UNIT- 1: INTRODUCTION TO RESEARCH

UNIT STRUCTURE

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1.1 LEARNING OBJECTIVES

After going through this unit you will be able to

- Define the term research.
- Explain the objective of research.
- Discuss the importance of research.

1.2 INTRODUCTION

In this first block of the course on 'Communication Research' we are going to discuss the various aspects of communication 'research' and other related concepts.

In this first unit we will concentrate on the meaning, definition and importance of research. Basically, research is an act of scientific investigation. This unit provides you with a basic idea on research and its importance.

In the next unit, you will be acquainted with various types of research. Quantitative and qualitative researches and the differences between them will also be enumerated in the unit in detail. After that the unit will deal with the different research methods, such as survey method, case study method,

The word 'science' has been derived from the Latin word "scientia" which means knowledge. As we have discussed earlier, research involves acquisition of knowledge Thus, science and research are related and go hand in hand. Science is popularly defined as an accumulation of systematic knowledge; or, we can say, the systematized knowledge about things or events in nature is called science. Here we have seen that the words systematic and knowledge are very important. Knowledge refers to the goals of science, while systematic refers to the method that is used to reach that goal. So, scientific method means the systematic method and research is always based on the systematic method.



CHECK YOUR PROGRESS

Q1. What do you mean by research?

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Q2. What is science?

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Q3. What do you mean by scientific investigation?

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1.4 DEFINITION OF RESEARCH

Some people consider that research is a movement, a movement from the known to the unknown. It is a voyage of discovery. We all possess the vital instinct of inquisitiveness because when the unknown confronts us, we all wonder at it and our inquisitiveness makes us probe by to attain full and fuller understanding of the unknown. C.R. Kothari in his book, *Research Methodology,* defines that this inquisitiveness is the mother of all

- According to Clifford Woody, Research comprises defining and redefining problems, formally to hypothesis or suggested solutions, collecting, organizing and evaluating data! making deductions and researching conclusion! and at last carefully testing the conclusions to determine whether they fit the formulating hypothesis.

From the above definitions we can say that research is an original contribution to the existing stock of knowledge making for its advancement. It is the search for a new knowledge through objective and systematic method of finding solution to a problem.



CHECK YOUR PROGRESS

Q4. Give a suitable definition of research.

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Q5. Who wrote the book “The Romance of Research”?

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1.5 OBJECTIVES OF RESEARCH

Already we have discussed in the above sections that the main objective of research is re-search of existing knowledge. Research is thus mainly to discover answers to questions through the application of scientific and systematic methods. The prime objective is to find out the truth which is hidden and which has not been discovered yet. In his book, ‘Research Methodology’, C.R. Kothari has given some objectives of research. These are:

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*);
2. To portray accurately the characteristics of a particular individual,

to public policy. Research provides an intellectual satisfaction of knowing a few things just for the sake of knowledge and simultaneously it has practical utility for the social scientists to use that something better or in a more efficient manner knowledge for doing something.

Not only in the pure science and the disciplines of the social sciences, research became a phenomenon that affects each and every sphere of the functioning of mass media all over the globe. Issues and activities under mass communication research encompass a wide range including determining the topics to be covered in the print medium, television, radio, effectiveness of certain programmes among the audiences and the viewers, success of advertising campaign or public relations activities etc. The influence of research also covers far beyond the mass communication tools to embrace every section of the society. We cannot ignore the importance of communication research in the present day context.



CHECK YOU PROGRESS

Q6. Fill in the blanks—

a. Research is an.....activity.

b. Television, Internet, mobile phone etc. are the results of the research and.....

c. ..... may not be part of research, but it certainly facilitates the decisions of the policy makers.



1.7 LET US SUM UP

- Research has became an integral part of all the areas of human activities. It is an endeavour to discover answers to the problems of intellectual and practical nature through the application of scientific and systematic approach. Research is important in all fields of academic discipline.
- The word research stands for re-search. It refers to a search for

Roman of Research".

Ans. to the Q. No. 6: Fill in the blanks—

a. Research is an academic activity.

b. Television, Internet, mobile phone etc. are the results of the research and scientific innovation.

c. Decision making may not be part of research, but it certainly facilitates the decisions of the policy makers.



1.10 MODEL QUESTIONS.

Q1. What do you mean by research? Discuss some of definitions of research.

Q2. 'Research means re-search' – Explain.

Q3. What do you mean by science? What is scientific investigation?

Q4. Elucidate the importance of research in mass media.