



IMPORTANCE OF HISTORICAL RESEARCH

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ABSTRACT:

Research is defined as a careful consideration of study regarding a particular concern or a problem using scientific methods. American sociologist Earl Robert Babbie, "Research is a systematic inquiry to describe, explain, predict and control the observed phenomenon. Everything written by a historian or a scholar does not fall in the category of research. Research may be defined as an activity which aims at bringing to light something new. It adds to the existing knowledge through a systematic study or investigation of a particular subject.



KEYWORDS: careful consideration , category of research , historian.

INTRODUCTION:

A prominent scholar B. Sheikh Ali has written, "Research is the activity undertaken to bring out something new, to extend the horizon of knowledge and to contribute some original idea. It is an attempt to make a diligent and systematic inquiry or investigation into a subject, in order to discover facts or revise the known facts or put the facts into theories".

Research involves inductive and deductive methods." Inductive research methods are used to analyse the observed phenomenon whereas, deductive methods are used to verify the observed phenomenon. Inductive approaches are associated with qualitative research and deductive methods are more commonly associated with quantitative research.

MEANING OF HISTORICAL RESEARCH

Historical research is a process of collecting and interpreting data about past events or ideas in order to find how they affected the present events and ideas. It studies possible reasons behind certain events to explain their influence on the events that followed. Historical research may not just help to figure out connections between past and present events, it can also provide the researchers with information regarding possible future events. In his book "Historical Research: A Guide" (2002), W.H.Mc Dowell defines historical research as: "Historical research represents a systematic enquiry into the past and an attempt to separate true from fictionalized accounts of historical events, based upon the examination of a wide range of relevant source material. This is an important task because history is the source of many of our ideas, beliefs and customs. A better understanding of the past places us in a more advantageous position to appreciate change in the present and to try and learn from past mistakes. " Historical research mainly relies on first-hand information sources such as historical records, books, photographs, letters, evidence that belongs to the time the research focuses on. To put it simply, those sources are written by someone who was a participant or direct witness of the event. Secondary source

materials - books and articles are written sometime after the events can also contribute to research to some extent. However, one should keep in mind that secondary sources of information can be more biased because they usually contain data that the authors wrote using multiple sources. It is worth mentioning that primary sources can also be biased, and because the research is looking for the answers in the past, there is no guarantee for information accuracy. 'History is exploring into past in order to re-enact past history'. Historical research is gaining round rapidly among the historians, scholars and archaeologists. They are devoting their time and energy to enrich our knowledge about the past history with the help of their researches. As history is both a science and an art, the method to be used in writing history would be different from those of all other disciplines. As complete objectivity is impossible to achieve, the aim should be to reconstruct the past as nearly as it really happened.

ADVANTAGES

- ❖ Historical research provides us with an opportunity to find insights about past events.
- ❖ Imposing key elements of past negative events can play a significant role in preventing certain similar circumstances. In other words, it can teach a history lesson.
- ❖ Historical research will discovery important contemporary events.
- ❖ A researcher will focus on the facts and findings.

OBJECTIVES OF HISTORICAL RESEARCH

The purpose of research is to find the answers to problem 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 classifications:

To portray accurately the particulars of a particular individual, situation or a group (studies with this object in view are known as descriptive research studies); 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);

For instance, the values of traditional conception of history epitomized by historians like Herodotus -(Father of history), his great successor Thucydides, Livy and Tacitus, the greatest of the Roman historian , viewed history as any written narrative of events. This definition is however inadequate and unacceptable in view contemporary realities. First, the definition did not recognize the division of the development of history overtime. Second, it did not recognize the division of the discipline into such fields political, social, economic, military intellectual, constitutional and educational history. Third, the conception of history as mere narration of events is now archaic because history has metamorphosed from mere description of events into critical and analytical interpretation of events.

Importance of historical research

- To reconstruct the historical events: A historian carefully and objectively reconstructs the Past to arrive at tenable findings.
- To observe about strange events: Certain historical occurrences from the Past have unknown details. A historian looks for these undiscovered events.
- To examine the importance of events: Significant events might have shaped the organization, movement, circumstance, or person a historian is researching.
- To authentication the context of a movement, organization, or circumstance: A historian looks for the background of an organization, movement, or event being examined to study and understand the Past.
- To find out the solutions to the Past's mysteries: We want to find answers to many of our questions about the Past. Understanding the solutions will help us better comprehend what happened in the Past.
- Explore the theory of causation: Two events are connected by a cause and an effect. A historian would like to identify such a connection.

- Relationship between past, present, contemporary and future: We can frequently gain a more insightful understanding of the present by looking back in time. Hence, a researcher seeks to establish the link between the Past and the present so we can understand it clearly.
- To assist accomplishments of people, organizations, and other forms of groups. Because these organizations, including institutions and agencies, significantly impact historical events, historians are keenly interested in documenting and assessing their accomplishments.
- To explore the current situation of concern: A phenomenon may be the subject of a study. Historians can have a thorough understanding of the current issue of crisis by using historical context.

CONCLUSION

The importance of recovery, examination and preservation lies in the fact that they provide a basis for the assessment and interpretation of sources in order to achieve the objective of historical research.

While sources must be reliable and valid, it is important to strive at understanding the origins of the sources because no matter how meticulous the process of recovery, interpretation and presentation might be the reconstruction of the past goes beyond mere summing up of reliable information available in the sources.

The deficiencies of the written, contemporary sources have made historians of traditional societies to seek data from alternative sources, particularly oral tradition mainly in the form of myth, legend, song, and popular history.

However, the use of oral sources in historical reconstruction is replete with difficulties of which the problem of chronology is outstanding.

A good historian constantly seeks to apply scientific approaches to the best of his ability. Throughout many stages of the research process, including the creation and testing of the hypothesis the gathering, analysis, interpretation, and synthesis of data, and the writing of the story, he employs the scientific method of inquiry. At every stage, he takes a systematic approach. The important word in his analysis of the historical event under consideration is systematic. These characteristics set authentic historical research apart. There is no denying that historical research has contributed significantly to the world despite its drawbacks. The development of this field of study has benefited from historical knowledge.

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