

Q23. Define the term "Social Research" and discuss the procedure "How to conduct a Research?"

Ans. I - INTRODUCTION: SOCIAL RESEARCH AND THE PROCEDURE TO CONDUCT A RESEARCH

Social  
Research

logical & Systematic Search  
for new & Useful Information

Research is a logical and systematic search for new and useful information on a particular topic. It is an investigation of finding solutions to scientific and social problems through objective and systematic analysis. A social research involves a specific procedure having seven steps. These steps are: problem identification, literature review, hypothesis formulation, choosing research method, data collection, data processing and research evaluation. Thus, a good research must pass through these seven stages.

## II - SOCIAL RESEARCH

### a) Definition

"A sociological research is a systematic method of exploring, analyzing and conceptualizing social life in order to extend, correct or verify data about society that aids in the structural observation of human behaviour."

(Pauline V. Young)

## b) Purpose

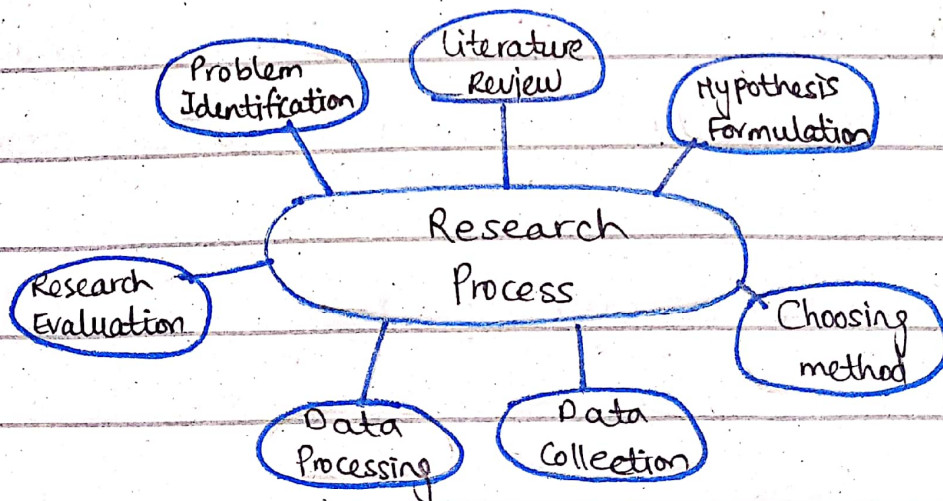
Following are the purposes of a social research:

1. To discover new facts about society.
2. To verify the already known facts.
3. To analyze their sequences, interrelationships and causal explanations.
4. To develop scientific tools and concepts which would facilitate reliable and valid study of human behavior.

## c) Methods

A social research has different methods: questionnaires, observation, interviews, social surveys, experiments, case studies, and ethnography.

## III - PROCEDURE OF A RESEARCH CONDUCTION



## a) Problem Identification

In the first step, the researcher has to define a research problem by choosing a topic. It should be noted that not all problems require research, some problems require a solution at administrative/managerial level.

According to Fisher, a problem will qualify as a potential research problem when the following three conditions exist:

1. There should be a perceived discrepancy between "what it is" and "what it should have been".
2. A question about "why" the discrepancy exists. This implies that the reason(s) of <sup>the</sup> discrepancy is unclear to the researcher.
3. There should be at least two possible solutions to the problem.

Example: Divorce among elite class in Karachi is an emerging social problem and needs research.

## b) Literature Review

In the second step, the existing sociological research on the problem must be tracked down and reviewed. The

reasons behind literature reviewing are:

1. To provide background information about the issue.
2. To save "labor" and embarrassment of duplicating research.
3. To develop a coherence between new and previous researches.
4. To become familiar with the methodology of others.
5. To understand any significant controversies, contradictions existent in the problem.

Example: Through review of the literature, it has been found that the issue of divorce among elite class of Karachi has not yet been studied.

### c) Hypothesis/Research Question Formulation

In the third step, a hypothesis must be developed which is a kind of assumption a sociologist make to conduct his/her research. Thus, a hypothesis is a presumed relationship between two variables in a way that can be tested with empirical

data.

Example: The following hypothesis may be developed in the divorce case: "The ~~Main~~ Cause of Divorce among Elites in Karachi."

#### d) Research Design/Method Choosing

In the fourth step, researcher has to carefully analyze and choose a proper research method. The researcher must choose a method while analyzing: time, available funds, access, legality, confidentiality, etc.

Example: In the divorce case, the questionnaire (anonymous) method is best-suited as people will feel free to share their views/opinions.

#### e) Data Collection

In the fifth step, the researcher has to identify the sample to study i.e. identify the respondents who will be the subjects of research.

A good sample has the following characteristics:

1. It should be representative (include all the concerned people) and should not be bias.

2. The sample should be flexible i.e. its size should be modifiable depending upon the circumstances.

3. It should be economically viable and readily accessible.

Example: Prepare a close-ended questionnaire with several alternatives of the causes of divorce and distribute it among people in Bahria Town, Defence, Clifton areas.

### f) Data Processing

In the sixth step, the gathered data must be analyzed in order to interpret a conclusion as it is impractical to place raw data into a report.

Data analysis usually involves reducing accumulated data to a manageable size, developing summaries, searching patterns, applying statistical techniques for understanding and interpreting the findings in the light of the research questions.

Example: After analyzing questionnaires, it is found that many people mentioned the main cause of divorce as "the lack of tolerance and forgiveness."

## g) Research Evaluation

Finally, the researcher has to evaluate his/her research. Research evaluation has two types:

### i) Internal Validity

Internal validity is concerned with the validity of conclusions drawn within the context of a particular study without worrying about generalization. Such questions may be:

1. Was the sample representative?
2. Is cause preceding the effect?
3. Are conclusions correct

### ii) External Validity

External validity is the validity of applying the conclusions of a study outside the context of that study.

Example:

Internal Validity: When the research was observed, it was found that the questionnaire method was best approach as the people feel free to anonymously express their views.

External validity: The conclusion 'Lack of



tolerance and forgiveness is the main cause of divorce among elites in Karachi" can be applied to the divorce scenario in entire Karachi.

#### IV - CRITICAL ANALYSIS

Problems are an integral part of human life. Every individual, society and state has problems, which need to be solved, otherwise they will result into numerous other problems. Some problems require low level / administrative solution while others require scientific solution. A scientific / social research is carried out to systematically solve a problem or to find its cause. For a good research, the researcher needs sharp sense as to detect the problem, find appropriate research method and effectively carry out the process. Thus, research process must be carried out by experts in order to make the time and resources investment worth.

#### V - CONCLUSION

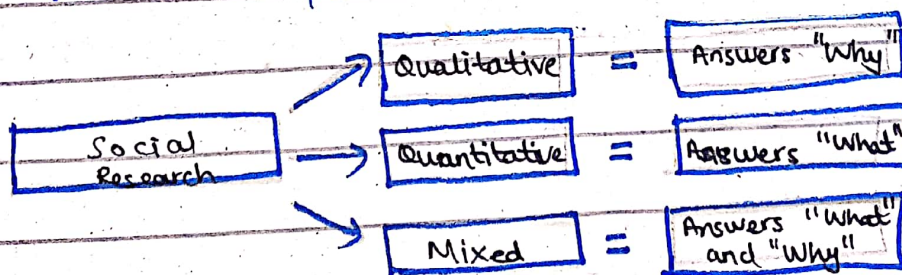
In a nutshell, a sociological research

is the logical and systematic search for new and useful information on a particular topic. It involves different methods and a particular procedure to be effectively carried out. Thus, research is the work/task of experts and not the individual/ordinary people.

Q24. Differentiate between qualitative and quantitative way of studying any social phenomenon. Elaborate by giving an example of each approach and how that can be inquired? (CSS-2020)

Q. Social issues are investigated through qualitative and quantitative modes of inquiry on variable situations. Explain the different situations with examples, reflecting proper application of the two methods. (CSS-2022)

Ans. I-INTRODUCTION: THE QUALITATIVE AND QUANTITATIVE WAYS OF STUDYING ANY SOCIAL PHENOMENON / ISSUE



Research is a logical and systematic search for new and useful information on a particular topic. It is an investigation of finding solutions to scientific and social problems through objective and systematic analysis. A social research involves two methods: qualitative and quantitative. Qualitative methods are used to determine the essential characteristics, properties, or processes of something or someone, whereas the quantitative method is concerned with the numerical analysis of data. However, today these two methods are also used in a mixed form and recognized as a legitimate method of social research.

## II - THE QUALITATIVE MODE OF INQUIRY

Qualitative Method	=	For Non-Numerical Analysis of Data
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### a) Definition

Qualitative research is a type of research that enables the researcher to gather in-depth insights on topics that are not well-understood. It focuses on the

"why" rather than "what" of social phenomena and is concerned with the interpretation of non-numerical data. In this research, the number of cases varies from two to ten.

### b) Methods

Common qualitative methods include interviews with open-ended questions, observations described in words, and literature reviews that explore concepts and theories. It also involves case studies and participant observation.

### c) Examples

1. What makes people use drugs?

In order to carry out a research (qualitative) on the above issue, the researcher carries out following steps:

- i. The researcher searches for the best method to carry out his research. He finds participant observation and interview as the best method.
- ii. Then he arranges a visit to <sup>a</sup> drug rehabilitation center for participant observation and interviews.
- iii. After living there for few days, he asks questions from them that why they started

drugs?

iv. After knowing their answers—which are different—he tries to find the major reason by his own analysis.

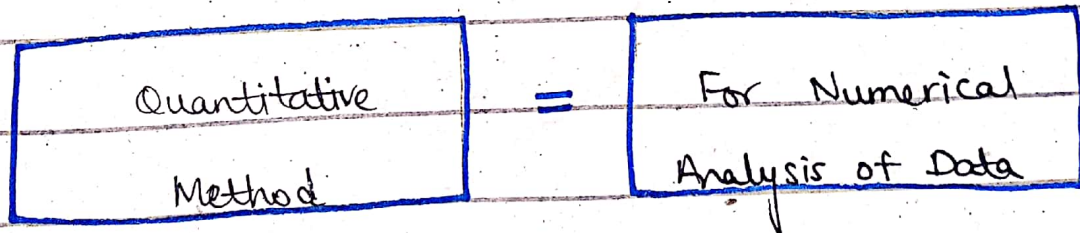
v. He finally finds that "Hopelessness" is the main cause of ~~drug~~ getting involved in drug addiction.

Similarly, other applications and examples

are:

2. What factors influence employee retention in large organizations?
3. The causes of divorce in society.
4. How to improve child productivity in academic disciplines?
5. Why is population explosion common among less-literate sections?
6. How to improve education sector?

### III - THE QUANTITATIVE MODE OF INQUIRY



### a) Definition

Quantitative research is a systematic investigation of phenomenon by gathering quantifiable data and performing statistical, mathematical, or computational techniques. Quantitative research is expressed in number and graphs and involves an infinite number of cases.

### b) Methods

Common quantitative methods include experiments, observations recorded as numbers, and surveys with closed-ended questions.

### c) Examples

1. Is online/virtual learning effective for students (based on their experiences of COVID-19)?

In order to carry out a quantitative research on the above issue, the researcher carries out the following steps:

- i. The researcher searches for the best method to carry out his research. He finds surveys as the best method.
- ii. He then arranges a visit to the nearby

educational institutes.

- iii He then personally interacts with the students in order to know their views.
- iv After knowing their views, he compiles the result by counting the number of proponents and opposers.
- v. He finally finds that majority of the students were against the virtual learning system and regarded it as an ineffective method.

Similarly, other applications and examples

are:

2. To know the literacy rate of a country.
3. What is the percentage of working class women in a country?
4. How has the average temperature changed globally over the last century?
5. To know the number of Idiopathic Pulmonary Fibrosis (IPF) patients after COVID-19 pandemic.
6. To know the average ~~delivery~~ delivery time of services like food panda, etc. in a particular area.

#### IV- CRITICAL ANALYSIS

Problems are an integral part of human life. Every individual, society and state has problems, which need to be solved. Some problems require managerial solutions while others require scientific solutions. The scientific research involves <sup>three</sup> types: qualitative, quantitative and mixed. Each method has its own strengths and weaknesses like qualitative method on one hand captures the complex reasons of behavior, but on the other hand its focus group will be small and hence will have generalization issues. Similarly, the quantitative method gives a compact summary of vast data, but it does not explore the "why" part of analysis. Thus, the researcher needs to be expert and should choose the research method according to his/her requirements.

#### V- CONCLUSION

To summarize, social research involves ~~two~~ three types: qualitative, quantitative and mixed. The qualitative research is used for the interpretation of non-numerical data while



the quantitative research is used for analysis of numerical data. Thus, the researcher has to choose these methods on the basis of his/her requirement.