Research is problem-centred. The findings are valid and verifiable.

Research work should contribute new knowledge in that field (Cited in Singh, 2006).

- **According to P.D. Leedy**

“Research is the manner in which we solve knotty problems in an attempt to push back the frontiers of human ignorance. Research is ultimately a way of thinking. It is a way of looking at accumulated fact so that a collection of data speaks to the mind of the researcher”.

She has insisted on that researcher has many discrete characteristics. These characteristics comprise the particular approach to a probing for truth. These latter include the following:

- Research begins with a question in the mind of the researcher.
- Research demands the identification of a problem, stated in clear, unambiguous terms.
- Research requires a plan.
- Research deals with the main problem through appropriate sub-problems.
- Research seeks direction through appropriate hypotheses and is based upon obvious assumption.
- Research deals with facts.
- Research is circular (Cited in Leeds, 1980).

### **3. Objectives of research**

The purpose of research is to discover answers to questions through the application of scientific procedures. The main aim of research is to find out the truth which is hidden and which has not been discovered yet. Kothari (1990) sees that each research study has its own specific purposes. These objectives often fall under a number of broad groupings. Some examples of these are as follows:

- To gain familiarity with a phenomenon or to achieve new insights into it. Studies with this object in view are termed as exploratory or formulated research studies.
- To portray accurately the characteristics of a particular individual, situation or a group. Studies with this object in view are known as descriptive research studies.
- To determine the frequency with which something occurs or with which it is associated with something else. Studies with this object in view are known as diagnostic research studies.
- To test a hypothesis of a causal relationship between variables. Studies with this object are known as hypothesis-testing research studies.

On the same issue, Singh (2006) provides a different classification of objectives. For him, there are three fundamental objectives of research. These are:

- **Theoretical Objectives**

Those researches whose objectives are theoretical aim to formulate new theories, principles, or laws. Such type of research is exploratory because it explains the relationships of certain variables. The researches contribute some basic knowledge to the human knowledge.

- **Factual Objectives**

These researches whose objectives are factual aim to find out new facts. This objective by nature is descriptive. These researches describe facts or events which happened previously. Such type of research is done in history.

- **Application objectives**

The research having application objectives does not contribute a new knowledge in the field of human knowledge but suggests new applications. By application, we mean improvement and modification.

#### **4. Motivation in research**

What makes people to undertake research is a question of fundamental importance. The possible motives for doing research may be either one or more of the following:

- Desire to get a research degree with its consequential benefits;
- Desire to face challenge in solving unsolved problems;
- Desire to get intellectual joy of doing more creative work;
- Desire to be of service to society; and
- Desire to get respectability (Kothari, 1990).

However, this is not an exhaustive list of factors motivating people to undertake research studies. Many more factors, such as: directives of government, employment conditions; curiosity about new things; desire to understand causal relationships, social thinking and awakening, and the like may as well motivate people to perform research operation (ibid).