BANC 110: Research Methods

TUTOR MARKED ASSIGNMENT (TMA)

Course Code: BANC 110
Assignment Code: BANC 110/ASST/TMA/July 2026 and January 2027
Total Marks: 100

There are three Sections in the Assignment. You have to answer all questions in all the Sections.

Assignment - I

Answer the following in about 500 words each. 20X2=40

a. Discuss the scientific method and explain how science differs from common sense.
b. Explain the relevance of informed consent and confidentiality in anthropological research.

Assignment - II

Answer the following in about 250 words each (Write Short Notes). 10X2=20

a. Armchair anthropology and its criticism
b. Use of Statistics in anthropological research

Answer the following questions in about 75 words each. 2X5=10

a. Laws in scientific research
b. Emic and etic approaches
c. Rapport building
d. Deception in research
e. Visual displays in research reports

Assignment – III

a. Describe the steps of research design. **20**
b. Prepare five questions for an interview guide to study social and cultural experiences of respondents. **5**
c. Mention five points to keep in mind while analysing quantitative data. **5**

a. Discuss the scientific method and explain how science differs from common sense.

Answer

The scientific method is a systematic way of gaining knowledge by asking questions, collecting evidence, testing explanations and checking whether conclusions are supported by facts. Instead of accepting an idea merely because it seems familiar, a scientific investigator examines it openly. This is particularly useful in anthropology, where customs, beliefs and human behaviour may look different from one community to another. A researcher must distinguish personal assumptions from findings based on careful observation.

Main steps in the scientific method

Observation and identification of a problem. Research usually begins when a person notices a pattern or an unanswered question. For example, an anthropologist might observe that school attendance varies among households of a particular village. The first task is to identify exactly what needs explanation. The question should be clear, researchable and relevant to the people concerned.

Review of existing knowledge. The investigator reads books, research articles, census material and earlier field reports. This helps in understanding what is already known and where a gap remains. It also prevents unnecessary repetition. In anthropology, earlier ethnographies may suggest possible influences such as occupation, migration, local language or gender roles.

Formation of a hypothesis. A hypothesis is a tentative explanation that can be examined through evidence. For example, the investigator may propose that the distance between home and school affects regular attendance. Not every anthropological study begins with a formal hypothesis, especially exploratory qualitative studies. However, it should still be guided by meaningful research questions.

Research design and data collection. The researcher chooses suitable methods, such as observation, interviews, questionnaires, surveys, genealogies or measurements. Important decisions include selection of participants, duration of fieldwork and ways of recording information. Informed consent, privacy and respectful behaviour are essential while collecting data from people.