NATURE OF RESEARCH IN HIGHER EDUCATION

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Abstract : *Research involves original work in answering a question or solving a problem of the several different research approaches available. This paper addresses with a realistic view of how research is done and a useful framework for designing, implementing, and evaluating studies and also emphasis throughout is on the nature of research—how research findings become accepted knowledge.*

Keywords : *Research, Nature of Research, Scientific Research, Characteristics of research, Essence of Research, Research Procedure, Scientific Investigation.*

Introduction :

Research is by definition original work, a searching to answer a question. A more formal definition of research would be : Studious inquiry ; usually, critical and exhaustive investigation or experimentation having for its aim the revision of accepted conclusions, in the light of newly discovered facts .

Research is a systematic inquiry whose goal is communicable knowledge.

- Systematic because it is pursued according to some plan
- An enquiry because it seeks find answer to questions
- Goal directed because the objects of the enquiry are posed by the task descriptions
- Knowledge directed because the findings of the enquiry must be go beyond providing mere information and
- Communicable because the findings must be intelligible to and located within some framework understanding for an appropriate audience.

Objectives of the Present Study :

1. To find ways to make research as possible and easy.
2. To develop a new point of view by introducing these steps.
3. To explore the unknown and unlock new possibilities.

Scope of the present Study :

The scope of the present study has confined to research conducted in various disciplines of higher education. The study is restricted to all those faculties of higher educational institute in which research process has been implemented.

Methodology :

Present study is concerned to academic research which is to be done in various disciplines of higher education. The author has used the research methodology which is applicable for research in higher education.

This study is a descriptive study that's why the author has conduct this study by descriptive method because the data about related topic is collected and described it.

Review of Literature :

Berger, (2010). opines that one of the major functions of synthesis of related literature is to let the reader known that the researcher is thoroughly familiar with the existing research materials on the subject, it provides the back-drop or the scenery for the study and gives that the researcher is not yet at a dead end. It also clearly shows the current state of knowledge on the subject.

Howitt, Dennis & Cramer, Duncan.(2000). First Steps In Research and Statistics: A Practical Workbook for Psychology. London. Routledge. The aim of this book to provide clear and relatively short introduction to basic research ideas and statistics which researcher typically need when doing research in the early part. however it is expected that the structure approach will also be useful at later stages of training in methods and research.

Pitchai Balakumar, Inamdar Mohammed, Naseeruddin & Gowraganahalli, Jagadeesh. 2013."The critical steps for successful research: The research proposal and scientific writing". In essence, research is performed to enlighten our understanding of a contemporary issue relevant to the needs of society. To accomplish this, a researcher begins search for a novel topic based on purpose, creativity, critical thinking, and logic. This leads to the fundamental pieces of the research endeavor: Question, objective, hypothesis, experimental tools to test the hypothesis, methodology, and data analysis. When correctly performed, research should produce new knowledge. The four cornerstones of good research are the well-formulated protocol or proposal that is well executed, analyzed, discussed and concluded. This recent workshop educated researchers in the critical steps involved in the development of a scientific idea to its successful execution and eventual publication.

Wood, Marilynn J. V & Ross-Kerr, Janet. (2011). Basic Steps in Planning Nursing Research: From Question to Proposal. Boston. Jones and Bartlett. The essence of book found in the idea that the way you ask a question will irrevocably determine the way you will answer that question. This is the unique feature of our approach to research and distinguishes this book from others that offer different views of research and the research process.

What is Research ?

Research comprises of two words, "Re" and "search". While "Re" implies a repetitive or iterative process, "Search" denotes, making a thorough examination of or looking over carefully in order to find something. Different researchers have defined research in various ways due to its wide scope. But, in general, research can be defined as a scientific process where new facts, ideas, and theories are established and/or proved in different areas of knowledge. Research aims at adding to the existing stock of knowledge for the betterment of world.

Research involves scientific and systematic analysis of a research area and concluding the findings with appropriate reasoning. It is a systematic as well as an object-oriented process. The process of research begins with identifying the research problem; following data collection; data analysis and ends with conclude the findings. It should be conducted in an unbiased manner, without manipulating the findings. Research plays a vital role in management decision making by analyzing the situation systematically and finding new ways to support the operations. For example, a company may conduct research to know the consumer reviews about certain products.

Research can be carried-out using various methods and techniques which are collectively called as research methods. Research methods are the tools and techniques for analyzing and collecting data so that meaningful outcomes can be extracted from the problem being studied. Research methodology can be defined as the scientific procedure to solve various problems related to research. It has a wider scope than research methods, as in addition to methods and techniques, the researcher designs different methodologies for different research problems. Research methodology varies according to the research problem. Therefore, it is concerned with the application of research methods as per the requirement.

Definition of Research :

According to Waltz and Bausell :

"Research is a systematic, formal, rigorous and precise process employed to gain solutions to problems or to discover and interpret new facts and relationships."

According to Clifford Woody :

"Research comprises defining and redefining problems, formulating hypothesis or suggested solutions, Collecting, Organizing and Evaluating data, Making deductions and reaching Conclusions to determine they fit the formulating hypothesis."

According to John Best :

"Research is a systematic activity directed towards discovery and the development of an organized body of knowledge."

What is Good Research ? (Essential Criteria of a Good Research)

A good research should qualify in following essential criteria :

1) Clearly Defined Objectives :

The objectives of a research study should be clearly defined. If the objectives of research are well defined, then there would be clear road map in front of the researcher to follow. It helps the researchers to determine the type of data required to conduct the research efficiently.

2) Ethically Conducted :

A researcher should abide by the ethical standards laid down to conduct a research accurately. The research data and the limiting factors should be properly scrutinized, explained, and documented to maintain a level of transparency with the readers. The data should not be altered to match the findings. The results of the research study should be properly documented and the conclusions should be based on proper evidences.

3) Flexibility :

Research involves re-examining the data till correct findings are arrived. This is possible only if the research approach is flexible in nature. There should always be scope to add in significant data or change the existing data as per the requirement.

4) Reliability :

Reliability refers to the repeatability of a research, tool, procedure, or instrument. The degree of reliability of a research study depends on the degree of similarity in research results. A research, is called reliable when it produces similar results for different samples drawn from the same population under similar conditions and procedures. For example, a researcher may study the effect of a course in written English on the final grades for a group of students. The results of this study will be reliable, if the same study on another group of students has similar outcomes.

5) Validity :

Validity is measure of the applicability of the research. It refers to the suitability and efficiency of the research Instrument or procedure regarding the research problem. It measures the accuracy of an instrument in measuring the problem. It is a measurement of applicability of the research. Validity is the basis of deciding whether a research conclusion, assumption, or proposition is true or false. The validity of research is maintained by defining the concepts as clearly as possible.

6) Accuracy :

A research is called accurate, if the process of research, instruments, and tools are related to each other. It checks to see that the research tools are being selected appropriately. For example, if a research is carried-out on mental patients, the use of observation would be appropriate to collect data, because in case of questionnaire or interview, they may not be able to answer or may answer incorrectly.

7) Credibility of Sources :

Credibility means that the research data should be taken from trustworthy sources. Although the use of secondary data in research allows the researcher 10 complete the research within the time frame, but he loses the credibility, as the secondary data are usually manipulated and hence relying exclusively it can lead to erroneous and faulty on it can research conclusions. A researcher should try to use primary data as much as possible. If primary data is not available, then specific amount of secondary data can be used. But, conducting a research completely based on secondary data can harm the credibility of the research.

Nature of Research :

Research can be characterized by following points :

1. Generalizability :

Generalizability is the measure of how useful the outcomes of a study are for a wider group of people or situations. A study has good generalizability if the results are broadly applicable to various kinds of people.

2. Research Should be Done Without Personal Biases :

Biasness on the research reflects it as bad research and an incomplete version of the documentation. You have to be free from biasedness and should follow the planned steps as well. A researcher should follow the methodology and not use personal perception to change the data and manipulate the results.

3. Systematic :

Research is done on the basis of planning not just on random research, reading, and writing techniques. It does have a methodology it does and it should follow the systematic rules and steps for completing the research. Research should follow the steps serially to make it fruitful and better.

4. Reproducible :

A researcher should be able to get approximately the same results by using an identical methodology if the investigation is conducted on a population having characteristics similar to the earlier study.

5. Problem Needs to be Solved :

Research should solve the problem of the hypothesis. It should identify the problems and investigates every aspect in depth.

6. Logical :

For the research, it’s a tough job to give the proper and logical basis and informational sources. Research does not only present the result on the basis of interpretation but proves those results using various logics.

7. Replicable pratikruti Yogya :

Multiple research on the same topic could enhance the reliability of the research and its results. It validates the accuracy and the reliability of the theory or the hypothesis.

Conclusion:

This paper has revealed that, the scientific research which is systematic, objective and controlled could be embarked upon to carry out studies devoid of bias. The paper still insists on pure and rigorous scientific investigations that have all the trappings of empiricism, theoretical frame – workings, conceptualizations, cause and effect relationship and validity. In scientific research, the practitioners delve into the use of quantitative as well as qualitative data in investigations. These and more make it imperative to accept the scientific nature of the research initiative as real and factual.

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