

NAZARATH COLLEGE OF ARTS AND SCIENCE

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

M COM – II

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RESEARCH



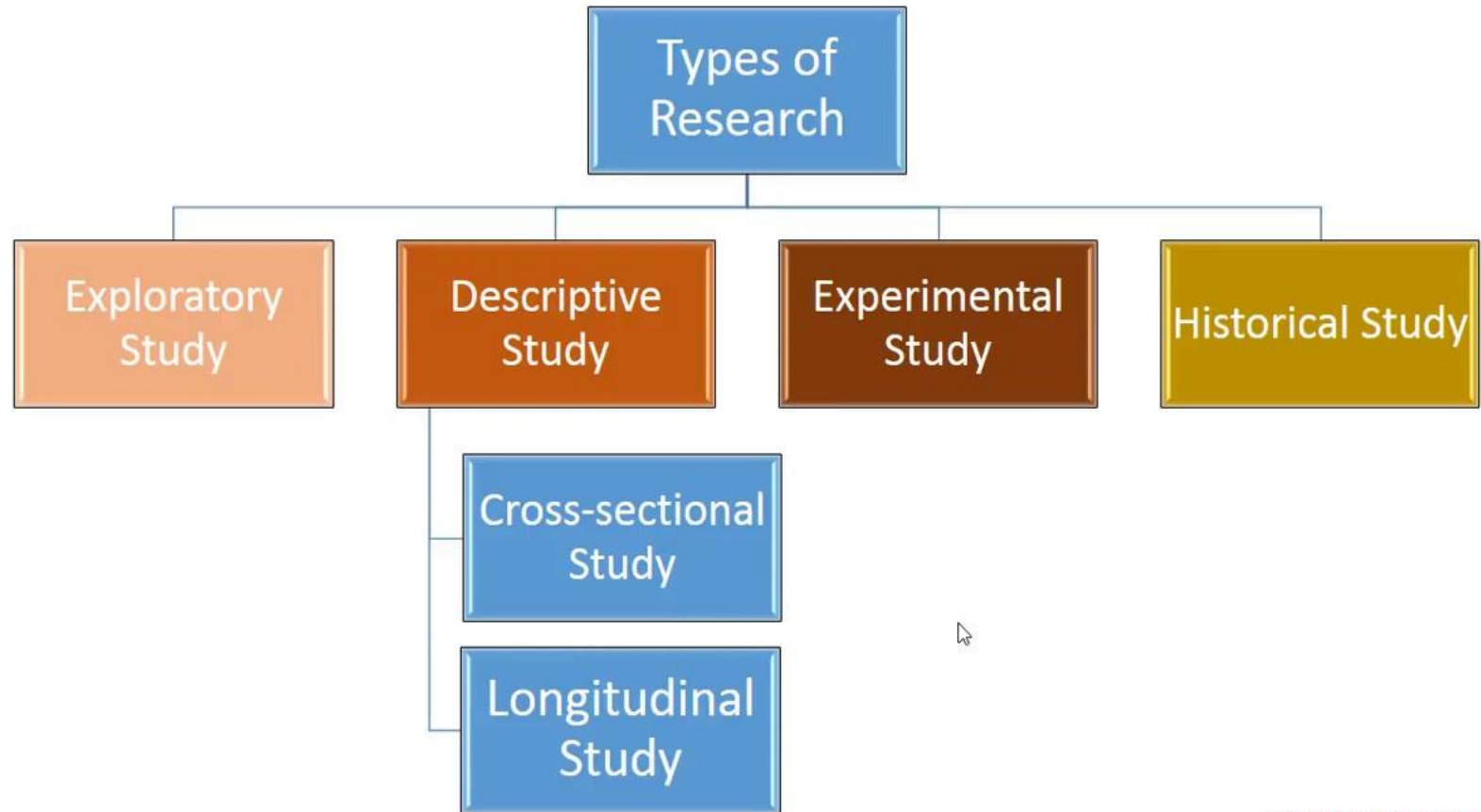
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- ✖ Research in common parlance refers to a search for knowledge.
 - ✖ Research is an art of scientific investigation.
 - ✖ The Advanced Learner's Dictionary of Current English lays down the meaning of research as “a careful investigation or inquiry specially through search for new facts in any branch of knowledge.
 - ✖ According to Clifford Woody research comprises defining and redefining problems, formulating hypothesis or suggested solutions; collecting, organising and evaluating data; making deductions and reaching conclusions; and at last carefully testing the conclusions to determine whether they fit the formulating hypothesis.

OBJECTIVES OF RESEARCH

- ✖ The purpose of research is to discover answers to questions through the application of scientific procedures. The main aim of research is to find out the truth which is hidden and which has not been discovered as yet. Though each research study has its own specific purpose, we may think of research objectives as falling into a number of following broad groupings:
- ✖ 1. To gain familiarity with a phenomenon or to achieve new insights into it (studies with this object in view are termed as *exploratory* or *formulative* research studies);

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- ✘ 2. To portray accurately the characteristics of a particular individual, situation or a group (studies with this object in view are known as *descriptive* research studies);
 - ✘ 3. To determine the frequency with which something occurs or with which it is associated with something else (studies with this object in view are known as *diagnostic* research studies);
 - ✘ 4. To test a hypothesis of a causal relationship between variables (such studies are known as *hypothesis-testing* research studies).

TYPES OF RESEARCH



- ✖ The basic types of research are as follows:
- ✖ ***Descriptive research*** includes surveys and fact-finding enquiries of different kinds. The major purpose of descriptive research is description of the state of affairs as it exists at present.
- ✖ In ***analytical research***, on the other hand, the researcher has to use facts or information already available, and analyze these to make a critical evaluation of the material.
- ✖ ***Applied vs. Fundamental:*** Research can either be applied (or action) research or fundamental (to basic or pure) research. *Applied research* aims at finding a solution for an immediate problem facing a society or an industrial/business organisation, whereas *fundamental research* is mainly concerned with generalisations and with the formulation of a theory.

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- ✘ ***Quantitative vs. Qualitative:*** Quantitative research is based on the measurement of quantity or amount. It is applicable to phenomena that can be expressed in terms of quantity.
 - ✘ Qualitative research, on the other hand, is concerned with qualitative phenomenon, i.e., phenomena relating to or involving quality or kind. Qualitative research is specially important in the behavioural sciences where the aim is to discover the underlying motives of human behaviour.
 - ✘ ***Conceptual vs. Empirical:*** Conceptual research is that related to some abstract idea(s) or theory. It is generally used by philosophers and thinkers to develop new concepts or to reinterpret existing ones. On the other hand, empirical research relies on experience or observation alone, often without due regard for system and theory. It is data-based research, coming up with conclusions which are capable of being verified by observation or experiment.
 - ✘ Empirical research is appropriate when proof is sought that certain variables affect other variables in some way. Evidence gathered through experiments or empirical studies is considered to be the most powerful support possible for a given hypothesis.



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- ✘ “A research design is the arrangement of conditions for collection and analysis of data in a manner that aims to combine relevance to the research purpose with economy in procedure.”

 - ✘ In fact, the research design is the conceptual structure within which research is conducted; it constitutes the blueprint for the collection, measurement and analysis of data.

 - ✘ (i) What is the study about?
 - ✘ (ii) Why is the study being made?
 - ✘ (iii) Where will the study be carried out?
 - ✘ (iv) What type of data is required?
 - ✘ (v) Where can the required data be found?
 - ✘ (vi) What periods of time will the study include?
 - ✘ (vii) What will be the sample design?
 - ✘ (viii) What techniques of data collection will be used?
 - ✘ (ix) How will the data be analysed?
 - ✘ (x) In what style will the report be prepared?



✘ WHAT IS A RESEARCH PROBLEM?

- ✘ A research problem, in general, refers to some difficulty which a researcher experiences in the context of either a theoretical or practical situation and wants to obtain a solution for the same
- ✘ A research problem is one which requires a researcher to find out the best solution for the given problem, i.e., to find out by which course of action the objective can be attained optimally in the context of a given environment.

SELECTING THE PROBLEM

- ✖ The research problem undertaken for study must be carefully selected. The task is a difficult one, although it may not appear to be so. Help may be taken from a research guide in this connection. Every researcher must find out his own salvation for research problems cannot be borrowed.
- ✖ The following points may be observed by a researcher in selecting a research problem or a subject for research:
 - ✖ (i) Subject which is overdone should not be normally chosen, for it will be a difficult task to throw any new light in such a case.
 - ✖ (ii) Controversial subject should not become the choice of an average researcher.
 - ✖ (iii) Too narrow or too vague problems should be avoided.
 - ✖ (iv) The subject selected for research should be familiar and feasible so that the related research material or sources of research are within one's reach. For this purpose, a researcher should contact an expert or a professor in the University who is already engaged in research. He may as well read articles published in current literature available on the subject and may think how the techniques and ideas discussed therein might be applied to the solution of other problems.

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- ✘ The importance of the subject, the qualifications and the training of a researcher, the costs involved, the time factor are few other criteria that must also be considered in selecting a problem.
 - ✘ The selection of a problem must be preceded by a preliminary study. This may not be necessary when the problem requires the conduct of a research closely similar to one that has already been done

TECHNIQUE INVOLVED IN DEFINING A PROBLEM



- ✘ Defining a research problem properly and clearly is a crucial part of a research study and must in no case be accomplished hurriedly. However, in practice this is frequently overlooked which causes a lot of problems later on. Hence, the research problem should be defined in a systematic manner, giving due weightage to all relating points.

The technique for the purpose involves the undertaking of the following steps generally one after the other:

- (i) statement of the problem in a general way;
- (ii) understanding the nature of the problem;
- (iii) surveying the available literature
- (iv) developing the ideas through discussions; and
- (v) rephrasing the research problem into a working proposition. A brief description of all these points will be helpful.

- ✘ **Statement of the problem in a general way:** First of all the problem should be stated in a broad general way, keeping in view either some practical concern or some scientific or intellectual interest. For this purpose, the researcher must immerse himself thoroughly in the subject matter concerning which he wishes to pose a problem. In case of social research, it is considered advisable to do some field observation and as such the researcher may undertake some sort of preliminary survey or what is often called *pilot survey*.
- ✘ **Understanding the nature of the problem:** The next step in defining the problem is to understand its origin and nature clearly. The best way of understanding the problem is to discuss it with those who first raised it in order to find out how the problem originally came about and with what objectives in view.

- ✘ **Surveying the available literature:** All available literature concerning the problem at hand must necessarily be surveyed and examined before a definition of the research problem is given. This means that the researcher must be well-conversant with relevant theories in the field, reports and records as also all other relevant literature.
- ✘ **Developing the ideas through discussions:** Discussion concerning a problem often produce useful information. Various new ideas can be developed through such an exercise. Hence, a researcher must discuss his problem with his colleagues and others who have enough experience in the same area or in working on similar problems. This is quite often known as an *experience survey*.
- ✘ Once the nature of the problem has been clearly understood, the environment (within which the problem has got to be studied) has been defined, discussions over the problem have taken place and the available literature has been surveyed and examined, rephrasing the problem into analytical or operational terms is not a difficult task. Through rephrasing, the researcher puts the research problem in as specific terms as possible so that it may become operationally viable and may help in the development of working hypotheses.

REVIEW OF LITERATURE

