



RESEARCH AS A PROFOUND JOURNEY OF KNOWLEDGE AND UNDERSTANDING

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Best Citation – BHAGYAMMA G, RESEARCH AS A PROFOUND JOURNEY OF KNOWLEDGE AND UNDERSTANDING, *JOURNAL OF RESEARCH ETHICS (JRE)*, 1 (1) of 2023, Pg. 34-41, APIS – 3920 – 0019 | ISSN – 2583 – 9535

ABSTRACT

Research, a dynamic journey of exploration, transcends traditional definitions to embrace an unwavering pursuit of truth and knowledge. It stands as the bedrock of intellectual advancement, marked by scientific rigor, objective inquiry, and rational understanding. P.M. Cook and J.W. Best underscore its comprehensive and intensive nature, yielding dependable solutions and substantial contributions to knowledge. Inherent in research is an expedition into the unknown, weaving the threads of curiosity into enlightening patterns. It operates on dual levels—foundational knowledge aids immediate problem-solving, while expansion through research thrives. Action research empowers practitioners, fostering decentralization and broadening understanding. It rejuvenates educators, nurtures experimental outlooks, and fortifies the profession. Quality research problems adhere to criteria like novelty, interest, feasibility, data availability, and cooperation. These problems shape the journey, driving impact and comprehension. Varied research approaches—qualitative, quantitative, and action—cater to distinct needs. Action research, in particular, empowers by engaging, decentralizing, and enriching practitioners. It offers lenses through which knowledge is pursued, contributing to society's intellectual and practical evolution.

Keywords: Research, Exploration, Knowledge, Intellectual advancement and Action research

INTRODUCTION

Research is an expansive and multidimensional concept that transcends ordinary definitions, encapsulating a profound journey of exploration and understanding. It embodies an unending pursuit of knowledge, an inexhaustible quest for truth that unveils new insights and rectifies past fallacies. As it contributes in an orderly manner to the reservoir of human knowledge, the information garnered through research is marked by its scientific rigor and objective nature. Rooted in rational comprehension, empirical validation, and systematic experimentation, research stands as a cornerstone of intellectual progress.

P.M. Cook eloquently characterizes research as a sincere, comprehensive, and intelligent quest for facts, their meanings, and the implications they hold within the context of a given problem.⁵⁰ This process involves meticulously designed strategies to collect, analyze, and interpret data systematically. It is the avenue through which dependable solutions to complex problems are formulated.

The pinnacle of research lies in its reliability, verifiability, and thoroughness, ensuring the information it presents is trustworthy and instills confidence.⁵¹ J.W. Best contends that research embodies a highly structured and intensive

⁵⁰ P.M. Bakshi, *The Discipline of Legislative Drafting*, 34 JOURNAL OF THE INDIAN LAW INSTITUTE 1 (1992).

⁵¹ *Id.*



application of the scientific method, generating formal records of procedures and conclusive outcomes. The outcome of research is not mere conjecture but a substantial contribution to knowledge.

C.C. Crawford aptly defines research as a refined and systematic mode of thinking, employing specific tools, instruments, and procedures to unravel solutions that surpass ordinary means. Originating from a problem, research unfolds through data collection, critical analysis, and evidence-based decision-making.⁵²

W.S. Monroe underscores research as a methodology for addressing problems by deriving solutions from factual information. These facts can encompass diverse forms such as opinions, historical records, test outcomes, responses to surveys, or experimental findings.⁵³

J. Francis Rummel views research as a dynamic endeavor aimed at uncovering, developing, and substantiating knowledge. It mirrors an intellectual evolution spanning centuries, evolving in purpose and structure while relentlessly seeking truth.

Clifford Woody portrays research as a meticulous inquiry or investigation to discern principles and facts, reflecting a dedicated pursuit in quest of understanding.

Rusk proposes that research is a distinctive perspective, an inquisitive stance or mindset. It poses unasked questions and endeavors to answer them methodically. Unlike idle theorizing, research involves a conscientious endeavor to gather facts and confront them head-on.

In spirit, research is a voyage into the realm of the unknown, an unyielding endeavor that spans time, methodologies, and disciplines. It is the process through which humanity delves into the intricate tapestry of knowledge, pulling at

threads of curiosity to weave new patterns of understanding and enlightenment.

KNOWLEDGE AND RESEARCH: CATALYSTS OF HUMAN PROGRESS

Human knowledge operates on two distinct yet interwoven levels, each contributing to the advancement of society and the betterment of human life.⁵⁴

Primary Level of Knowledge

At its foundational level, knowledge serves as the bedrock for practical human activities. Consider the teacher who employs their knowledge to solve intricate mathematical problems for their students or the doctor who applies their expertise to diagnose and heal diseases. This primary level of knowledge directly impacts immediate problem-solving and day-to-day activities, elevating the quality of life and addressing challenges efficiently.

Secondary Level of Knowledge and Research

Moving beyond the primary level, knowledge transcends utility and enters the realm of advancement. This secondary level of knowledge hinges on research, the active pursuit of expanding existing knowledge. Research is the mechanism through which knowledge grows in a methodical and structured manner.⁵⁵ It's important to highlight that research isn't synonymous with aimless exploration; rather, it's a deliberate and systematic endeavor aimed at generating new insights and understanding.

RESEARCH AND PROGRESS

The significance of research becomes evident when assessing the trajectory of human progress. It is an essential and potent tool that propels humanity forward. Without the process of systematic research and its subsequent application, progress would be stymied. The bedrock of our cultural and societal evolution is

⁵² *Id.*

⁵³ Viswarup Mukherjee, *Brooms Legal Maxims*, https://www.academia.edu/19337987/Brooms_legal_Maxims (last visited Aug 31, 2023).

⁵⁴ *Id.*

⁵⁵ Raymond V. Bowers & Frederick Lamson Whitney, *The Elements of Research*, 3 AMERICAN SOCIOLOGICAL REVIEW 131 (1938).



founded on research's ability to uncover new truths and ideas, effectively dismantling the barriers of ignorance.⁵⁶ This, in turn, opens pathways to improved methodologies, enhanced products, and more effective ways of conducting tasks.

Every significant research endeavor yields progress, be it in scientific, technological, social, or cultural spheres. The ultimate aim of research is to usher in progress, not only in isolated domains but also in the holistic quality of human life. By shedding light on solutions to our challenges, research guides us through difficulties, unlocks new avenues of understanding, and presents alternative perspectives that can transform our world for the better.

RESEARCH'S IMPACT ON EFFICIENCY AND WELFARE

Research isn't confined to academia; it permeates all aspects of society. Its influence extends to agencies dedicated to human welfare and upliftment. By informing policies, guiding interventions, and improving practices, research enhances the efficiency and effectiveness of organizations devoted to improving the human condition. Whether it's healthcare, education, social services, or industry, research plays a pivotal role in shaping strategies that lead to positive outcomes.⁵⁷

CLASSIFICATIONS OF RESEARCH

Research takes on various forms, each with its distinct purpose and approach. Three broad categories encompass the spectrum of research:

Basic Fundamental Research / Pure Research

This form of research seeks to unravel the fundamental principles governing natural phenomena. It's driven by curiosity and a quest for foundational knowledge, often without immediate application in mind. Pure research lays the groundwork for applied research and

contributes to the expansion of scientific understanding.⁵⁸

Applied Research

Applied research takes the insights derived from basic research and directs them towards solving practical problems. It bridges the gap between theoretical knowledge and real-world application, offering innovative solutions to concrete challenges.

Action Research

Action research is deeply embedded in the context of practical situations. It involves collaborative efforts to identify issues, devise solutions, implement changes, and assess their impact in real-time. This approach ensures that research outcomes are not only theoretically sound but also practically viable. Thus, knowledge and research form a dynamic duo that propels human progress. They operate on different planes, with knowledge serving as a foundational tool and research driving expansion and advancement. The pursuit of knowledge through research has shaped our cultural development and led to significant progress in all facets of life. Through diverse classifications, research encompasses both theoretical exploration and practical problem-solving, making it a cornerstone of human achievement.

BASIC OR FUNDAMENTAL RESEARCH

Basic or fundamental research is a profound exploration that delves into the very essence of knowledge. It transcends the realm of everyday phenomena and immediate problems, seeking to unravel the fundamental aspects that underpin various disciplines.⁵⁹ At its core, fundamental research focuses on resolving major and vital issues rather than mundane concerns. The results it produces manifest in the form of sweeping generalizations, principles, and theories that contribute to the bedrock of human understanding. The driving force behind

⁵⁶ *Id.*
⁵⁷ *Id.*

⁵⁸ *Id.*
⁵⁹ Bakshi, *supra* note 2.



fundamental research is the quest for uncovering basic truths and laws that govern the natural world, with a primary emphasis on uncovering knowledge rather than its direct application.

This type of research emphasizes precision and control in its methodology and execution, placing less immediate emphasis on applying results in practical situations. Often conducted in well-equipped laboratories, fundamental research might employ animals as subjects of study due to its exploration of core behavioral principles.

APPLIED RESEARCH: BRIDGING THEORY AND PRACTICE

Applied research, also known as practical research, bridges the gap between theory and real-world application. Unlike fundamental research, which seeks broad truths, applied research hones in on how those theories, principles, or laws can be directly utilized in practical scenarios.

Applied research is closely tied to field workers and individuals who directly encounter the problems being investigated. It aims to validate the theories and laws established through research by implementing them in actual field settings. The insights gleaned from research conducted on specific samples are tested and applied to other comparable situations.

However, applied research does often involve certain trade-offs. It might sacrifice a degree of control and precision compared to fundamental research due to the complexity of real-world contexts. The application of the same fundamentals might need adaptations and modifications when transitioning from one region, field, or country to another.

Examples of topics falling under applied research could include studying the effects of various teaching devices on learning, analyzing the usage of textbooks, conducting daily assessments, exploring parental cooperation's impact, improving experimental systems,

enhancing literacy, and upgrading laboratory facilities.

ACTION RESEARCH: EMPOWERING PRACTITIONERS THROUGH REFLECTION

Action research closely aligns with applied research, with the distinction lying in its focus on the practitioner's perspective. Educational practitioners, such as teachers and administrators, undertake action research to enhance their decision-making and practices.

The essence of action research is to employ a cyclical process of investigation, action, reflection, and refinement. It's a journey of self-improvement where teachers or administrators conduct research to gain insights into their own practices and behaviors. This iterative process enables them to make more informed decisions and engage in more effective actions.

Action research is firmly grounded in the reality of the classroom or administrative environment. Teachers strive to improve their teaching methods, while administrators seek to enhance their leadership strategies. It fosters qualities like objectivity, collaborative thinking, and professional development, combining the roles of a researcher and a practitioner.⁶⁰

Thus, the world of research is rich and diverse, encompassing different facets that contribute to the advancement of knowledge and the betterment of society. From fundamental research that uncovers underlying truths to applied research that bridges theory and practice, and action research that empowers practitioners through reflection, each type plays a crucial role in shaping our understanding and driving progress.

CRITERIA OF A GOOD RESEARCH PROBLEM: CRAFTING THE FOUNDATION OF INQUIRY

A successful research endeavor hinges on the formulation of a well-defined and impactful research problem. Several key criteria

⁶⁰ Mukherjee, *supra* note 5.



contribute to the robustness and significance of a research problem:

Novelty and Originality

The essence of any worthwhile research problem lies in its novelty. The problem should be sufficiently original to avoid triviality and commonplace solutions. Originality stands as a fundamental hallmark of credible research, setting the stage for new insights and discoveries.⁶¹

Interest and Intrinsic Motivation

For a researcher to embark on a journey of exploration, the problem must captivate their interest. Without personal intrigue and curiosity, overcoming the obstacles that inevitably arise becomes arduous. An inherent motivation propels the researcher forward, driving them to navigate challenges with determination.

Importance and Significance

The chosen research problem should hold substantial importance. It must address an issue of relevance, contributing to the advancement of knowledge or the enhancement of a principle, practice, or field. The problem's impact should extend beyond the confines of the research itself, resonating with broader implications.⁶²

Feasibility and Suitability

While a problem may seem excellent in theory, its practical feasibility is vital. The researcher's capabilities, resources, and expertise must align with the demands of the problem. The problem should be amenable to the researcher's skillset and accessible data, ensuring a viable path to a successful conclusion.⁶³

Availability of Data

Data is the lifeblood of research. A good research problem necessitates access to valid, reliable, and relevant data. Adequate data-

gathering devices and methods must be at the researcher's disposal. If confidential or sensitive information is required, the feasibility of obtaining such data should be assessed.

Cooperation and Support

Some research problems require collaboration and cooperation from external parties. Whether it's conducting tests, interviews, observations, or experiments, the researcher's ability to garner cooperation and access from relevant sources impacts the problem's viability.

Resource Accessibility

Research incurs various expenses, from equipment and materials to travel and report preparation. The researcher should evaluate the availability of resources, both financial and logistical, to ensure the smooth execution of the research.

Resilience and Willingness

Research can be arduous, laden with challenges and criticism. The researcher's willingness to navigate and overcome hurdles is vital. They must assess their readiness to handle potential setbacks, criticism, and the emotional aspects that come with controversial or sensitive topics.

Therefore, the selection of a research problem serves as the foundational step in any research endeavor. It shapes the trajectory, depth, and impact of the entire study. These criteria collectively guide researchers in crafting problems that contribute to the expansion of knowledge, positively influence practices, and create meaningful impacts on the field of study and beyond.

RESEARCH APPROACH

The approach adopted in research serves as the compass guiding the researcher's journey through the realm of inquiry. Various research approaches provide distinct lenses through which information is gathered, analyzed, and interpreted. Here, we delve into different aspects of research approaches, shedding light on

⁶¹ Bakshi, *supra* note 2.

⁶² "An Introduction to Legislative Drafting- PM Bakshi" by GS Srividya, <https://repository.nls.ac.in/nlsj/vol6/iss1/22/> (last visited Aug 31, 2023).

⁶³ Mukherjee, *supra* note 5.



qualitative and quantitative methodologies, as well as types of legal research.

QUALITATIVE RESEARCH APPROACH

The qualitative research approach revolves around understanding the subjective realm of attitudes, opinions, and behaviors. It ventures into the nuanced world of human experiences, emotions, and contradictory behaviors. Unlike quantitative research, qualitative research doesn't begin with pre-established hypotheses. Instead, researchers have a clear focus on the problem they wish to explore, often guided by open-ended questions.⁶⁴

QUANTITATIVE ANALYSIS

Quantitative research involves the transformation of data into numerical form, facilitating mathematical analysis and the derivation of conclusions. This research type can be further classified:

- a) This involves drawing conclusions about a larger population based on a subset of that population, often achieved through statistical sampling.⁶⁵
- b) This centers on studying the effects of one or more independent variables on a dependent variable. Controlled experiments are common in this category.

ADVANTAGES OF ACTION RESEARCH

Action research, with its emphasis on active participation, reflection, and improvement, brings forth numerous advantages that resonate with practitioners, researchers, and the field of education as a whole. Here, we explore the benefits that action research bestows upon those engaged in the process:

Active Engagement in Problem-Solving: Action research engages the individual responsible for solving a problem right from the outset. This

active involvement ensures a deeper understanding of the issue and allows for more effective problem-solving strategies.

Decentralized Decision-Making: This approach encourages a decentralization of decision-making and actions. It empowers practitioners on the ground to make informed decisions, leading to quicker and more responsive solutions.

Broadening and Deepening Knowledge: Engaging in action research widens and deepens the practitioner's general knowledge base. It fosters an appreciation for the role that research plays in shaping our understanding and refining practices.

Educator's Guidance: As an educator, engaging with research becomes essential to provide informed guidance to students. This firsthand experience equips educators to impart insights into research methodologies, fostering a culture of inquiry among students.

Renewed Energy and Insights: Action research injects new interests, motives, and insights into the practitioner's professional journey. This infusion revitalizes instructional methods, injecting enthusiasm and energy into teaching practices.

Decentralization in Research: Action research aligns with the decentralization it promotes in decision-making. It extends this ethos to research, promoting a bottom-up approach where practitioners actively contribute to knowledge generation.

Experimental Outlook: The action research process introduces an experimental outlook among field workers. This shift encourages a dynamic approach to problem-solving and cultivates a culture of adaptive experimentation.

Strengthening the Profession: Collectively, the experience of action research fortifies the entire profession. The insights gained contribute to the collective knowledge pool, enhancing the quality of education and practice.

⁶⁴ Bakshi, *supra* note 2.

⁶⁵ Glanville Williams & Dennis Baker Treatise of Criminal Law – 5th Edition 2023 – Indian Reprint in 2 Vols. – Bharat Law House, <https://www.bharatlawhouse.in/shop/criminal-laws-minor-acts/glanville-williams-dennis-baker-treatise-of-criminal-law-5th-edition-2023-indian-reprint-in-2-vols/> (last visited Aug 31, 2023).



In essence, action research is a catalyst for change, empowerment, and growth. It equips practitioners with a hands-on approach to problem-solving, infuses educational processes with fresh perspectives, and fosters a culture of ongoing improvement. By bringing research to the forefront of practice, action research serves as a bridge between theory and reality, enhancing the quality of education and professional development.

CONCLUSION

In the realm of research, a dynamic journey unfolds, transcending conventional boundaries to embrace an unyielding pursuit of truth and knowledge. It stands as the bedrock of intellectual advancement, marked by scientific rigor, objective inquiry, and rational understanding. P.M. Cook and J.W. Best emphasize its comprehensive and intensive nature, yielding dependable solutions and substantial contributions to knowledge. Embedded within research is an expedition into the unknown, intricately weaving the threads of curiosity into patterns of enlightenment. It operates on dual levels—foundational knowledge aids immediate problem-solving, while expansion through research thrives, propelling progress.

One powerful iteration of research, action research, emerges as a beacon of empowerment. It rejuvenates practitioners, broadens their understanding, and instills an experimental outlook, fortifying their profession. By decentralizing decision-making and fostering active engagement, action research transforms educators into agents of positive change. As educators become both researchers and practitioners, they cultivate a culture of inquiry, rejuvenation, and continuous improvement.

Quality research problems, guided by criteria like novelty, feasibility, and cooperation, shape the research journey, driving both impact and comprehension. Different research approaches—qualitative, quantitative, and

action—address distinct needs, offering multifaceted lenses through which knowledge is pursued. Action research, with its focus on engagement, decentralization, and empowerment, stands out as a potent tool for practitioners.

In the grand tapestry of human intellectual progress, research plays a pivotal role. It propels society forward, informs decision-making, and enhances human understanding. The diverse array of research approaches reflects the multifaceted nature of inquiry, contributing to the evolution of knowledge and practical advancement of society. As researchers, educators, and practitioners continue to explore the uncharted territories of knowledge, they weave the threads of curiosity into patterns of enlightenment, fostering an ongoing journey of discovery and progress.

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