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Chapter one

Introduction to Research

Source of Knowledge

- There are many ways in which humans acquire knowledge and gather information in order to solve problems.
- Many questions are answered and problems solved based on inherited customs, traditions and experiences.
- More complex questions may be answered through a process of logical reasoning/scientific approach
- Generally, there are two broad sources of knowledge.
 1. Experience, and
 2. Scientific method

What is Research

- It is an investigation of finding solutions to scientific and social problems through objective and systematic analysis.
- Research is an **organized** and **systematic** way of **finding answers to questions**.
- Research is a systematic, controlled, empirical and critical method consisting of enumerating the problem, formulating a hypothesis, collecting the facts or data, analyzing the facts and reaching certain conclusions either in the form of solutions toward the concerned problem or in certain generalizations for some theoretical formulation.

What is research?

- The sociologist **Norbert Elias** defined research in terms of its aims, as follows:
- The aim, as far as I can see, is the same in all sciences... the aim is to make known something previously unknown to human beings. It is to advance human knowledge, to make it more certain or better fitting . . . The aim is . . . discovery. (Elias 1986: 20)

What is research cont...

- Generally , research means
- directed toward the solution of a problem;
- is based upon observable experience or empirical evidence;
- demands accurate observation and description;
- involves gathering new data from primary or first-hand sources or using existing data for a new purpose;
- is characterized by carefully designed procedures, always applying rigorous analysis.

What makes people to undertake research?

- The possible motives for doing research may be either one or more of the following among others:
 - a. Desire to get a research degree along with its consequential benefits like better employment, promotion, increment in salary, etc.
 - b. Desire to face the challenges in solving the unresolved problems, i.e., concern over practical problems;
 - c. Desire to get intellectual joy of doing some creative work;
 - d. Desire to be of service to society; and
 - e. Desire to get respectability.

Who does research

- Academics
- Students
- Government and commercial organizations
- Consultants
- Managers

Characteristics of (Good) Research

- To qualify as a research, a process must have certain characteristics as listed below:
 - A. Organized** in that there is a structure or method in going about doing research. It is a planned procedure, not a spontaneous one. It is focused and limited to a specific scope.
 - B. Systematic** because there is a definite set of procedures and steps which you will follow. There are certain things in the research process which are always done in order to get the most accurate results.
 - C. Rigorous**
 - The research procedures followed to find answers to questions are relevant, appropriate and justified.

Characteristics cont..

D. Critical

- The methods employed and procedures used should be critically scrutinized.
- The process of investigation must be foolproof /perfect and free from any drawbacks.
- The process adopted and the procedures used must be able to withstand critical scrutiny.

E. Valid and verifiable

- This concept implies that whatever you conclude on the basis of your findings is correct and can be verified by you and others.
- The research procedure used should be described in sufficient detail to permit another researcher to repeat the research for further advancement, keeping the continuity of what has already been attained.

Characteristics cont..

F. Controlled

- In exploring the causality relation to two variables, the study must be set in way that minimizes the effects of other factors affecting relationship.
- In social science research, however, since controlling is almost impossible, the effect of the other variable must be quantified rather.

G. Empirical

- This means that any conclusions drawn are based upon hard evidence gathered from information collected from real life experiences or observations.