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Research Methods in Psychology

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By: Gaurav Sahni



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**Sample Preview
of the
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QUESTION PAPER

June – 2023

(Solved)

RESEARCH METHODS IN PSYCHOLOGY

M.P.C.-5

Time: 2 Hours]

[Maximum Marks: 50

Note: All sections are compulsory.

SECTION-A

Note: Answer the following questions:

Q. 1. Explain the goals and steps of grounded theory.

Ans. Ref.: See Chapter-14, Page No. 130, 'Goals and Perspectives of Grounded Theory' and Page No. 131, 'Steps of Grounded Theory'.

Q. 2. Describe the steps in research process.

Ans. Ref.: See Chapter-1, Page No. 5, 'Steps in Research Process'.

Q. 3. Explain single-factor research design.

Ans. Ref.: See Chapter-9, Page No. 86, 'Single Factor Design'.

Q. 4. Explain ethnography as a research methods.

Ans. Ref.: See Chapter-3, Page No. 121, 'Ethnography : The Meaning' and Page No. 126, Q.No. 4.

SECTION-B

Note : Answer the following questions:

Q. 5. Explain the methods of estimating reliability.

Ans. Ref.: See Chapter-2, Page No. 14, 'Methods of Estimating Reliability'.

Q. 6. Define Variable. discuss various types of variables.

Ans. Ref.: See Chapter-3, Page No. 31, Q. No. 1.

Q. 7. Describe the methods of data collection in survey research.

Ans. Ref.: See Chapter-4, Page No. 41, 'Sampling Methods'.

Q. 8. Differentiate between quasi-experimental and experimental research design.

Ans. Ref.: See Chapter-11, Page No. 101, 'Difference Between Quasi-experimental Design' and 'True Experimental Design'.

Q. 9. Explain the causal comparative research design.

Ans. Ref.: See Chapter-12, Page No. 111, 'Casual Comparative Research Design'.

SECTION-C

Note: Write short notes on the following:

Q. 10. Objectivity safeguards in research process.

Ans. Objectivity is a fundamental principle in the research process that ensures unbiased and reliable outcomes. Safeguards to maintain objectivity in research include:

1. Clearly defined research objectives: Clearly stating the research objectives at the outset helps to guide the study and avoid biases that many arise from personal interests.

2. Research design and methodology: Developing a well-designed research plan and selecting appropriate methodologies are crucial for maintaining objectivity.

3. Data collection and analysis: Researchers should collect data systematically and consistently, adhering to predesigned protocols.

By implementing these safeguards researchers can enhance the objectivity of their work and promote the credibility and relativity of knowledge.

Q. 11. Steps for case study.

Ans. Ref.: See Chapter-8, Page No. 80, 'Steps for Case Study'.

Q. 12. Disadvantages of correlational design.

Ans. Ref.: See Chapter-12, Page No. 110, 'Evaluation of Correlational Design'. ■■

QUESTION PAPER

December – 2022

(Solved)

RESEARCH METHODS IN PSYCHOLOGY

M.P.C.-5

Time: 2 Hours]

[Maximum Marks: 50

Note: All sections are compulsory.

SECTION – A

Q. 1. Elucidate the various steps followed in a research process.

Ans. Ref.: See Chapter-1, Page No. 5, 'Steps in Research Process'.

Q. 2. Differentiate between experimental research and field experiments. Explain the strengths and weaknesses of field experiments.

Ans. Ref.: See Chapter-7, Page No. 68, 'Experimental Research and Field Experiments' and Page No. 69, 'Strengths and Weaknesses of Field Experiments'.

Q. 3. Define group design. Explain the effect of different conditions, with an example.

Ans. Ref.: See Chapter-9, Page No. 86, 'Between Group Design'.

Q. 4. Explain the approaches and steps in discourse analysis.

Ans. Ref.: See Chapter-15, Page No. 141, 'Approaches or Theories of Discourse Analysis' and Page No. 142 'Steps in Discourse Analysis'.

SECTION – B

Q. 5. Define validity. Explain the various threats to interval validity.

Ans. Ref.: See Chapter-2, Page No. 17, 'Validity' and Page No. 18, 'Threats to Internal Validity'.

Q. 6. Discuss the possible difficulties in formulating a good hypothesis.

Ans. Ref.: See Chapter-4, Page No. 38, 'Possible Difficulties in Formulation of a Good Hypothesis'.

Q. 7. Delineate the characteristics of ex-post facto research.

Ans. Ref.: See Chapter-6, Page No. 65, Q. No. 1 and Page No. 63, 'Characteristics of Ex-Post Facto Research'.

Q. 8. Explain the assumptions and steps in ethnography.

Ans. Ref.: See Chapter-13, Page No. 122, 'Assumptions in Ethnography' and Page No. 123, 'Steps of Ethnographic Method'.

Q. 9. Discuss the types of quasi-experimental design.

Ans. Ref.: See Chapter-11, Page No. 102, 'Types of Quasi Experimental Design'.

SECTION – C

Q. 10. Content Analysis

Ans. Ref.: See Chapter-15, Page No. 144, 'Concept of Content Analysis'.

Q. 11. Research Biases

Ans. Ref.: See Chapter-1, Page No. 4, 'Research Biases'.

Q. 12. 'Interaction' in Factorial Design

Ans. Ref.: See Chapter-10, Page No. 99, Q. No. 4.

■ ■

Sample Preview of The Chapter

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RESEARCH METHODS IN PSYCHOLOGY

INTRODUCTION TO RESEARCH METHODS IN PSYCHOLOGY



Basic Process/Concept in Research

INTRODUCTION

We all know that understanding is one of the essential aspects of learning any of the activity. It is essential to come to know that why everybody thinks, feel and behave differently. And for performing any given task we need to do the research on that particular topic. We need to follow the various principles which are set by the various psychologists to solve the problems. Research comprises “Creative work undertaken on a systematic basis in order to increase the stock of knowledge, including knowledge of man, culture and society, and the use of this stock of knowledge to devise new applications.” It is used to establish or confirm facts, re-affirm the results of previous work, solve new or existing problems, support theorems, and develop new theories. The primary purposes of basic research are documentation, discovery, interpretation, or the Research and Development (R&D) of methods and systems for the advancement of human knowledge. Approaches to research depend on epistemologies, which vary considerably both within and between humanities and sciences. There are several forms of research: scientific, humanities, artistic, economic, social, business, marketing, practitioner research, etc.

In this chapter we will learn about the nature and relevance of research. We will also learn about the various qualities of the research. Psychological research refers to research that psychologists conduct to research and analyse the experiences and behaviours of individuals or groups. Their research can have educational, occupational and clinical applications. Hypothesis testing refers to the process of choosing between competing hypotheses about a probability distribution, based on observed data from the distribution. It is a core topic in mathematical statistics and indeed is a fundamental part of the language of statistics.

CHAPTER AT A GLANCE

DEFINITION AND MEANING OF RESEARCH

Research is an investigation or experimentation that is aimed at a discovery and interpretation of facts, revision of theories or laws or practical applications of the new or revised theories or laws. According to Grinnell, Research means a systematic investigation, including research development, testing, and evaluation, designed to develop or contribute to generalizable knowledge. Activities that

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meet this definition may be funded or unfunded, or may be conducted as a component of another program not usually considered research. For example, demonstration and service programs may include evaluation components, which constitute research activities under this definition.

The scientific method is a body of techniques for investigating phenomena, acquiring new knowledge, or correcting and integrating previous knowledge. To be termed scientific, a method of inquiry must be based on empirical and measurable evidence subject to specific principles of reasoning. The Oxford English Dictionary defines the scientific method as: "A method or procedure that has characterized natural science since the 17th century, consisting in systematic observation, measurement, and experiment, and the formulation, testing and modification of hypotheses.". According to Kerlinger, Scientific research is a systematic, controlled, empirical and critical investigation of hypothetical propositions about the presumed relations among natural phenomena. On the other hand, Burns is of the view that research is the systematic investigation to find the answers to a problem. Hence, we can say that research provides scientific information and theories for the explanation of the nature and the properties of the world. It makes practical applications possible. Scientific research is funded by public authorities, by charitable organizations and by private groups, including many companies.

CRITERIA OF GOOD RESEARCH

Whatever may be the types of research works and studies, one thing that is important is that they all meet on the common ground of scientific method employed by them. One expects scientific research to satisfy the following criteria:

1. The purpose of the research should be clearly defined and common concepts be used.
2. The procedural design of the research should be carefully planned to yield results that are as objective as possible.
3. 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.

4. The analysis of data should be sufficiently adequate to reveal its significance and the methods of analysis used should be appropriate. The validity and reliability of the data should be checked carefully.
5. Conclusions should be confined to those justified by the data of the research and limited to those for which the data provide an adequate basis.
6. The researcher should report with complete frankness, flaws in procedural design and estimate their effects upon the findings.
7. Greater confidence in research is warranted if the researcher is experienced, has a good reputation in research and is a person of integrity.

OBJECTIVES OF GOOD RESEARCH

The prime objective of the good research is to find out the answers of various different questions scientifically. Each of the research study is different and follows the different pattern. We can bifurcate the objectives of good research in four different categories.

When the purpose of research is to gain familiarity with a phenomenon or acquire new insight into it in order to formulate a more precise problem or develop hypothesis, the exploratory studies come in handy.

Descriptive research, is used to describe characteristics of a population or phenomenon being studied. It does not answer questions about how/when/why the characteristics occurred. Rather it addresses the "What" question (What are the characteristics of the population or situation being studied?)

It is research on a disease that someone might get diagnosed with gigantic research. The basic logic of hypothesis testing is to prove or disprove the research question.

QUALITIES OF A GOOD RESEARCH

A research is a comprehensive task and it requires great effort as a researcher on your part. The first thing that determines the success of your research is your research topic. A good research topic should have the following qualities. The following qualities should serve as a guide when conducting a research. At every point of the research work, always go back to them to

ensure that your work is in line with these qualities. Therefore, a scientific research is:

Systematic: (one step leads to the other and it is devoid of any guess work or intuition at arriving at conclusions). It is the most important quality of any research topic. The topic should have to be clear so that others can easily understand the nature of your research. The research topic should have a single interpretation so that people cannot get distracted.

Logical: (it is guided by the rules of logical reasoning and it establishes the relationship between different variables). Well-defined and well-phrased research topic is a half guarantee of a successful research. Sometimes researchers phrase the research topic in such a way that it gives a double-barrelled impression.

Empirical: (it is self evident). The language of the research topic should have to be simple. You should use technical terms only when it is necessary, otherwise use simple words so that everyone can understand it.

Reductive: (can be reduced to a sentence especially in the research topic). The titling of the research problem should follow the rules of titling. there are various rules of titling. You can either use a sentence case or a title case but most of the titles follow title case.

Replicable: (the study can be replicated anywhere and similar results should be generated). Current importance should also be the consideration of the researcher while selecting a research topic. An obsolete topic will not be beneficial for anyone the topic should have current importance.

RESEARCH PROCESS: BASIC CONSIDERATIONS

The results of psychology experiments are printed and broadcast everyday in newspapers, magazines, television programs and blogs. On a more informal level, we often make judgements about the intentions, motivations and actions of others on a daily basis. While the everyday judgments we make about human behaviour are subjective and anecdotal, researchers use the scientific method to study psychology in an objective and systematic way. We can divide the psychological research process into two major categories: Context of discovery and Context of justification.

Context of Discovery

Context of discovery refers to an early phase in a research setting where a new or different way of thinking (beliefs, information, knowledge) about a subject of study or research is introduced. An example of this could be when a researcher presents a new hypothesis regarding a known phenomenon.

Role of Theories, Hypotheses and Paradigms in Psychological Researches

The first step of a psychological investigation is to identify an area of interest and develop a hypothesis that can then be tested. While a hypothesis is often described as a guess, it is actually much more specific. A hypothesis can be defined as an educated guess about the relationship between two or more variables.

The various psychological theories assisted in understanding how mind, brain and behaviour are related with each other. For example, a researcher might be interested in the relationship between study habits and test anxiety. They would then propose a hypothesis about how these two variables are related, such as "Test anxiety decreases as a result of effective study habits."

Learning theories tend to fall into one of several perspectives or paradigms, including behaviourism, cognitivism, constructivism and others. Learning theories tend to fall into one of several perspectives or paradigms, including behaviourism, cognitivism, constructivism and others. Then came the matter of Ordeal of proof in which hypothesis and paradigm makes a difference in science.

In order to form a hypothesis, you must start by collecting as many observations about something as you can. Next, it is important to evaluate these observations and look for possible causes of the problem. Create a list of possible explanations that you might want to explore. After you have developed some possible hypotheses, it is important to think of ways that you could confirm or disprove each hypothesis through experimentation. In the scientific method, falsifiability is an important part of any valid hypothesis. This does not mean that the hypothesis is false; instead, it suggests that if the hypothesis were false, researchers could demonstrate this falsehood.

Research Biases

Cognitive biases are tendencies to think in certain ways. Cognitive biases can lead to systematic deviations from a standard of rationality or good judgement and are often studied in psychology and behavioural economics.

Although the reality of these biases is confirmed by replicable research, there are often controversies about how to classify these biases or how to explain them. Some are effects of information-processing rules, called heuristics, that the brain uses to produce decisions or judgements. Such effects are called cognitive biases. Biases in judgement or decision-making can also result from motivation, such as when beliefs are distorted by wishful thinking. Some biases have a variety of cognitive (“cold”) or motivational (“hot”) explanations. Both effects can be present at the same time.

There are also controversies as to whether some of these biases count as truly irrational or whether they result in useful attitudes or behaviour. For example, when getting to know others, people tend to ask leading questions which seem biased towards confirming their assumptions about the person. This kind of confirmation bias has been argued to be an example of social skill: A way to establish a connection with the other person.

The research on these biases overwhelmingly involves human subjects. However, some of the findings have appeared in non-human animals as well.

Context of Justification

Whatever the concrete process of justification may consist of, it presupposes that there is something that has to be justified. Therefore, before the process of justification can begin, the thing to be justified has to be somehow present. Now, it is plausible that in science, anything that is in need of a justification has to be discovered; it is not simply given. At least, this approach is plausible if “discovery” is understood in a wide sense that includes “invention”. Claims in science that are in need of justification typically comprise new hypotheses, new theories, new models with certain properties, new classifications, new forms of representation, or new phenomena.

Scientific Attitudes and Values Associated with Research Process

The research into how students’ attitudes affect their learning of science related subjects has been one of the core areas of interest by science educators. The development in science education records various attempts in measuring attitudes and determining the correlations between behaviour, achievements, career aspirations, gender identity and cultural inclination. Some researchers noted that attitudes can be learned and teachers can encourage students to like science subjects through persuasion. But some view that attitude is situated in context and has much to do with upbringing and environment. The critical role of attitude is well recognized in advancing science education, in particular designing curriculum and choosing powerful pedagogies and nurturing students.

Objectivity Safeguards in Research Process

Objectivity in social research is the principle drawn from positivism that, as far as is possible, researchers should remain distanced from what they study so findings depend on the nature of what was studied rather than on the personality, beliefs and values of the researcher. It consists of: procedural safeguards, standardization, operationalization and avoiding of bias.

Procedural safeguards include the right to participate in all meetings, to examine all educational records, and to obtain an Independent Educational Evaluation (IEE) of the child. Parents have the right to written notice when the school proposes to change or refuses to change the identification, evaluation or placement of a child. Standardization is related with the consistency and objectivity of how tests are administered and scored. In order to compare one person to another on a test, it is important that they take the test under the same conditions and the same scoring procedure is applied to both.

Operationalization is a process of defining the measurement of a phenomenon that is not directly measurable, though its existence is indicated by other phenomena. It is the process of defining a fuzzy concept so as to make the theoretical concept clearly distinguishable and to understand it in terms of empirical observations.