

## Social Research: Aims & objectives (1)

Social Research is the systematic method of discovering the new facts, or verifying the old facts, their sequences, inter-relationships, causal explanations and the natural laws which govern them. Systematized effort to gain new knowledge, we call research. 'Re' means, again and again and 'search' means - to find out, to probe, to discover closely and carefully. Research is the manipulation of things, concepts or symbols for the purpose of generalising to extend correct and verify knowledge, whether that knowledge aids in the construction of a theory or in the practice of an art. According to Pauline V. Young, Social research is a systematic method of exploring, analyzing and conceptualizing social life in order to extend, correct or verify knowledge, whether that knowledge aids in the construction of a theory or in the practice of an art.

The main aims & objectives of Social Research are as follows

1. The main aim of every research is to add to new knowledge.
2. In theoretical field social research aims at finding problems of human beings as a part of the society and their behaviour in different situations.
3. With respect to utilitarian aim social research helps in reducing social conflicts and tensions as well as in the ratification of social ills. It also helps in locating and identifying delinquent behaviour and causes of such social problems as dacoities, suicides etc.
4. It also helps in locating the causes and factors responsible for committing crime and thereby helps in eliminating socially injurious actions.
5. Social research aims to understand the functioning of society, human behaviour and its interaction with the environment and the social institutions.   
 → Its main purpose is to diffuse knowledge & establish theories based on credible facts.
6. To discover new facts or verify and test old facts, develop new scientific tools, concepts and theories which would facilitate reliable and valid study of social life.   
 ② Social research is about answering research questions. Three types of research questions can be asked i.e. 'what', 'why' & 'how'.
7. To find out the causal connection between human activities and natural laws governing them.
8. Development of social policy, evaluation of programmes, planning of reconstruction.
9. To evaluate social problems, their effects on society and to find out possible solutions.



## Motives (Why) Social Research:

- There are few motivating factors in social research
1. one such factor is quest for knowledge and curiosity for the unknown.
  2. This type of research is motivated to find out underlying basic phenomena. So as to avoid uncertainties in human life to the extent possible.
  3. Still another motivating factor in social research is to study unusual happenings of human life.
- Thus there is not a single motivating factor but there are many motivating factors which are responsible for carrying out social research.

## Advantages / Importance of Social Research:

One of the most important advantages is that with the help of social research we gain more knowledge and new dimensions are added to the already existing knowledge. Many superstitions and facts based on ignorance are removed. All social problems are properly analyzed and efforts are made to find out their proper, just and reasonable solution. Social research creates a circle by which every individual wants to know more and more and thus the society is benefited by that. It is with the help of this research that reliable information can be collected about social phenomenon.

Social research also helps us in knowing latest social trends and directions in which society is moving. With its help some accurate presumptions can be made about the things to happen which in turn help in avoiding calamities and at least prepare the society for facing them. This research also helps in human progress and control the course of human behaviour.

Social research continuously focusses our attention to the new social problems which go on adding to the society. Without social research these need not have to come to light and there would have been a social lag which would result in social dissatisfaction.



### ③ Types of Research: PURE & APPLIED

Motives for undertaking research are associated with the type of research or whether it is basic or theory oriented research or whether it is applied or policy-oriented research. The former is concerned with producing knowledge for understanding and the latter with producing knowledge for action. Both types of social research deal with problems, Basic research with theoretical problems and applied research with social or practical problems.

Basic or fundamental research is concerned with advancing fundamental knowledge about the social world, in particular, with the development and testing of theories. It is also called theoretical research. It investigates on basic principles and reasons for occurrence of a particular event or process or phenomena. Applied research on the other hand is concerned with practical outcomes, with trying to solve some practical problem, with helping practitioners accomplish tasks, and with the development and implementation of policy. Frequently the results of applied research are required immediately while basic research usually shows a longer time-frame.

Basic and applied researchers have different orientations to their work. Basic researchers are more detached and academic in their approach and tend to have their own motives. Applied researchers are more pragmatic and change-oriented, and generally have to pursue goals set by others. The driven goal is to have practical payoffs or uses for results.

However, in the social sciences, research is often a mixture of basic and applied. Some stages of a project may have a basic flavour while other stages may be more applied. Pure research may provide a foundation for further ~~sometimes~~ applied research. A sociologist, <sup>may provide</sup> making a study of the social structure of a slum neighbourhood, is working as a pure scientist and if this is followed by a study of how to prevent delinquency in a slum neighbourhood, this is applied science. Many people view sociology entirely as an applied science trying to solve social problems. Properly viewed, it is both a pure and an applied science. For unless a science is constantly searching for more basic knowledge, its practical applications of knowledge are not likely to be very practical.

Few if any social research projects are exclusively concerned with advancing knowledge for its own sake while the <sup>social</sup> researcher may not be interested in the practical benefits.

basic research can eventually produce such outcomes. Thus the controversy between 'Pure' and 'Applied' science need not be made much of, because the two are not mutually exclusive and there is a continual interplay between them, each contributing to the other in many ways. Both are complementary to each other.