BSOC-114 : SOCIOLOGICAL RESEARCH METHODS-II

Programme : BASOH/ BAFSO
Course Code: BSOC-114
Assignment Code: ASST/BSOC 114/ 2026-27
Total Marks: 100

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

Section I

Answer the following Descriptive Category questions in about 500 words each.

1. What do you understand by 'research'? Describe the different types of social research. 20

2. Discuss the issue of objectivity in social science research. 20

Section II

Answer the following Middle Category questions in about 250 words each.

3. Explain the role of observation in social research. Distinguish between participant and non-participant observation. 10

4. What do you understand by extensive research? 10

5. What is life history method? 10

Section III

Answer the following Short Category questions in about 100 words each.

6. What is qualitative data? 06

7. What is an interview schedule? 06

8. Write a note on reflexivity in research. 06

9. Who are key informants? 06

10. What is a pilot study? 06

1. What do you understand by ‘research’? Describe the different types of social research. (20)

Answer

Research is a systematic and critical attempt to answer a question or produce reliable knowledge about a phenomenon. Instead of depending on common sense, personal opinion or isolated experience, it begins with a clearly formulated problem, examines relevant evidence, applies appropriate methods and presents conclusions that others can assess. Social research applies this process to social relations, institutions, meanings, inequalities and patterns of human behaviour. For instance, asking why some children leave school requires investigating household circumstances, schools, gender relations, local employment and the perspectives of children themselves rather than accepting one simple explanation.

Characteristics of social research A good study has a definite research question and a reasoned choice of methods. It uses concepts carefully, gathers evidence systematically, relates observations to existing knowledge and reports its procedures transparently. Its conclusions must follow from the evidence, while uncertainty and limitations should be acknowledged. Social researchers also need informed consent, confidentiality, protection from harm and sensitivity to social differences. Because social situations change across places and periods, an explanation must specify the context in which its findings are relevant.

Types according to purpose Exploratory research is carried out when a subject is not sufficiently understood. Open interviews with first-generation university students, for example, may reveal obstacles that have not appeared in earlier studies. Descriptive research provides a careful picture of conditions or characteristics, such as the distribution of housing facilities across neighbourhoods. Explanatory or analytical research goes beyond description to examine reasons, processes and relationships, asking why some groups have unequal access to resources. Evaluation research assesses whether a programme achieves its aims; one might compare a nutrition programme's design, implementation and observed outcomes. Action research links inquiry with planned improvement, often involving teachers, workers or community members in identifying and addressing a practical problem.

Basic or fundamental research develops concepts and theoretical understanding without requiring an immediate policy application. Applied