# RESEARCH METHODS IN SOCIAL WORK

## ASSIGNMENT

**Course Code: - BSW 129**
**Total Marks – 100**

Note:

(i) Answer any **five** of the following questions in about **500 words** each.
(ii) All questions carry equal marks.

1. Define social work research and explain its scope as a secondary method of social work. Discuss the major areas of social work research with examples. 20

2. Compare and contrast qualitative and quantitative approaches in social work research. Discuss their characteristics, strengths, and limitations with suitable examples. 20

3. Define mixed method research and explain its significance in social work. How does combining qualitative and quantitative approaches enhance the reliability and depth of findings? 20

4. Explain the major steps involved in the social work research process. Discuss the relevance of each step with examples. 20

5. Discuss the importance of sampling in social work research. Explain any two sampling methods, highlighting their advantages and limitations. 20

6. Explain the process of data processing in social work research. Discuss the importance of editing, coding, and measurement in ensuring the accuracy and reliability of research findings. 20

7. Illustrate the application of the measures of central tendency and the measures of dispersion with examples. 20

8. Highlight the importance and the essential components of a research report. 20

## 1. Define social work research and explain its scope as a secondary method of social work. Discuss the major areas of social work research with examples. (20)

### Answer

Social work research is a systematic study of human needs, social problems, services and professional interventions. It uses planned methods of collecting and analysing evidence to understand why a problem occurs, whom it affects, and which responses are useful. For example, a social worker may study why eligible families do not receive a public benefit, instead of assuming that the families are simply unaware of the scheme. Research can examine their experience, the procedure followed by officials and the actual outcome of assistance. In this way, research connects the values of social work with evidence from everyday life.

### Place of research in social work

Social casework, group work and community organisation are commonly described as primary methods because they involve more direct helping relationships. Social work research is considered a secondary or supporting method along with methods such as social welfare administration and social action. The word 'secondary' does not mean less valuable. Research supports the primary methods by identifying needs, examining practices and guiding improvements. It may be carried out in a neighbourhood, a hospital, a school, a residential institution or a government programme.

A social worker meeting one family might notice that a child frequently misses school. Research across many families can show whether transport, seasonal employment, disability, discrimination or household responsibilities are common causes. A worker can then choose a suitable intervention and explain the need for it to the concerned agency. This is the practical link between research and service.

### Scope and uses

The scope of social work research extends from understanding a social situation to improving the delivery of help. **Needs assessment** measures what people require and what resources are available. Before organising a community nutrition programme, workers may assess children's nutritional status, household food habits and access to health services. **Problem analysis** explores the reasons behind difficulties such as unemployment, domestic violence, substance dependence, homelessness or social isolation. It helps distinguish visible symptoms from deeper causes.