

AN ANALYTICAL STUDY ON HISTORICAL RESEARCH

Abstract

An intellectual activity is research. It is in charge of disseminating fresh information. Additionally, it is in charge of eradicating misunderstandings, correcting past errors and supplementing the body of knowledge with fresh information. Research is regarded as a kind of applying the scientific method to problem-solving. It is a methodical, structured and time-consuming process that continues the scientific technique of analysis. Historical studies focus on the significant record of human accomplishment. It is employed to comprehend both the past and the present in light of earlier events and developments. An individual, an idea, a movement or an institution can all be the subject of historical analysis. The current study presents a method of investigation to find, describe and interpret what existed in the past and adheres to the standard methodology of historical research.

Keywords: Historical, Research, Qualitative, Quantitative, Data, Sources, Primary, Secondary, Chronology, Subaltern history.

Author

Dr. S. Prabakaran

Assistant Professor of History
PG & Research
Department of History
AVVM Sri Pushpam College
Poondi, Thanjavur, Tamil Nadu, India.

I. INTRODUCTION

An intellectual activity is research. It is in charge of disseminating fresh information. Additionally, it is in charge of eradicating misunderstandings, correcting past errors and supplementing the body of knowledge with fresh information. Research is viewed as a collection of activities that are isolated from daily life and conducted by those with intellectual gifts and true commitments to the quest of knowledge. However, it is untrue to imply that the research is limited to this group of people. However, it is true to claim that extremely talented and dedicated employees make up a significant portion of the research community. As a result, the research is not at all mysterious and is being done by thousands of regular people.

Research is regarded as a kind of applying the scientific method to problem-solving. It is a methodical, structured and time-consuming process that continues the scientific technique of analysis. There are numerous ways to learn things. They are analogous reasoning, intuition, revelation authority, and logical manipulation of fundamental presumptions, educated guesses, and observation. The use of highly goal-oriented techniques is one of the study subfields known as empirical research.

II. DEFINITIONS OF RESEARCH

The followings are the important definitions of research:

1. **J. Francis Rummel** reveals that research is an intellectual process that has evolved over a hundred years, ever changing in aim and form and always in quest of truth. It is an endeavour (effort) to uncover, develop and verify information.
2. **P.M.Cook** says that research is an honest, thorough and intellectual quest for facts, their meanings, or their consequences in relation to a certain issue is research.
3. **Howard and Sharp** opined that the research is the practice of looking for non-trivial facts and insight in order to add to one's own body of knowledge and ideally, that of others.
4. **W.S.Monroes** reveals that as a method of researching problems whose solutions are to be drawn partially or entirely from facts is research.
5. **G. C. Crawford** says that simply put, research is a methodical and skilled way of thinking that makes use of specialized equipment, methods and techniques to come up with better answers to problems than would otherwise be possible. It begins with an issue, gathers information or facts, critically evaluates them and seeks decisions based on the actual evidence.

III. HISTORICAL RESEARCH – AN OVERVIEW

The term "**history**" which derives from the Greek word "**historia**" encompasses all facets of a person's life in society, including social, political and historical dimensions. The tale of human experience is history. It is a science that equips a man with knowledge from the

past, making him more clever and smart. It covers every facet of human existence and has the widest scope of any field of study. Today, history has developed into a useful tool for comprehending the course of evolution and how society came to be in its current form. It intensifies one's appreciation of one's national heritage and instils a strong sense of patriotism for one's country. It gives us a clear sense of the interconnectedness and oneness of the entire planet.

While historical facts, such as wars and dynasties, were the primary focus of history education in the past, modern history education now incorporates knowledge of geography, religion, anthropology, philosophy, economics, technology, art and society. History teachers should be aware of the value and utility of teaching history and should not have unwavering faith in their ability to do it.

1. History-meaning and definitions: History is, in its purest form, a study of past occurrences or fact-based learning. In a narrow sense, history might be defined as the past that has been meticulously researched and recorded.

- **Dionysius of Halicarnassus C40 – 08BC** – “Philosophy drawn from examples”.
- **Herodotus** – “An account of an unchanging Past”.
- **Sir Francis Bacon 1561 – 1626** – “History makes men wise”.
- **Thomas Carlyle 1795 – 1881** – “History is essence of Biographies”.
- **John R. Seelye 1834 – 1895** – “History is past Politics”.
- **J. B. Bury 1861 – 1927** – “History is Science”.
- **Lord Acton 1834 – 1902** – “History unfolds Human freedom”.
- **Benedetto Croce** – “History is contemporary”.
- **R. G. Collingwood 1889 – 1943** – “History is re-enactment of thought”.
- **E. H. Carr** – “History, an unending dialogue between the Present and the Past”.
- **G. J. Renier** – “History is experience of Men”.
- **A. L. Rowse** – “History is interaction between Society and Geography”.

2. Kinds of history: There are many kinds of history as follows: Political History, Constitutional History, Parliamentary History, Legal History, Military History, Diplomatic History, Social History, Economic History, Intellectual History, Biographical History, National History, Universal History, Local History, New History, Total History, Structural History, Pop-History and Subaltern History.

3. Historical research- meaning: Using a methodical approach to gathering, arranging and evaluating the data pertaining to a topic, research is a serious academic activity with a set of aims to explain, analyze or understand a problem or find a solution to it.

A middle ground between science and art is history. History already existed in the form of oral traditions that were repeated to the knowledge and enjoyment of the populace before writing was discovered. They were put in the form of poetry after the invention of the written word. Following independence, it was realized that, in addition to maintaining long-standing traditions and practices, one also needed to train the populace to meet the demands and challenges of a rapidly changing society.

History is a dynamic process that shows a learner's active orientation toward or development of knowledge. The instructor must use cutting-edge teaching strategies for history in order to accomplish the purpose of teaching history. Today, history is a useful tool for comprehending the evolution of society and how it came to be in its current form.

The study of history as a science aims to explain the rise of civilization. The historian who researches the historical sources must contribute in a really scholarly manner. The phrases "historiography" and "historical explanation" both refer to the narrative presentation of history based on a variety of methods, ideas and guidelines for conducting historical research and choosing appropriate sources.

Herodotus and **Thucydides'** writings from the fifth century B.C. serve as the foundation for western historical tradition. Up to the second century C.E., the tradition established by these Greek intellectuals persisted. In Europe, it is referred to be the classical era of historical writing. The most notable aspect of these texts was that the authors described experiences that were magnificent and deserving of being preserved in the form of collective memory.

Leopold Von Ranke (1795–1886), a renowned scholar and a brilliant writer who personified an elevated and comprehensive historiography, developed a historical methodology over the course of his sixty-year professional career and asserted that one might write objective history using this methodology.

The study of history is meticulous and accurate. It must include different dimensions, namely, i). Time factor ii).Place factor iii). Development factor and iv). Continuing factor.

Several strategies or procedures were used to choose and arrange the historical material as follows:

- The concentric approach method.
- The topical method.
- The patch method.
- The regression method.
- The chronological method.
- The cultural epoch theory method.
- The lines of development method.
- The progressive method.

4. Types of historical research: In order to draw conclusions about the past, historical study tries to establish facts. Finding an accurate account of the past is the major goal of historical research in order to better understand the present. The historian must rely on the reported observations of others, which frequently attest to dubious competency and occasionally to dubious objectivity, according to John W. Best (1977). Because it is important to know and comprehend educational achievements and trends from the past in order to get perspective on present and future directions, historical study has considerable importance in the field of educational research. It is helpful for making future predictions.

Research on the past might be qualitative, quantitative, or both. The issue being addressed and the facts at hand should decide the sort of approach. Historical studies focus on the significant record of human accomplishment. It is employed to comprehend both the past and the present in light of earlier events and developments. An individual, an idea, a movement, or an institution can all be the subject of historical analysis. All of these historical observational items cannot, however, be viewed separately. History cannot be studied of people without taking into account their interactions with the concepts, movements, and/or institutions of the time. The focus merely establishes the areas of emphasis that historians choose to emphasize.

5. Sources of data in historical research: Historical information is typically divided into two groups, which are as follows:

- Primary sources, or eyewitness accounts, are these. They come from a real observer or participant who witnessed the occurrence. Investigative labour is required to locate and evaluate primary historical data. It requires reasoning, gut instinct, perseverance and common sense (Tuchman, 1994).
- Secondary sources are accounts of an event that the reporter did not personally witness. The reporter may have spoken with or read an account from an actual observer, but their evidence is not that of the participant or observer in question. The historian and researcher may occasionally use secondary sources, but due to the distortion in information transmission, they should only be used when primary data are not readily available, which is very often the case. Finding the secondary sources is only the first step, as Tuchman (1994) notes. The quality of this source material must next be confirmed by the researcher.

6. Importance of historical research: These are the primary goals or significance of research:

- To profit by the experiences of the past in the solution of present-day problems.
- To develop the science of behaviour of historical situations.
- To provide knowledge that will permit the educator to achieve its goals by more effective method.
- To provide knowledge concerning achieving the Objective.
- To review existing Knowledge.
- To describe some situation or problem.
- To construct some situation.

7. Characteristics of historical research: The following are the characteristics of research:

- It develops new knowledge or data from Primary source.
- It develops general principles of a theory or a law.
- It is systematic, expert and accurate investigation about a particular problem.
- It strives to eliminate feeling, emotion, prejudice, favour and preference.
- It may generalize even unpopular findings.

- It organizes data and quantity in qualitative term as far as possible and expresses them in numerical data.
- It requires an inter-disciplinary approach.
- It is not a field of specialist only. Action research may be done by a classroom teacher.
- It is not a purely mechanical approach.
- Its methods are inadequate for the solution of many of the problems we face.
- It suffers from the inadequate of control.
- It continues to use criteria that would not survive critical and explicit discussion.
- It is relatively prosaic repetitive and lacking in impact.

8. Nature of historical research: In order to draw conclusions about the past, historical study tries to establish facts. Usually, this is followed by an assessment of these incidents and how they relate to the current situation and potential future events. Therefore, the major goal of historical study is to produce an accurate account of the past in order to get a better understanding of the present. We can forecast and somewhat influence our future thanks to this information.

As with any other type of study, historical research entails defining a topic, developing research questions or hazy generalisations, accumulating and analysing evidence and drawing inferences or generalisations based on deductive and inductive reasoning. The historian, however, has more obstacles to overcome than any other type of researcher.

A historian is required to include all types of data that come his way since historical data is a closed class of data that is located along a defined temporal locus. Historical research is not based on experiments but rather on stories of unique observations. The historian works with one-of-a-kind, non-repeatable data. They primarily include reconstructing historical events from various kinds of papers, artefacts, relics and records that had a direct or indirect bearing on the event under investigation.

When a historian extrapolates truth from historical data, his job becomes more challenging. The main challenge is that historical research is frequently conducted with all of the unreliability that the data may entail because the data are almost always relatively insufficient.

The historian must rely on other people's recorded observations, typically from sources with questionable credentials and occasionally from sources with questionable objectivity.

9. Value of historical research: The importance of historical research can be attributed to the necessity of understanding historical accomplishments and patterns in order to get perspective on current and future trends.

10. Difficulties encountered in historical research: The challenges that come with conducting historical research make it a challenging endeavour. Delimiting the issue such that a satisfying analysis is possible is a key challenge. Beginners frequently frame issues too broadly, but seasoned historians understand that historical research requires a

thorough analysis of a small issue rather than a cursory look at a large area. The target pistol, not the shotgun, is the weapon of research.

IV. CONCLUSION

Since historians might not have been alive at the period they are researching and might be far from the events they examine. To ensure that their information is as reliable as possible, they must rely mostly on personal experiences. They must frequently rely on inference and logical analysis, using the recorded experience of others rather than direct observation. It takes creativity, diligence and resourcefulness to locate the proper original sources of data. The context in which the events being researched took place and were documented is another important consideration for historians. In addition to the social and political context in which they wrote, it is important to keep in mind the prejudices and worldviews of people who documented the events.

REFERENCES

- [1] Bikash Bhattacharya, (2001). **An Introduction to Historiography**, Dominant Publisher, New Delhi.
- [2] Kothari, C.R. (2005). **Research Methodology**, Methods and Techniques, Second Edition, New Age International (P) Limited, New Delhi.
- [3] M. L. Wangoo and Prof. C. L. Kachroo, (2000). **Teaching of History**, Suneel Publication, Jammu.
- [4] M. Prabha Rao, (2017). **Teaching of Social Studies**, Dominant publisher, New Delhi.
- [5] Raghunath Rao, (2006). **Learn and Teach History**, based on UNESCO ICT initiatives Authors press, Delhi.
- [6] Ravilochanan, P., (2016). **Research Methodology**, Margham Publication, Chennai.
- [7] Ronald Vaughan Morris, (2012). **History and Imagination**, New York.
- [8] Sadhika Rawat and R. Rangarajan, (2013). **Teaching of History**, Pacific books Publisher, Delhi.
- [9] Satram Singh and Ved Prasad Yadhav, (2015). **Teaching Methods of History**, Srishti Book Publisher, New Delhi.
- [10] Shalini Wadhwa, (2000). **Modern Methods of Teaching History**, Sanup and Sons, New Delhi.
- [11] Venkatesan, G., (2013). **A Study of Historiography**, V. C. Publications, Rajapalayam.