

# [Characteristics of social science research](https://assignbuster.com/characteristics-of-social-science-research/)

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What is Social Science? “ Social science is, in its broadest sense, the study of society and the manner in which people behave and influence the world around us" (Economic and Social Research Council) Specifically, study of ïƒ¼Human behavior (what people do) ïƒ¼Characteristics (who people are) ïƒ¼Value (what people prefer) Social Science cont… Subjects Anthropology, Communication studies, Criminology, Economics, Geography, History, Political science, Psychology, Social studies, and sociology ethnicity and gender, employment and leisure, recreation & tourism, population health, lifestyle & wellbeing just to name a few What is Social Science Research? “ Social research is a scientific undertaking which by means of logical methods, aim to discover new facts or old facts and to analyze their sequences, interrelationships, casual explanations and natural laws which govern them. " (www. scribd. com) It applies scientific method to social inquiry on ïƒ¼ Human beings and their life contexts ïƒ¼ Philosophical questions relating to the - Nature of knowledge (epistemology), - Values (axiology) and - Being (ontology) (Somekh, 2005) Objectives of social research 1) To facilitate the understanding of human behavior 2) It seeks to find explanation to unexplained social 3) 4) 5) 6) phenomena To identify functional relationship existing in a social phenomena To find out the natural laws that regulate or direct social phenomena To standardize the society concept, e. g. culture, generation gap, social distance etc. To formulate solution to social problems. Objectives of social research cont.. 7) To maintain social organization, remove social tension, misconception 8) Helps clarify doubts and correct misconceptions about facts of life Characteristics of Social Science Research 1) Both theory (library) and field research are essential Field work helps the social scientist comes to grips with the subject. 3) A need for current information that leads to heavy use of journal articles and conference papers, although books are also important sources 4) Calls for inter-disciplinary approach to support gathering of data and publishing results 5) Relies on raw data such as statistics, survey results, observations, and interviews 2) Characteristics of Social Science Research ïƒ¼ Development of generalizations, principles or theories that are helpful in predicting future occurrences. ïƒ¼ It demands accurate observations and description ïƒ¼ Researchers may choose from a variety or non- qualitative description of their observations ïƒ¼ It involves gathering new data from primary sources or using existence data for new purpose. Characteristics of Social Science Research — cont. ïƒ¼ Characterized by carefully designed procedure that applies rigorous analysis ïƒ¼ Requires expertise ïƒ¼ Strives to be objective and logical, testable & validated ïƒ¼ Characterized by patient and unhurried activity. ïƒ¼ Researcher must expect disappointment and discouragement Social science research methodology Methods used in social science research share certain basic stages a) Choosing a research problem and stating the hypothesis. b) Formulating the research design c) Gathering data d) Analysis of the data e) Interpreting the results to test the hypothesis. Social Science Research methodology — cont.. Methods used should: ïƒ¼Have scientific and logical foundations ïƒ¼Empirical ïƒ¼Have a testable hypothesis ïƒ¼Systematic and objective ïƒ¼Rigorous/meticulous ïƒ¼Evidence-based Social Science Research methodology — cont.. Results ïƒ¼Can be generalized ïƒ¼Need to be replicable ïƒ¼Cumulative Significance of Social Science Research ïƒ¼Helps diagnosis of problems and offer solution. ïƒ¼Facilitates prediction and control over social phenomena ïƒ¼Addresses challenges facing the society - social welfare ïƒ¼Aims at contributing to existing knowledge and systematisation of knowledge. ïƒ¼Discovery of facts thus generation of new knowledge ïƒ¼Helps understand issues of human concerns ïƒ¼It is useful for the formulation of legislations, policies, schemes, and programmes — thus support development planning. Problems/Limitations of Social Science Research 1. Ethical issues 2. Problem of maintaining objectivity. Scientist part of the study 3. Dynamic nature of man & social phenomena —unpredictability, human problems & complexity of social data 4. Personal values 5. Anthropomorphization References Economic and Social Research Council. What is social science? 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