

TOPIC- Classification of Research Based on Purpose

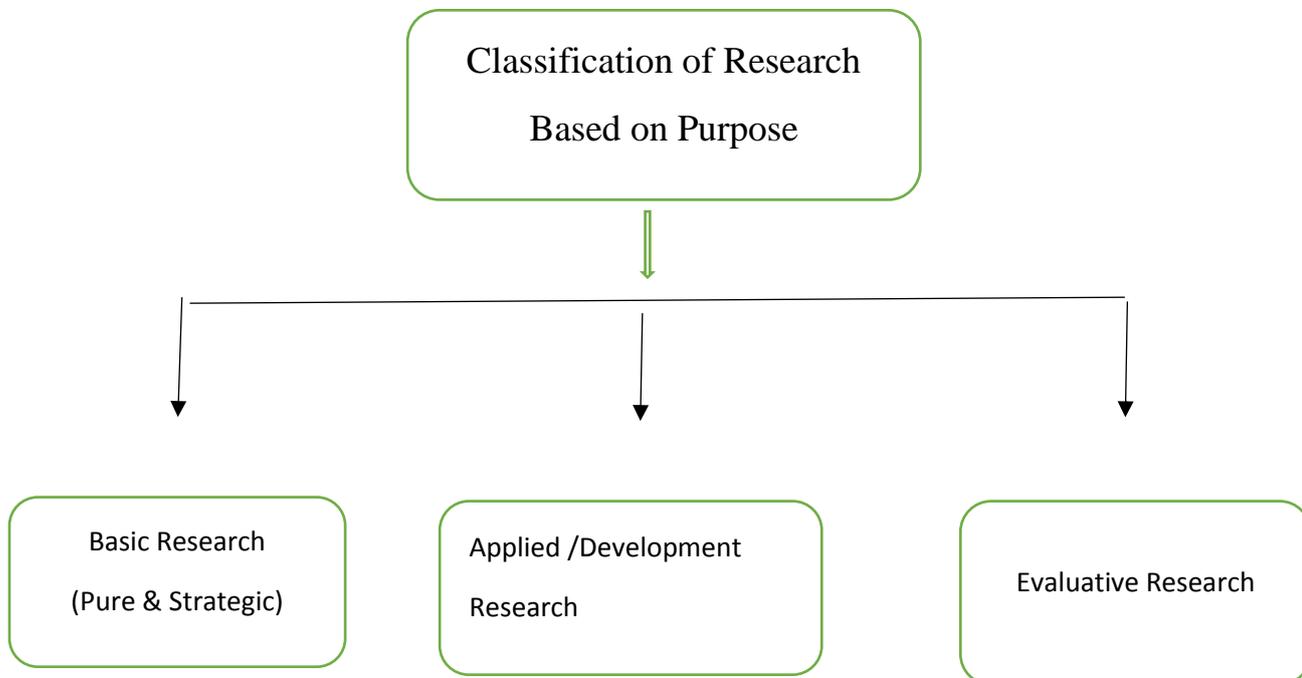


Figure - Classification of Research by Purpose

Basic Research: When the solution to the research problem has no apparent applications to any existing practical problem but only of the scholarly interests of a community of a researcher, the research is called basic reach. Basic research attempts to generate and expand the fundamental knowledge about social world. It has no practical value or has little direct impact on action, performance or policy decision. Basic researchers are more detached and academic in their approach and tend to have their own motives.

Example of pure research is - a social researcher in a developed country has investigated if there is any relationship between religion and occupation. If we attempt to see the relationship found in developed countries is also present in the developing country, we are doing a basic research. Pure basic research is experimental and theoretical work undertaken to acquire new knowledge without looking for long-term benefits other than the advancement of knowledge. Strategic basic research is experimental and theoretical work undertaken to acquire new knowledge directed into specified broad areas in the expectation of useful discoveries. It provides the broad base of knowledge necessary for the solution of recognized practical problems.

Applied Research: It variously known as action research, operations research, social research, decision-linked research, is a type of research that covers a wide range of social science areas. Applied research is inspired by the needs of social action and aims at finding a practical solution for an immediate problem of the sociality making optimal use of the available resources. The problem-solving nature of the applied research means it is conducted to reveal answers to specific questions related to action, performance or policy needs. Example that demonstrates what the applied research is - it has been observed that in Bangladesh, the proportion of women who are delivered through Caesarian section is very high. It is suspected that small height is one of the risk factors to difficult deliveries. A study may therefore be conducted to verify if this is the case.

Evaluative Research: It is concerned with the evaluation of such occurrences as social and organizational programs or intervention. Evaluative research attempts to-

- Assess implemented activities;
- Examine effects of activities;
- Assess short-term effects;
- Determine the impact of a program;
- Evaluate success of intervention.

The use of the principles of experimental design is fairly entrenched in evaluation research, but other approaches have merged in recent years. An example is cited - Goiter is highly, prevalent in many parts of Bangladesh. UNICEF, Bangladesh initiated lipiodol injection campaign in some selected Thana in 1989. After a period of two years, the impact of this campaign was evaluated. The results were compared with another area where no such campaign was launched

Comparison between Basic and Applied Research

Basic Research	Applied Research
Research problems and subjects are selected with a great deal of freedom.	Research problems are narrowly constrained to the demands of client or the sponsor
Research is judged by absolute norms and scientific rigor, and the highest standard of scholarship is sought	The rigor and standard of scholarship depend on the uses of results.
The primary concern is with the internal logic and rigor of research design	The primary concern is with the ability to generalize findings to areas of interest to sponsor/client.
The driving goal is to contribute to basic, theoretical knowledge.	The driving goal is to have practical payoffs or use of results.
Success comes when results appear in a scholarly journal and have an impact in the scientific community.	Success comes when results are used by sponsor/client in decision making.

Applied vs. Fundamental: Research can either be applied (or action) research or fundamental (to basic or pure) research. Applied research aims at finding a solution for an immediate problem facing a society or an industrial/business organisation, whereas fundamental research is mainly concerned with generalisations and with the formulation of a theory. “Gathering knowledge for knowledge’s sake is termed ‘pure’ or ‘basic’ research.” Research concerning some natural phenomenon or relating to pure mathematics are examples of fundamental research. Similarly, research studies, concerning human behaviour carried on with a view to make generalisations about human behaviour, are also examples of fundamental research, but research aimed at certain conclusions (say, a solution) facing a concrete social or business problem is an example of applied research. Research to identify social, economic or political trends that may affect a particular institution or the copy research (research to find out whether certain communications will be read and understood) or the marketing research or evaluation research are examples of applied research. Thus, the central aim of applied research is to discover a solution for some pressing practical problem, whereas basic research is directed towards finding information that has a broad base of applications and thus, adds to the already existing organized body of scientific knowledge.

