

Chapter One

Research Methods: An

Introduction

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Target Groups: For 4th Year BUMA Students

1.1 Introduction

The term ‘Research’ consists of two words:

Research = Re + Search

‘Re’ means again and again and ‘Search’ means to find out something.

Therefore, research means to observe the phenomena again and again from different dimensions.

Some Important Meanings of Research

Research is oriented towards the discovery of relationship that exists among phenomena of the world in which we live.

Research commonly refers to a search for knowledge.

- Some people consider research as a movement from **known to unknown**.
- It is indeed a **voyage** of knowledge.

Business research is the application of the scientific method in searching for the truth about business phenomena.

Definition

Research is the **systematic** and **objective** identification, collection, analysis, dissemination of and use of information for the purpose of improving decision making related to the identification and solution of problems and opportunities.

1.2. Motivation of Doing Research

The possible motives for doing research can be either one or a combination of the following.

- 1) Desire to get degree with its consequential benefit.**
- 2) Desire to get respect and promotion (to own respect in society)** in academic and research institutions publication is crucial for promotion and academic rank.
- 3) Desire to face a challenge in solving the unsolved problem.** Concern over a particular problem initiates a researcher.

4) Desire to get intellectual joy of doing some creative work.

5) Directive of government.

6) Employment condition.

- ✓ Some employers set as criteria at least one publication in international journal.

1.3. Types of Research

Generally research can be classified on the basis of the following traits.

1. On the basis of the outcome of the research

- ✓ Whether the research tries to solve a particular problem or makes a general contribution to the knowledge, research can be:

A. Fundamental Research

Research done primarily to enhance understanding on certain problems that commonly occur in organizations is called **basic, fundamental or pure research**.

For example:

- ✓ **Darwin Theory of Evolution**
- ✓ **Relationship between Crime and Economic status**

B. Applied Research

- ✓ A research aimed at finding a solution for **an immediate problem facing a society**, a group or industry (business organization).

For example

- ✓ **The improvement of safety in the working place.**
- ✓ **The reduction of wastage in the working places**
- ✓ While pure research discovers **principles and laws**, applied research discovers their **application** in solving some social, economical or any other problems.

2. On the basis of the purpose of the research (the reason why a research is conducted), it can be:

A. Exploratory Research (Pilot Survey)

- ✓ It is called preliminary research.
- ✓ It is aimed at discovering, identifying and formulating a research problem and hypothesis.

B. Descriptive Research

- ▶ It is a research which describes phenomena as they exist.
- ▶ It is used to identify and obtain information on the characteristics of a particular problem or issue.
- ▶ The main purpose of such research is description of the state of nature or affairs as it exists at present.

For example

- ↯ What is the absentee rate in office or manufacturing department?
- ↯ Frequency of shopping

C. Analytical or Explanatory Research

- ▶ Analytical research on the other hand, goes beyond simple description of the state of nature.
- ▶ When a researcher encounters an issue that is already known and have a description of it you may begin to ask “why” things are the way they are.
- ▶ Not only describe the characteristics, but also it analyzes and explains why and how it happened or is happening.

For example

- ↯ How can we reduce the numbers of complaints made by customers?
- ↯ How can we reduce the number of absenteeism in the office or department.

D. Predictive Research

It tries to explain about the probability of happening similar thing in the future.

For example

- ↗ How would an increase in interest rate affect our profit margin?
- ↗ What type of packaging will improve the sales of our products?

3. On the basis of the Process of the research That is, on the basis of data used in the research process research can be:

A. Qualitative Research

- ✓ Such research is applicable for phenomenon that cannot be expressed in terms of quantity.

For example

- ▶ Research designed to find out how people feel or what they think about a particular subject or institution

B. Quantitative Research

- ▶ It is applicable for phenomenon that can be expressed in term of **quantity**.
- ▶ A quantitative approach involves collecting and analyzing **numerical data** and applying **statistical tests**.
- ▶ Quantitative research is more objective in nature.

For example

- ▶ The Impact of CSR on the Financial Performance of a give bank

4. On the basis of the the environment in which the research is carried out research can be:

A. Field research: It is a research carried out in the field. Such research is common in social science, agricultural science, history and archeology.

B. Laboratory research: It is a research carried out in the laboratory. These are commonly experimental research. Such researchers are common in medical science, agriculture and in general in natural sciences.

C. Simulation research: Such research uses **models** to represent the real world. Simulation is common in physical science, economics and mathematics.

5. On the basis of the time required to complete the research, research can be:

A. One Time Research:

- ▶ It is a research limited to a single time period

B. Longitudinal research:

- ▶ Such research is also called ongoing research.
- ▶ It is a research carried out over several time periods.

1.4. Objectives of Research

Though each research study has its own specific objectives, any research has got the following common (general) objectives.

1. To generate new knowledge, principle and scientific law
2. To review and synthesize existing knowledge. That is, to verify the validity of the previous work.
3. To investigate some existing situation or problem
 - To explain new phenomenon
 - To examine the cause of the problem
 - To examine the nature of the problem
4. To provide solution to a problem
5. To construct or create a new procedure and new system
6. A combination of any one of the above

1.5. Research Process

- ▶ Research processes consists of a series of actions or steps, which are necessary to successfully carry out research activities.
- ▶ These activities (steps) can overlap continuously rather than the following strictly prescribed sequence.
- ▶ The first step can determine the nature of the last step to be under taken. These steps are not separated and distinct.
- ▶ They do not necessarily follow each other in any specific order.

However, the following order of steps provides a useful procedural guide line regarding the research process:

- Identification and formulating the research problem
- Extensive literature survey
- Developing working hypothesis
- Preparing the research design
- Determining sample design
- Collecting data
- Execution of the project
- Analysis of the data
- Hypothesis testing
- Generalization and interpretation
- Reporting the result

1.6. Characteristics of Good Research

1. Good research is **Systematic**.
2. Good research is **logical**.
 - Research is guided by the rules of logical reasoning.
3. Good research is **Empirical**.
 - It deals with **concrete data** that provides a basis for internal validity to research results.
4. Good research is **Replicable**.
 - It allows research results to be verified by replicating the study and there by building a sound basis for decisions.

Thank You!!