***Significance and Problems of Social Research***

**Significance of Social Research:**

Within the last 20 to 25 years, courses in methods of social research have come to occupy an increasingly important role in sociological curricula. This is because growing significance of social research and also growing job opportunities in this field.

The market analysis, the public opinion expert, the investigator of communication and propaganda all are growing facts for governmental and business needs. Knowledge of social research is useful for interpreting and weighing such reports.

In the present age, social science are accruing a scientific method of study for this method, research is an important factor. In the last two or three decades, social research has become an important subject of the curriculum of Sociology. In fact almost all the universities, where sociology is taught, social research is a part of the curriculum of the sociology. Social research has therefore, assumed greater importance.

Apart from this, the social science research is essential for proper understanding of the society and proper collection and analysis of social facts. The social research is an effective method. Research Laboratory techniques are helpful in finding further knowledge, about the subject. Through research only it has been possible to make progress and reach further. It is part of man’s nature. The important saying goes, necessity is the mother of invention and invention is the result of research. So long as necessity exists the research shall be this social science and particularly sociology has come to occupy an important place for us.

In fact, research is an organized effort to acquire new knowledge. It is based on the past experience and past knowledge. The richer the past knowledge, the greater will be veracity of the results. In science sociology is assuming a scientific base, research has become a part of study, and it is not an easy task to predict social behavior because the human nature is ever changing.

**Problems of Scientific Social Research**

In fact, social research deals with social a phenomenon which is quite different than the natural phenomena. Hence, there are fundamental difference between research in social sciences and that of physical or natural sciences.

* **Complexity of Social Data:** It is a well-known that social science studies the human behavior which depends on several factors such a physical, social, temperamental, psychological, geographical, biological socio-cultural etc. Because of these factors a researcher is generally confused. It is therefore said that because of this complexity of social data human beings cannot be put to scientific test.
* **Problems of Concepts:** In social science research, one has to face number of problems among which of a) abstraction, and b) faulty reasoning, plays major role in formulating and defining the concepts and law. Abstraction is both the central strength and one of the weaknesses of economics, for example full-employment or perfect competition and pure competition. Faulty reasoning leads to wrong conclusion, for example classical theory of employment was based on a faulty reasoning that wage cut will increase employment was based on a faulty reasoning that wage cut will increase employment opportunities, however later on J.M.Keynes proved the faulty reasoning of this classical theory and presented alternative theory.
* **Problems in Interpreting Relationship between Cause and effect:** In social science research, we generally find interdependent relationship between cause and effect. The cause and effect are one and the same, for example, in underdeveloped countries, the economic development cannot be accelerated due to lack of technical knowhow and capital cannot be obtained due to underdevelopment of the country.
* **Dynamic Nature of Social Phenomena:** Man is a social animal and the human societies undergo constant change. What is true today may be not useful tomorrow. The techniques used in past may prove useless for present and future studies. On account of this dynamic nature of social phenomena our task of analyzing data becomes very much complicated and the inferences drawn may be misleading.
* **Problem of maintaining objectivity:** The problem of impartiality is in part a problem of objectivity. It is generally argued that the social scientists are less objective than natural scientist because their own interest affected by the findings of their studies, hence leading to prejudice and bias.
* **Unpredictability:** Predictability is one of the most important characteristics of science. In case of physical science, high degree of predictability is possible but it is not so in case of social data. But this statement is also partially true; the social scientist can roughly estimate the behavior of the group.
* **Difficulty in the Verification of the Inferences:** In social science research, the events of social sciences are non repetitive and the social scientists are ill-equipped with their tools to verify inferences.
* **Difficulty in the Use of Experimental Method:** In case of social science research, its product being a human being cannot be put to laboratory test. Even if it is done, their responses wouldn’t be natural but subject to the awareness of the artificial condition. Thus the social scientist has to watch them in wide world.
* **Incapability of being dealt through empirical method:** An empirical method cannot be applied in case of social science research as repeated experiment is not possible, for example, the problem of unbiased sampling, selection of data etc.
* **Problems of inter-disciplinary research:** Social science being, inter-disciplinary one related with, Economics, Political Science and Sociology, we cannot draw water-tight compartments for each other social sciences.