

Lecture 5

classification of types of research

Research can be classified according to:

- The applications of its findings and results,
- Its objectives,
- Its mode of enquiry.

However, one aspect of classification does not exclude the others.

For example:

A research can be classified as pure from the view of application, explanatory from the view of objectives, and as qualitative from the view of mode.

That is:

1. The research is pure
2. It attempts to explain a phenomenon and,
3. It is qualitative.

5.1. Aspects of research in the three viewpoints:

the three perspectives in the use of research present different aspects.

5.1.1. Aspects of the application perspective:

- pure research
- and applied research

These are the two broad categories.

- pure research develops theories and tests them.
- pure research states hypotheses and tests them.
- theories and hypotheses tested may or may not have practical applications.

Pure research:

- develops research methods
- develops procedures and techniques
- examines them
- verifies them

the knowledge developed is added to the already existing body of knowledge.

Applied research:

In social sciences, most of the research is applied

-research tools developed are applied to information collection.

•-information gathered are used in other ways like: Policy formation, administration, teaching.

5.1.2. aspects of the objectives perspective:

a research can be classified according to its objectives. It can be :

- descriptive
- correlational
- explanatory
- exploratory.

When the perspective is descriptive:

-it attempts to describe a situation, a phenomenon, a problem.

-it provides information about living conditions, attitudes, and the like.

-the aim is to describe what is significant and prelevant with respect to the problem or issue under study

When the perspective is correlational:

- the emphasis is to find the existence of associations/relationships between two or more aspects of a situation.

- ex: relationship between stress and heart attack.

- correlational studies examine the link between various elements of a situation.

When the perspective is explanatory:

- the researcher tries to clarify and explain why and how a relationship exists between two aspects or more.

- Ex: this perspective may explain why there is a correlation/link between smoking and cancer.

When the perspective is exploratory:

- research is used to explore an unknown area.
- a study is undertaken to know more about a situation
- research is undertaken to know about the feasibility of a study.

In the objectives perspectives, each study has an objective:

- | | | |
|----------------|-----------|--------------|
| -descriptive | objective | to describe |
| -correlational | objective | to correlate |
| -explanatory | objective | to explain |
| -exploratory | objective | to explore |

5.1.3. aspects of the enquiry perspective:

this perspective concerns the process researchers use to find answers to their research questions. There two main approaches:

1. the structured approach
2. the unstructured approach.

1. the structured approach:

in this approach, the following elements are structured and predertiming:

- a. the research process
- b. objectives
- c. design
- d. sample
- e. questions to be asked to respondents.

2. The unstructured approach:

- a. allows flexibility in the research process
- b. contains more variation and diversity.

The same issue can be investigated by one of the two approaches.

Ex: in a topic like people's views towards politics, you might
Want to know about the views people hold

A. The paradigm rooted in the physical sciences is:

- systematic
- scientific or positivist

B. The opposite paradigm, found in the social sciences, is:

- qualitative
- ethnographic
- and naturalistic.

The advocates of each paradigm have developed their own techniques, methods and terminology to understand phenomena.

Since the 1960's both paradigms have gained recognition.

However,

Right at the beginning, the researcher has to determine his mode of enquiry, and hence the paradigm.

The researcher should, in any research, adhere to values.

- both approaches find their place in research.
- both have their strengths and weaknesses.
- hence, the researcher should not favour only one type of approach

Conclusion

Whatever the type of research one may decide to conduct, the ultimate goal is to construct knowledge, find out about reality by suggesting understanding of various phenomena and solutions to observable problems. The quality of research will depend on the overall rationale followed by the researcher.