

# Characteristics of social science research

[Science](#)



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

- ¼ Human behavior (what people do)
- ¼ Characteristics (who people are)
- ¼ Value (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

- ¼ Human beings and their life contexts
- ¼ 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.

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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

Development of generalizations, principles or theories that are helpful in predicting future occurrences. It demands accurate observations and description Researchers may choose from a variety of qualitative description of their observations It involves gathering new data from primary sources or using existing data for new purpose. Characteristics of Social Science Research — cont. Characterized by carefully designed procedure that applies rigorous analysis Requires expertise Strives to be objective and logical, testable & validated Characterized by patient and unhurried activity. 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:

Have scientific and logical foundations Empirical Have a testable hypothesis Systematic and objective Rigorous/meticulous Evidence-based Social Science Research methodology — cont.. Results Can be generalized Need to be replicable Cumulative Significance of Social Science Research Helps diagnosis of problems and offer solution. Facilitates prediction and control over social phenomena Addresses challenges facing the society - social welfare Aims at contributing to <https://assignbuster.com/characteristics-of-social-science-research/>

existing knowledge and systematisation of knowledge.  $\frac{1}{4}$ Discovery of facts thus generation of new knowledge  $\frac{1}{4}$ Helps understand issues of human concerns  $\frac{1}{4}$ It 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

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Publications