

Hassles faced by social science researchers

Social science research is conducted by social scientists with the help of various quantitative and qualitative approaches. The quantitative approach relies on statistical data to substantiate claims and arrive at conclusions. On the other hand the qualitative approach emphasizes communicating with people, observing them closely for a sustained period of time and gaining an in-depth understanding of their life rather than simply analysing numbers. It is common for most research to be done with a mix of both kinds of techniques. However, researchers do face a few problems when it comes to collecting social data and analyzing it.

One of the key problems faced by researchers in this field of study is that they are dealing with human beings. Human beings are complicated by nature. It is hard to find many similarities between people even in a homogenous population. Most societies these days are made up of people who are diverse in their ethnicity, social background and academic achievements. Moreover, people are influenced by temperament, geography and biological make up. It is hard to draw conclusions from such diversity. People also do not stay the same. Their nature, interests and lives change with the passage of time. Whatever conclusions the social scientists draw today might not hold true later.

It is hard for many social scientists to remain objective and impartial in their observations and judgment. Every person is conditioned to think and act in a certain way. Sooner or later the personal views of the scientists start clouding their judgment and affect the research study. Many techniques of social research are based on the responses that one gets from the people under study. If people answer the questions truthfully then the research will reveal the right answers. On the other hand if people conceal facts or even lie, the researchers will be prone to draw incorrect conclusions. The responses of the people are also subject to the situations that they are in at that point of time.

Choosing a truly representative sample population among the vast numbers that make up the societies of today can be quite a headache. If the researcher were to choose too few people then the study will get over quickly but the conclusions might be incorrect. On the other hand if too many people are chosen, the researcher will not be able to complete the study and draw conclusions within a reasonable time period.