

**Tools for Online Survey –Characteristics,  
Advantages and Disadvantages**

Dr. K. Raghu Naga Prabhakar

**Types of Survey: Face-To-Face Survey,  
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**Introduction to Social Science Research**

Dr G. Sreenivas Reddy

**Public Policy and Public Administration**

Dr. G. Sreenivas Reddy

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# TOOLS FOR ONLINE SURVEY –CHARACTERISTICS, ADVANTAGES AND DISADVANTAGES

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## Abstract

*This article discusses the meaning, importance and features of different online surveys that are increasingly becoming common these days. After studying this you will be able to understand the variety of online surveys so as to use them as a researcher or as thinking social being interested in understanding various aspects of society on a scientific basis.*

## Keywords

Online, Offline, Survey, Survey research, Research design, Questionnaire, Respondents

## Introduction

Since the emergence of website feedback, online survey software and questionnaire tools have evolved into something entirely different. Having started as a solution more in the realm of traditional survey tools with long lists of questions and anonymous respondents, online survey software has somehow managed to stay 'in fashion' among online users including researchers. This ongoing popularity is, attributed to the fact that online survey software is a simple and easy way to get in touch with a targeted audience and gather user feedback. The majority of social surveys in the past used to be conducted in-person or via telephone or mail. While these methods of surveying are still employed, the majority of today's surveys have gone digital since just about everyone is online these days. According to the Pew Research Centre, the number of surveys being conducted over the internet has increased dramatically in the last 10 years due to the relatively low cost of conducting web surveys in comparison with other methods. For example, the U.S. Census Bureau conducts more than 130 surveys and programs each year, and that's just one of the largest online surveys. Today, political

parties, individual researchers, government agencies and business organizations frequently use online surveys such as email surveys, pop-up surveys, and other forms of surveys.

### **What is online survey?**

Online survey, also called internet survey, is **one of the most popular data-collection sources**, where a set of survey questions is sent out to a target sample and the members of this sample can respond to the questions over the World Wide Web. Respondents receive online surveys via various mediums such as email, embedded over website, social media etc. online surveys are internet based method of collecting primary data needed for research or decision making.

Organizations and individuals such as political parties, think tanks, strategy consultants, and policy researchers use online surveys in order to gain insights and feedback about political events or developments. With the progress made by the internet, more and more organizations have come to depend on the data received and analyzed from online surveys to make changes in their functioning. For efficient data collection, organizations or individual researchers must choose an advanced and efficient online survey platform.

### **Importance of online surveys**

The primary reason for the growth in the online surveys is that they are extremely low cost and convenient due to the sheer magnitude of reach. Over the past decade, researchers have started preferring conducting surveys using an online survey tool as they can send out surveys from the desktops or laptops and their target audience can respond to these surveys whenever possible at their own time and pace. There are several reasons for conducting online surveys. They include: gathering feedback on public policies; conducting public preferences on location, type or scale of a public facility; obtaining feedback on functioning of public servants; and measuring public satisfaction. In addition to the possibilities mentioned above, one can obviously conduct a survey amongst supporters of a political party as to how the party machinery is working at various levels such as national, state, and district or mandal level.

## **Characteristics of Online Surveys**

There are six distinct characteristics that should ideally define online surveys. A researcher should make sure that in using one or more of online surveys that they are ensuring these features so that the online survey will turn out to be effective and productive. The six characteristics are as follows:

**Clarity regarding purpose of the online survey:** This is the most important characteristic of online surveys. An improper survey can only lead to appalling results. Researchers should have clarity on the objective of conducting an online survey so that the gauged results can be used to achieve the pre-determined objective.

**Accuracy of research design:** For an online survey to bear efficient results, it is important for the researcher to develop a thorough research design. How to carry out research and analysis using online surveys can be decided by choosing a suitable research design. Research design will help researchers in deciding how to collect information using online surveys and how to measure and analyze the data collected. The type of research design can be decided according to the research problem an organization is facing. Upon detecting the research problem, a researcher can decide from among various type of research design: Cross-sectional, longitudinal, experimental, correlational etc. In case, an organization intends to conduct an online survey at a particular time, the researchers can rely on cross-sectional research design and in situations where the organization wants to observe a change in pattern from a particular time interval to another the researchers can rely on longitudinal research design.

**Using precisely structured survey questions:** An efficient survey should include a carefully balance of open-ended and closed-ended survey questions. There are various question types which can suffice different purposes of online surveys. The questions added in an online survey should be effective in obtaining the required information from the selected sample. Some of the most widely used survey questions are Multiple-choice questions, Dichotomous questions, Matrix questions, Likert Scale questions etc. A researcher will be able to gather effective information from online surveys only when the purpose of the survey is justified



with the type of survey questions. For example, Likert scale questions can be used to know the level of agreement of respondents with a particular statement, or Matrix questions can be used where there is a long list of similar questions and there is a likelihood of respondents dropping off a survey if these questions are not combined. Researchers should understand the purpose of an online survey to ensure that the survey questions are well-structured to garner crucial details.

**Clearly defined target sample:** A sample is a represents section of target respondents who represent the required characteristics for research and whose inputs can be generalized and applied to the entire target market. After filtering a sample from the target population, the number of individuals who are a part of the sample will be indicative of the sample size. A sample can be formed on the basis of various aspects such as demographics, profession or any other factor according to the researcher's experience and knowledge. Samples can be formed using two sampling methods viz., probability and non-probability sampling. In the probability sampling method, every individual of a target population has an equal opportunity to be a part of a selected sample. Non-probability sampling is a technique where the sample is chosen on the basis of the researcher's judgment, experience and knowledge and not on random selection.

**Collection and Analysis of respondent feedback:** Including the right survey questions and sending the online survey to the desired sample can lead to productive results only if the collected results are well-analyzed to make informed decisions for the organization. With online survey software such as QuestionPro, researchers can get analyzed data on a dashboard which keeps updating real-time as respondents take the online survey. The data presented on this dashboard is in the form charts and graphs for the ease of statistical analysis for market research.

**Transparent reporting of survey responses:** The research reports created using data obtained from online surveys should be shared with all the stakeholders of the organizations so that each member is aware of the data gathered from surveys. Every respondent should also understand that their inputs are being implemented by the organization – this way, they will trust the organization in being honest about providing feedback for improvement.

**Tools available for online survey:** Picking online survey software or questionnaire tool can be a difficult task especially considering the fact that many of these tools seem to provide many of the same features. There are also some distinctions between the features you receive with the paid version versus the free version. Typically, paid versions of online survey software offer added capabilities such as:

**Survey logic** – paid tools often provide the option to add a follow up question. This is based on the answer you have provided to the previous question. This is also referred to as question routing.

**Export data** – There are several tools that will allow you to export your survey data – unless you start using the paid version.

**Custom logo** – Looking to get rid of the survey tool's logo and make it your own? With most paid versions this is possible.

**More question types** – Although free survey tools offer plenty of question types, including multiple choice, ratings, drop-downs and radio buttons, paid versions tend to offer even more. We will list out and compare some of the most popular and well-known online survey software and questionnaire tools to make your decision making process just a little bit easier.

In the light of the above information we list out the available tools of online survey hereunder along with their respective website details wherever possible.

**Type-form:** In online survey software with a very user-friendly interface that allows users to put surveys together or themselves. As a respondent, the process of filling in a survey goes quite smoothly. The free version of Type form includes free features such as unlimited questions and answers, data export options, custom-designed themes as well as readily-made templates and basic reporting features.

**Feedier:** Is an accessible survey platform that lets teams get instant clarity on their users' experiences and future needs. With the help of this we can create playful surveys that can be automated and sent out at key touch points. Feedier's dashboard lets you group individual feedback into live journeys. Validate key decisions using easy-to-share visual reports that connect with your existing workflows. Integrate

your surveys into your website or app by generating embedded code or share it with email/SMS campaign to your audience.

**Hub Spot:** Hub Spot's out-of-the-box survey tools make it easy to capture qualitative and quantitative feedback so you can understand your respondents better. With Hub Spot, we can create and deliver surveys via email and on our website. The tool will also help us choose the right format of survey and track our surveys so that can improve our customer experience over time.

**Survey Monkey:** One of the more well-known online survey software and questionnaire tools, Survey Monkey is used, besides policy researchers, by millions of business organizations all over the world. It provides its users with 15 different types of survey questions (including multiple choice, open comments and Likert scales). This tool is perfect for one-off surveys. However this makes it less suitable in terms of measuring overall satisfaction or re-surveying customers again after a certain period of time. Survey Monkey, is an online survey development cloud-based software developed by a service company known as SVMK Inc. SVMK Inc was founded in 1999 by Ryan Finley and Chris Finley. The company provides surveys, and a suite of paid back-end programs. Survey Monkey is not only the world's most popular as well as free online survey tool. Survey Monkey presents all the tools necessary for you to create strong, professional surveys easily. The exact feature is dependent on which of the four pricing plans a user chooses. However, if you're just starting up with online survey tools and you are trying to figure out the best one, you can opt for the free pricing plan that gives you access to the basic tools needed to create great surveys.

**Crowd signal:** Crowd signal (previously Poll Daddy) is online survey software that allows users to conduct surveys in two different ways: by embedding surveys on their website, inviting respondents via email. Once the data is collected, you can create filters to analyze the data and share it in reports. This is done using raw data export with program such as Excel, PDF, CSV, Google Docs and XML. The results of these surveys can all be viewed in real-time.

**Qualtrics:** Online survey software and questionnaire tool that somewhat pushes the boundaries of traditional surveys. It offers nearly 100+ question types, several

readily made survey templates as well as features such as display logic, email triggers and logic branching. Included in its real-time web reports, users can choose from over 30 different graph types and export results to CSV or SPSS.

**Alchemer:** Alchemer (formerly Survey Gizmo) is similar to Survey Monkey in terms of inviting respondents and customization possibilities. What sets this online survey software apart, however, is that it is more attractive in terms of the look and feel of the survey than Survey Monkey. It also offers nearly 100 different question types that can all be customized to the user's liking. Additionally, users can configure their own surveys quickly and easily.

**Get Feedback:** With Get Feedback, users can easily build branded surveys using drag & drop and a number of different personalization features. It is also flexible in that it adapts to almost every platform that is used to distribute surveys. You can also integrate this tool with Sales Force, meaning the results of the surveys are also visible in your Sales Force dashboard.

**QuestionPro:** QuestionPro is a web-based survey application intended for small and medium-sized companies. This survey software enables researchers to easily create online polls and surveys. They offer multiple survey templates and over 30 different question types. In terms of deployment, surveys can be sent out to respondents via email or to target visitors Via integrated.

**Google Forms:** Google Forms is a free online survey software and questionnaire tool that allows its users to quickly and easily put together surveys via a drag & drop interface. In terms of design, these surveys can be entirely customized. The tool provides you with real-time response info and charts. This data can also be connected with other Google products. Google Forms is survey administration software included as part of the free, web-based Google Docs Editors suite offered by Google. The service also includes Google Docs, Google Sheets, Google Slides, Google Drawings, Google Sites, and Google Keep.

**Where do I go to create a Google form?** When you create a Google Form, it's saved in Google Drive. To create a form directly from Google Drive: On a computer, go to [drive.google.com](https://drive.google.com). In the top left, click New.

**How to you use Google Forms for surveys?** You can use Google Forms to create online surveys and quizzes and send them to other people. Step 1: Set up a new form or quiz. Go to forms.google.com. Click Blank. A new form will open. When you create a Google Form, it's saved in Google Drive. To create a form directly from Google Drive: On a computer, go to drive.google.com.

**How to grade a question on Google Forms?** Make a new quiz & answer key 1. In Google Forms, open a quiz 2. At the top, click Response 3. Click Individual 4. To move between individuals, click Previous or Next 5. Find the question you want to grade. In the top right, enter how many points the response earned. Under the answer, click Add feedback.

**How do you change the name of a Google form?** From forms.google.com, click Blank or choose a template. From drive.google.com, click New More. Next to Google Forms, point to the Right arrow and click Blank form or from a template. Name your form: In the top-left corner, click untitled form or the template form name and enter a new name.

**Qualaroo by ProProfs:** Which was recently acquired by Proprofs – is online survey software with which users can create easy and accessible surveys. These surveys usually appear at the bottom of your screen in a widget. You can easily conduct polls amongst your visitors and ask short and simple questions. It also includes a question library that can be used to form the basis for your survey questions.

**Pulse Insights:** Pulse Insights is comparable to other online survey software and questionnaire tools such as Qualaroo and Survicate. Using a micro survey platform, Pulse Insights collects data from your visitors in a very simple manner. This tool is also capable of integrating responses from surveys into other tools such as web analytics, A/B testing, CRM and DMP.

**Survicate:** It's allows users to trigger targeted surveys across various locations of their website. Users can also send out email questionnaires to different customers. In terms of creating these surveys and offers a library of predefined surveys that user can choose from. This survey tool also includes dash boarding capabilities, NPS analysis, and CSV and XLS exporting.

**Ask Nicely:** In online survey software that collects feedback daily using one-off surveys.

This software can be integrated with your own CRM so that you can set up regular samplings or fast surveys and respond directly from your CRM. This tool however focuses

**Recently:** Recently is Net Promoter Score® survey software created for businesses of all sizes. This online survey software has a lot of great features such as audience segmentation, custom survey creation, and multi-channel survey collection. With recently, users can also automate their campaigns by setting up their survey and programming when the program should send the survey to their target audience.

**Response:** Response is online survey software and questionnaire tool that is mainly catered to mobile app users as it is responsive to screen size. This easy-to-use tool is free, however if you want to create branded surveys with your own logo, background and colors you'll need to upgrade the response Plus package. Keep in mind with the free package, your question formats are limited, however you can make use of their question logic feature which gives deeper insights into the questions being asked.

**Kwik Surveys:** Online survey maker, Kwik Surveys offers 30+ templates surveys, however they cannot be customized for your brand. The Kwik Surveys dashboard is particularly easy to navigate and surveys can be created using a simple drag-and-drop editor. You cannot create open answer questions, however. Results can be exported using multiple file types or analyzed within the software in real-time. The software also offers segmentation and comparison features whereby you can identify trends within your data.

**Survey Nuts:** With Survey Nuts, users are initially presented with three blank questions that can be filled in and customized before adding more, if needed. This can all be done before even creating an account with Survey Nuts. Once you are finished created your survey you will add your email address at the bottom and Survey Nuts will save the survey, create an account and give you the link to your survey.

**Survey Planet:** Survey Planet is a questionnaire tool that includes custom themes, pre-written question (which can be combined with your own) and a responsive layout. In addition, users can make use of question branching and multiple languages. While creating a survey, you can simultaneously preview a live copy of your survey on the same page. Survey Planet offers both a free and paid plan.

**Go Survey:** So, Go Survey enterprise grade survey software that is very easy to use. Users can choose from a wide variety of survey templates or 'survey banks' as they refer to them. You can also manipulate the type of questions you want to ask based on Net Promoter Score (NPS), demographics and text. Survey invites can be distributed and tracked via email or Social-media too.

### **Advantages and limitations of online surveys**

Surveys offer researchers quantitative and qualitative data that can be studied and analyzed, and provide them with insight into various aspects of their business. So, let's take a look at the benefits of online surveys (which far outweigh the negatives, which we'll also cover).

**Advantages:** What makes online surveys so popular? The following is the list of reasons they are being heavily utilized.

**1. Faster:** The time it takes for someone to complete an online survey is, on average, about two-thirds shorter than that of other research methods. Since online surveys are being taken automatically, there's no need to wait for paper questionnaires to come back or for a phone interviewer to compile their findings. With web-based surveys, response time is almost instant.

**2. More Accurate:** The margin of error is greatly reduced with online surveys because participants enter their responses directly into a web survey. Some traditional methods rely on the attentiveness of interviewers to enter all details correctly, and naturally, human error can creep in whenever a person has to perform a repetitive task. When it comes down to it, web surveys are usually more accurate. Since respondents record their own answers, there is no opportunity for an interviewer to misinterpret a response.

**3. Easily Stylized:** An online survey is a chance to brand and leave an impression on

participants. Your survey can be styled to match your business website with customized backgrounds, logos, images, fonts, and more. You'll want to be sure that your online survey company supports responsive design, like Survey Legend, so that mobile device users have a good experience as well.

**4. Easy To Use for Participants:** Today's consumers hate unsolicited phone calls. They also don't like junk mail and likely don't have time for a face-to-face interview. That's why online surveys are so great! With an online survey, participants can pick a moment that suits best and the time needed to complete the survey is much shorter. Questions that are not relevant to a particular participant can be skipped automatically using Survey Legend Skip Logic.

**5. More Honest:** When a survey participant is speaking with a live interviewer, they may not be totally honest with their responses; they may outright lie. An online survey is easily made anonymous or confidential, not collecting the name or other easily identifiable information about the respondent. This makes many participants feel more comfortable, and more likely to answer questions honestly.

**6. More Flexible:** The order of the questions in an online survey can be changed, or questions can be skipped altogether, depending on the answer to a previous question to tailor the survey to each participant as he or she proceeds. Online surveys are also flexible. Unlike paper surveys, which have to be reprinted if errors arise, web-based surveys can be easily modified with just a few keystrokes. Similarly, they can be altered according to the demographics of the population being questioned, making it easier for companies to target specific audiences without having to print new survey forms.

**7. Cost-Effective:** Online surveys don't have the expense of an interviewer for in-person or telephone surveys, the printing and postage required for mail-in surveys, and other costs associated with other means of surveying.

**8. Anytime, Anywhere:** This is an easy one; with online surveys, participants can take a survey at any time, no matter where they're at. With a mobile responsive design, they can take a survey on a subway at 3 AM! This means there's no need to place expensive phone calls or send representatives on long-distance trips.



**9. Large Sample Sizes:** Online surveys have a greater reach than other types of market research techniques. Too often, companies may make the mistake of assuming a small sampling of people represents the general consensus. Underrepresentation of a portion of the population in polls is largely thought to be a big contributing factor for the surprise outcome of the 2016 U.S. presidential election. With online surveying, thousands of participants are within reach, allowing you to expand your sample size to extract data that matches the attributes of the larger population, getting you more conclusive results.

**10. Easy Data Analysis and Reporting:** Surveys tend to be standardized, providing quantifiable data that can be easily compiled and analysed. While qualitative survey research techniques, such as focus groups or phone interviews, may yield some interesting answers, analysing responses becomes more difficult (and potentially inaccurate). In addition, many online survey programs offer advanced statistical tools that can be used to analyse survey data to determine validity, reliability, and statistical significance.

**11. No Interviewer needed:** You'll find this in the disadvantages, too, but not having an interviewer can also be a plus. An interviewer could cause a survey participant to hide their truth out of embarrassment or fear. Interviewees can also influence responses in some cases by their spoken language or body language, which skews survey results.

**More Candid Responses:** Honesty is important in data collection, otherwise, your analysis – and the action(s) you take due to it – can be skewed. Whereas in-person or telephone surveys can cause a person to “clam up” or be untruthful with their answers, most online surveys offer anonymity, which is more likely to result in people giving their true thoughts and feelings on any given subject.

### **Limitations of online surveys**

There are many benefits of using online surveys for your research. However, it would not be fair not to point out a few disadvantages.

**1. Online Limitations:** Not everyone has internet access. If you are trying to survey a broad spectrum of people, you may miss out on the thoughts or opinions of older

demographics and rural dwellers by using an online survey only. This occurred in 1948 when telephone surveys were used to poll for the US presidential election, but researchers failed to recognize that many voters did not yet have telephones.

**2.Limitations of Close-Ended Question:** Most surveys have close-ended questions, meaning the respondent has no choice but to select an answer or choose “not applicable” or “other.” While close-ended questions make surveys easy to analyze, they may have a lower validity rate than other types of questions. One can, of course, create surveys with open-ended questions but its filling up proves tedious and bothersome for the respondents.

**3. Non-Response Bias:** Survey fraud is probably the heaviest disadvantage of an online survey. There are people who answer online surveys for the sake of getting the incentive (usually in the form of money) after they have completed the survey, not with a desire to contribute to the advancement of the study.

**4. Lack of Interviewers:** While sometimes considered a benefit, the lack of an interviewer can sometimes be a negative aspect of online surveys. That is because a skilled interview can often coax answers out of a participant that is not very forthcoming with their responses. A skilled interviewer also knows how to read body language, and can often tell when a participant is being untruthful as well as adjust questions to make an uncomfortable participant feel more at ease.

## **Conclusion**

There are a number of methods of conducting survey research. Basically the methods are of two broad types, offline methods and online methods. There are innumerable online tools of survey research. It is just a matter of determining which is right for you and which will elicit the most accurate responses based upon the questions being asked. Each of them can be effective in a limited sense and none of them will be useful under all circumstances. Online tools of research are gaining in importance due to their advantages over the traditional tools of survey such as face to face interview or personal observation. Hence all researchers need to be familiar with them. However, they should be aware of limitations of online surveys and should make all-out efforts to overcome them.

## Glossary

**Research design:** Researcher design is a planned sequence of the entire process involved in the conducting of a research study.

**Panel survey:** Panel survey is a type of **longitudinal survey**. It can be a qualitative or quantitative survey used to measure people's behaviour. Using panel survey, data can be collected in various ways, starting from conducting interview to using online surveys or even scanning barcodes.

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# **TYPES OF SURVEY: FACE-TO-FACE SURVEY, TELEPHONE SURVEY, MAIL-IN SURVEY AND ONLINE SURVEY**

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## **Abstract**

*The objectives of this article are to help the researchers to know major types of research surveys and to enable them to understand the uses and limitations of each one of them. After going through this article one can have a broad understanding of the different methods and platforms currently available for online surveys.*

## **Keywords**

Survey method, Online survey, Offline survey, Focus groups, In-person, Anonymity, Cohort, Panel survey, Longitudinal survey.

## **Introduction**

Technically speaking in a survey is a method of gathering and compiling information from a group of people, more often known as the sample, to gain knowledge by organizations, businesses, or institutions. This information or opinion collected from the sample is more often a generalization of what a larger population thinks. Different types of surveys help provide important or critical information in the form of meaningful data, which is further used by organizations and individuals to make informed and sound decisions. The collected data offers good insights only when the administered tool of survey such as a questionnaire is carefully designed to promote response rates and includes both open-ended questions and closed-ended questions and answers options in an exhaustive way. There is much variety when it comes to surveys, and we can identify their types based on the frequency of their administration or the way of deployment.

## **Types of surveys**

Now that we know what a survey is and why do we need to survey people, let us

explore its types. These can be classified in different ways, as mentioned earlier, depending upon the frequency of administration or deployment and how the distribution/deployment occurs. The most common survey types are listed and discussed hereunder.

**Online surveys:** Online survey or internet survey is one of the most popular data-collection sources, where a set of survey questions is sent out to a target sample and the members of this sample can respond to the questions over the World Wide Web or www. They are increasingly becoming more and more important each passing day. Respondents receive online surveys via various media such as email, embedded over website, social media etc. Organizations conduct online surveys to use the internet in order to gain insights and feedback about a variety of things. With the progress made by the internet, more and more organizations depend on the data received and analyzed from online surveys to make integral changes in their functioning. For efficient data collection, organizations must choose an advanced and efficient platform. The primary reason for the growth seen in the use of online surveys is that they are extremely low cost and conducting an online survey is convenient due to the sheer magnitude of reach. Over the past two decades, researchers have started preferring conducting surveys using an online survey tool as they can send out surveys from the desktops or laptops and their target audience can respond to these surveys whenever possible.

**In-person interviews: In-Person Interviews**, also called Face-to-face interviews, one to one interviews, and personal interviews are formal meetings that happen in person between the researcher and the respondents for the purpose of collecting research data. They are often more in-depth than the telephone interviews. **In-person interviews** enable researchers to better evaluate a respondent's attitude and preferences, as well as to assess vital non-verbal cues. This is a traditional mode of interviewing which researchers have been using prior to the emergence of technology. These interviews generally employ a standardized and pre- structured questionnaire (or interview schedule) to ensure that all respondents are asked the same set of questions in the same sequences. It is a two-way conversation initiated

by an interviewer to obtain information from a respondent. The one-to-one interview helps researchers gather information or data directly from a respondent. It is a qualitative research method and depends on the knowledge and experience of a researcher to frame and ask relevant questions one after the other to collect meaningful insights from the interview. These interviews can last from 30 minutes up to a few hours.

**Focus groups:** Focus groups are a form of qualitative research that is commonly used in research. It is a particularly popular method within political science and sociological research. During a **focus group survey**, a group of individuals normally ranging between 6 to 12 people is brought together in a room to enable them to engage in a guided discussion of a topic. Focus groups discussions capture the experiences and views of sampled respondents regarding specific issues closely related to research question (s). The group shares their feedback, opinions, knowledge, and insights about the topic at hand. Focus groups data collection method is most suitable for types of studies where multiple perspectives are needed to be obtained regarding the same issue or problem. As it is the case with any other research method, focus groups have some disadvantages as well. Focus group discussions bring out multiple perspectives, dimensions and viewpoints on a topic. They may be heavily influenced by one or two dominant individuals in the group.

**Panel surveys:** A panel survey is a type of longitudinal study. It can be a qualitative or quantitative survey used to measure people's behavior. Panel survey as research method is a type of **longitudinal survey**. It can be a qualitative or quantitative survey used to measure people's opinions, feelings, thoughts and behavior over a period of time. Using panel survey, data can be collected in various ways, starting from conducting interview to using online surveys or even scanning barcodes. Target audiences in a panel survey are chosen for study and data points gathered repeatedly at different points in during the study. In a panel survey, **repeated observations are derived by following a sample of persons (a panel) over time and by collecting data from a sequence of interviews (or waves)**. These

interviews are conducted at usually fixed occasions that in most cases are regularly spaced.

**Telephone surveys:** A telephone survey is **one of the survey methods used in collecting data either from the general population or from a specific target population.** Telephone numbers are utilized by trained interviewers to contact and gather information from possible respondents. They are so called because researchers conduct these surveys over telephones. Respondents need to answer questions related to the research topic by the researcher. These surveys are time-consuming and sometimes non-conclusive. The success of these depends on how many people answer the phone and want to invest their time answering questions over the telephone. Telephone interview surveys are considerably more common than in-person interviews because they are far less expensive to administer and act as a standard tool for gathering information. The advantages of telephone survey include high accessibility, good quality control anonymity of respondents, quick processing and handling of data as explained below:

**High Accessibility:** Researchers can benefit from conducting a telephone survey because of the large scale accessibility associated with it. A majority of India's population has a phone at their respective homes. People who do not have access to the Internet such as those who live in remote areas can still become respondents through their telephones.

**Good Quality Control:** Trained interviewers can ask the questions to the respondents in a uniform manner, promoting accuracy and precision in eliciting responses. The phone interviews are also recorded, which means that the analyst has an opportunity to observe and analyze the behavior or attitude of the respondents toward controversial issues (e.g. state disputes, preferred presidential candidates, etc.) or new concepts (new products, laws to be passed, etc.).

**Protecting Anonymity of Respondents:**

The *telephone survey approach provides perhaps the highest level of anonymity for respondents who wish to hold their opinions in confidentiality.* This facilitates accuracy in responses, especially in controversial topics.



Quick Data Processing and Handling: The emergence of the computer-assisted telephone interviewing(CATI) has led to a faster manner of processing, handling and storing the data gathered from phone interviews. Both real-time data and past data can be rapidly analyzed using CATI.

### **Disadvantages of telephone survey**

Disadvantages of telephone survey are mainly two. Firstly, since telephone surveys may interrupt the personal time of the respondents, interviews via phone are to be conducted no longer than 15 minutes. This calls for a single open-ended question needing a lengthy answer to be changed into a few close-ended questions. Secondly, many people use call screening to accept only calls that they are expecting. These people include credit-challenged ones who screen not only the calls from their creditors, but also those calls from unknown numbers. Also, extremely busy people often screen calls to accept only those from their business partners or family members and significant others.

**Mail-in surveys:** Compared with telephone **surveys**, the cost in conducting a mail **survey** is typically lower. To make the most out of it, mail **surveys** should be used when the researcher wishes to know if there are changes in the political scenario, the opinion regarding the contemporary events, survey relates to time-sensitive matters or when the audience is difficult to research by other methods. A combined data collection approach is a solution to consider. In a combined mail and online research design, an invitation to an online survey is sent to respondents via the mail. This provides the reach of mail surveys and the questionnaire control of online surveys.

**Kiosk surveys:** Kiosk is a small open-fronted hut or cubicle from which newspapers, refreshments, tickets, etc., are sold. It is a small structure in a public area used for providing information or displaying advertisements, often incorporating an interactive display screen or screens. **Kiosk** survey is very useful when you run **surveys** directly on your organisational or office premises, such as a shop, store, hotel lobby, hospital or office. In such cases you can have a **survey** waiting in a corner to be filled-in by any visitor who passes by.

**Paper surveys:** As the name suggests, this survey uses the traditional paper and pencil approach. Many would believe that paper surveys are a thing of the past. However, they are quite handy when it comes to field research and data collection. These surveys can go where computers, laptops or other handheld devices cannot go. There is a flip side to it too. This survey type is the most expensive method of data collection. It includes deploying a large number of human resources, along with time and money.

**Longitudinal surveys:** Longitudinal surveys are those surveys that help researchers to make an observation and collect data over an extended period. There are three main types of longitudinal studies: trend surveys, panel surveys, cohort surveys.

**Trend surveys:** Trend surveys are deployed by researchers to understand the shift or transformation in the thought process of respondents over some time. They use these surveys to understand how people's inclination change with time.

**Panel survey:** Another longitudinal survey type is a panel survey. Researchers administer these surveys to the same set or group of people over the years. Panel surveys are expensive in nature and researchers to try to stick to their panel to gather unbiased opinions.

**Cohort survey:** The third type of longitudinal survey is the cohort survey. In this type, categories of people that meet specific similar criteria and characteristics form the target audience. The same people don't need to create a group. However, people forming a group should have certain similarities.

**Retrospective survey:** A retrospective survey is a type of study in which respondents answer questions to report on events from the past. By deploying this kind of survey, researchers can gather data based on past experiences and beliefs of people. This way, they can save the cost and time. When there is a statistical margin of error (the sample of 200 provides an error range of +/- 7% with a 95% confidence), this type of survey is particularly the most democratic process there is, and the most reliable, for learning about the opinions of an entire community.

## **Conclusion**

In this paper we have briefly discussed the meaning of survey research as a prelude to understanding the major types of survey research. We have identified, listed out and discussed the major forms of survey research along with their scope for applications. This discussion should help an aspiring researcher to use appropriate method of survey research from among the multiplicity of them. Before concluding we should also remember that we should select one or more of survey methods that would well serve our research objectives well and fully.

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## **Glossary**

**Longitudinal surveys:** Longitudinal surveys are those surveys that help researchers to make an observation and collect data over an extended period. There are three main types of longitudinal surveys as explained below.

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## GOVERNMENT AND IT'S BUSINESS PROMOTION POLICY

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### Abstract

*An attempt has been made in this paper to focus on the phenomenon of liberalization, its historical context, its distinct features, its socio-economic-politico-cultural manifestations and its impact on the Public Administration and the public at large. Arguing that liberalization is in essence unipolarization of globalization, it tries to posit an alternative vision to the present unipolar globalization. It concludes that, although globalization may be inescapable, unipolarisation of globalization is regressive, reversible and catastrophic.*

### Keywords

Liberalization, Unipolar, Catastrophic, Globalization, Macroeconomic, Free market, Cold War.

### Concepts of Liberalization

Liberalization is a basic concept in classical economics. Physiocrats, the 18<sup>th</sup> century school of French economic thinkers, initially developed the major ideas underlying economic liberalism. A number of moral philosophers and political economists in the late 18<sup>th</sup> to late 19<sup>th</sup> century, like Adam Smith, Robert Malthus and David Ricardo, gave full expression to laissez faire and liberalization later.

Liberalization implies a process of freeing the economy, from various governmental regulations such as industrial licensing, controls on pricing and distribution of products and services, import licensing, foreign exchange regulations, control of capital issues by companies, credit controls, restriction on investment etc., so that the development and operation of the economy is increasingly guided by-freely operating market forces<sup>1</sup>. Thus, liberalization is essentially a process of withdrawal of all direct controls on the economy<sup>2</sup>.

Although liberalization is basically an economic phenomenon, it is grounded in the political ideology of liberalism. It is a political and ideological trend that unites supporters of the bourgeoisie-parliamentary system and votaries of freedom for capitalist enterprise. Some people perceive it is an expression of interests of the industrial bourgeoisie in the period of its struggle for political and economic supremacy<sup>3</sup>. Politically, it manifests itself as the doctrine of laissez faire and extreme individualism. Its basic tenet is the organization of society in a manner as to best serve and protect the pursuit of individual interests, as opposed to the collective interests and majority rule<sup>4</sup>.

Economic liberalization is of two kinds One, macro-liberalization or liberalization at the global level &Two, micro-liberalization or liberalization at the national or sub-national levels. While the first kind of economic liberalization is known as globalization, the second variety of it is know, either as liberalization per se or as the composite of liberalization privatization and globalization.

Thus, liberalization of economy as a whole-both domestic and global-could be more meaningfully termed as liberalization, privatization and globalization, or LPG for short.

### **Historical Context**

Several tumultuous events of the decades of 1980s and 1990s have led to the enthronement of LPG as the dominant force and the ideological anchor of the late 20<sup>th</sup> century. These include: collapse of the Soviet Union, sweeping politico-economic changes in Eastern Europe, end of The Cold War, ascendance of neoliberalism (as manifest in the Reagonomics in USA and Thatcherism in UK), proliferation and expansion of Transnational Corporations (TNCs) and Multinational Corporations (MNCs), the growing clout if IMF and the World Bank, emergence of macro-economics (academically nurtured by the journal “The Economist” of London), emergence of Rightwing political formations as ruling parties in several countries of the world, establishment of WTO, communication and internet revolution, collapse of Third Worldism as a Distinct theory and practice, ascendance of monocultures, decline of counter cultures, erosion of cultural plurality and a host of other. These phenomenal changes of an

unprecedented magnitude have been variously termed as “transition from authoritarian rule” (O'Donnel, Schewetter and Whitehead), “New World Order” (Bush), “The End of History” (Fukayama), “New World Disorder” (Ignatieff), “Clash of Civilization” (Huntington)<sup>5</sup> and as the “Return of the Capitalist Colonialism” (RajiniKothali).

There are two views regarding the historical context of the LPG. While according to one of these views globalization is a development of the last two decades or so, according to the other it is not altogether new phenomenon and that it is as old as the capitalism itself. These contending contextualization's notwithstanding, there is near consensus on the point that the globalization process of today, which got its major impetus with the demise of the Soviet system, has certain features that distinguish it from the earlier forms of globalization and internationalization<sup>7</sup>. One important difference between the order and the newer strains of globalization relates was a kind of bipolar or multipolar globalization the newer one is marked by unipolarity under US the hegemony.

### **Features of LPG**

Amya Kumar Bagchi culled out nine distinct features of LPG as follows: spread of international trade in goods and services; migration of people between countries or regions; exchange of money and means of payment on increasing scale across countries or regions; flow of capital from one country to another to help produce goods and services; flow of finance (not necessarily linked to the production of goods and services) between different countries; emergence of TNCs that were one engaged in the activities listed above; international trade in technology; spread of print and electronic media; and growth in international trade and production of services of all kinds-shipping, insurance, banking, finance and health care<sup>8</sup>.

James Petras characterizes globalization as a phenomenon that has historically been linked to the concentration of capital, wealth and power. Further, globalization involves globalization of nations as well as classes. He also views it as process embedded in a system of hierarchy of power, exchanges and benefits<sup>9</sup>. Thus, globalization is viewed as a phenomenon that generates three types of relations. They are: imperialist directed exchanges with colonial or dependent



nations; inter-imperialist exchanges between non-imperialist nations and classes.

William K. Tabb, taking a positive view of globalization, conceives it as a process of reducing barriers between countries and of encouraging closer economic, political and social interaction which could vastly increase the ability of people everywhere to improve their living standards by sharing knowledge and the fruits of human labour across the barriers<sup>10</sup>.

The characteristics of the late 20<sup>th</sup> century globalization, which is essentially unipolar globalization could be discussed under three categories viz., economic, political and cultural.

### **1. Economic Characteristics**

- a) Far reaching changes in the manufacturing sector including declining importance of raw materials originating from Third World countries and increasing importance of knowledge-based services, as evident from the growing weight age of tertiary sector in the GNP make-up of nations.
- b) Changes in the nature of world trade consequent to growth of financial services. Obliteration of international division of labour of yesteryears with the location of MNC plants near the sources of cheap raw materials and labour markets and emerging international trade between branches and subsidiaries of multinationals. On account of such changes now it is no longer possible to identify the origin of a product by the place of its final manufacture. For example, the Nissan is manufacturing new light trucks which are designed in San Diego, California, assembled in a Ford plant in USA, and marketed by Ford and Nissan in USA and Japan, respectively.
- c) Free mobility of capital across nations to the point, as put by William K. Tabb, “of capital attempting to create the international regime with powers unaccountable to elected governments”. There is thus, the surrender of sovereignty to capital.
- d) Mobility of labour beyond national boundaries. Although the labour mobility is relatively less than the capital mobility, product/service

mobility and mobility of technology, it is nevertheless substantive. For example, 40% of IBM's workforce in 1999 foreigners. The Whirlpool is employing 43,500 workers, mostly non-US, in 45 countries.

- e) The rising tides of deregulation, labour market flexibility, privatization, cuts in social spending, flexible exchange rates, financialization or dominance of short term, speculative concerns are imposing themselves at the expense of long-term choices favouring productive investment (a la Samir Amin).
- f) Subordination of national economic policies to the economic policies of the global players.

## **2. Political Characteristics**

- a) Ever increasing concentration of hegemonic political and military power in the hands of the US.
- b) Weakening of the nation-states on account of neoliberal; policies.
- c) Metamorphosis in the role of the state from that of change or development agent to one of facilitator-state or minimalist state on account of anti-state discourses<sup>11</sup>.
- d) End of the welfare state.
- e) Erosion in the legitimacy of the states, especially in the Third World. The notion-state that was unquestioned ever since the Treaty of Westphalia of 1648, is now being questioned everywhere. Eric Hobsbawm, acclaimed as the greatest living historian of nationalism, has himself celebrated its demise by observing that “it has now become unfashionable to think in terms of nationalism and nation-state”
- f) Extreme instability in political life manifest in unclear political verdicts (US and India being cases in point), hung parliaments and fluidity of political alignments in many nations. Now the centre-stage of politics is occupied not by the state but by a plethora of movements focusing on environmental, ethnic and sub-national issues and issues of social justice.

- g) Emergence of, what Samir Amin calls, 'low intensity democracy'<sup>12</sup> marked by de-politicization of the people of the world through promotion of NGOs of a dubious character.
- h) Emergence of a new ruling class, called as “digirati” or the telegraphic ruling class”, in the low intensity democracy. Kenneth Keniston has sociologically characterized this new ruling class as the one possessing 1) cellular telephones; 2) knowledge of English language; 3) computer literacy; and 4) Internet address and web sites. This new ruling class, constituting as it does, a mere one percent of the world's population, rules over the rest of the world population comprising of the non-English speaking, illiterate, peasant and working masses of the South.
- I Decline of trade unions, marginalization of the Left politics, rise of fundamentalism, downsizing of public bureaucracies, marginalization of employment equity policies are also a few other important features of political life engendered by the LPG enterprise.

## 2. Cultural Characteristics

- a) Co-modification of culture wherein the exchange value of culture has gains an upper hand over its use value. Of late, it seems we are not creating our culture, instead we are buying it. Major share of our culture be it mass culture, popular culture or media culture- is ever increasingly owned and operated by big business corporations whose obsession is profit and control over people rather than development of their creative facilities. As parenti tightly points out, 'much of mass culture is organized to distract us from thinking too much about larger realities'. The growing ascendancy of mass culture is killing people's culture and is propagating, as parenti observes rightly, “images and values that are largely sexist, racist, consumerist, authoritarian, militaristic and imperialistic”.
- b) There are discernable cultural elements and cultural biases in the computer software. A vast majority of the Third World masses are excluded from the use of computers, Internet and the World Wide Web because of poverty and the near total absence of software in their native

languages. As keinston points out, this exclusion of majority raises questions of politics, software and culture. The educational and games software loaded in to PCs being from the US it is culturally specific and is basically designed to transform all its users into “little North-Americans”.

- c) Emergence of new telectronic culture, created, nurtured and propagated by the telectronic ruling class which inspired and dominated by multinational giants like the Disney, Sony, Murdoch, MTV, McDonalds, CNN, Mitsubishi Nike, Philips, Levis, Nestle, Microsoft, Intel, Kellogg, Pepsi Coca-Cola, Kentucky and umpteen other business corporations.
- d) A spurt in free trade in images and information and a corresponding decline in the free trade of tangible objects. There is a growing monopoly of TV news production gained by media giants like the BBC, Robert Murdoch, CNN etc. These channels not only give a western twist to news but they also marginalize coverage of non-western societies. The print media too is not an exception to this.
- e) Massive changes are taking place in the field of education under the impulse of LPG. The social sciences, theoretical natural sciences and humanities disciplines are on the deathbed in the Third World. With the unbridled privatization of education only marketable courses are thriving and socially relevant but non marketable ones are going a begging. Thus, education in general and the higher education in particular are increasingly becoming narrow based with anything other than computer tagged courses having no takers. The recent downturn in the fortunes of the “digirati” and of the software sector does not seem to have come a day soon and this downturn needs scientists in India and other Third World countries are uncritically accepting the new western intellectual agenda embedded in misconceptions such as the 'end of the nation', 'end of the ideology, 'end of planning', 'end of socialism' and end of state sovereignty with supine docility. Paradoxically, the foreign academic funding

agencies have gained free entry into the policy formulation apparatus while the native scholars are largely barred from such an entry. The education of the subaltern classes is greatly harmed due to privatization of education.

- f) Neo-fundamentalism that has emerged as a reaction to the new culture as characterized earlier has been taking many ugly turns. This phenomenon is posing as much of a threat to nationalism and nation-state as does the forces of globalization. The rise of neo-fundamentalism is largely due to neglect of local traditions, practices, values and linguistic identities under the mono-culturing impact of west-centric globalization. The neo-fundamentalists who are thriving under the spell of an imagined, recreated and fantasized past are posing serious threats to the ethnic and cultural minorities and contributing to a certain weakening of the already tenuous national identities in the Third World nations

### **Liberalization and Unipolar Globalization?**

It is evident from the foregoing that liberalization is essentially an offensive of the developed North and its leading light US so as to establish its global hegemony by hoodwinking the under developed South. It is neither ideologically neutral nor culturally neutral phenomenon. It is both ideologically and culturally laden one. Its ideology is the ideology of corporate capitalism. Its culture is West-centric in general and US-centric in particular. Its avowed enterprise are further marginalization of the already marginalized Third World nations and the subaltern classes within all the nations by creating, sustaining and strengthening a unipolar global order under the US hegemony. Thus, liberalization may be better called as unipolar globalization.

### **Liberalization and Public Administration**

Globalization is signaling the end of, what Christopher Hood calls, the progressive era public administration<sup>13</sup> and its metamorphosis into New Public Management (NPM). The new Public Management paradigm stands for a public service less insulated from the private sector and for greater managerial discretion in the

handling of staff and resources<sup>14</sup>. It is also becoming increasingly leaner, less monopolistic, less visible and more homogenous all over the world raising the debatable question whether this unidirectional change is necessarily appropriate to all classes of people and all nations. This homogenization of public administration across the world particularly overlooks the immense variety among nations and in their problems and priorities.

Drawing similarities between the process of colonization pursued by the British in India in the past and the ongoing policies of the US, Noam Chomsky the noted linguist and intellectual in his Recent Delhi School of Economics lecture said that the problem of terrorism could not be seen apart from the kind of globalization taking place in the world today<sup>15</sup>. Globalization is minimizing the space for accommodation of particularistic interests in pluralistic societies at the local or national levels on account of multinationalization of decisional ensembles resulting in recourse to extremism and terrorism to maneuver for the unaccommodated interests. Thus, the emerging unipolar global order is anti-public Administration, anti-public and anti-poor. It is leading to delegitimation and marginalization of Public Administration and the traditions of welfare state. It is accentuating inequalities between and among the nations and classes. Its philosophy is the idolization of market and the denigration of the state. Its mission and goal is the end of democracy by way of centralizing power, resources and authority in the hands of MNCs, TNCs, World Bank, IMF, WTO and the like which are not at all accountable to people. The unipolar global order is engendering authoritarianism in the international arena. It is also unleashing forces that will dehumanize the whole development process all over the World.

### **Alternate Vision**

More important among reasons for such as dehumanization is that the dice of LPG in general and globalization in particular is heavily loaded in favor of the US on account of the unipolar nature of the present globalization process. This becomes clear from the admission of no less a person than Henry Kissinger, one of the most acclaimed US Secretaries of State, who once confessed; "Globalization Is only another name for US domination".

The redemption obviously lies in creating a multipolar global order based on the principles of equity, social justice and above all peace. The greatest obstacle in the path to such a multipolar global order is the pervasive belief that globalization is inexorable and non-negotiable. The advocates of neoliberals vehemently argue that there is no alternative to globalization. Even admitting that there is no alternative to globalization it should be noted that there is not just one kind of globalization but there could be several versions of it viz., bipolar, multipolar and non-polar globalizations in addition to the unipolar one. It should also be noted that what makes globalization particularly inhuman is that while its costs are largely borne by the Third World nations and subaltern classes, its fruits are rather exclusively enjoyed by the First World nations in general and the richer classes in particular.

The need of the hour is the creation of a multipolar global order or at least the resurrection of a multipolar global order or at least the resurrection of the bipolar world order. The argument that there is no alternative to unipolar globalization is against the forces of history. History cannot come to an end one fine morning. The unipolar global order of today is bound to change latter, if not sooner. In fact a number of forces are currently at work laying the seeds of a multipolar global order. The more prominent of them are: the global environment movement; local transnational pressure groups; NGOs; professional and scientific networks of social scientists, ornithologists and demographers; macro-regional and continental agencies; UN conferences whose key participants are representative of the nation-states; the new social movements associated with the 'new politics' of identify that are unleashing anti-systemic forces; the global disarmament movement, et. In addition to the above mentioned civil society forces, the growing tide of international terrorism that had recently shattered the invincibility of the US by destroying symbols of its military and economic might viz., the pentagon and the WTC towers is a powerful pointers to the vulnerability of unipolar global hegemony. The anti-systemic, and anti-unipolar forces, referred to above are already engaged in the task of building a 'global civil society'. Further, today we also find an accentuating trend of regionalization of global politics to establish regional blocks as a collective response to ills of unipolar globalization. The

developments since the terrorist attacks on September 11<sup>th</sup> 2001 in the US are also a pointer to this. The US has now realized its vulnerability and of the need to mop up support of nations-small and big-in tackling the problems of the New World Order as in the case of anti-terrorist tirades. Perceptive analysts have been prognosticating that Russia, China, India and to certain extent Brazil bear the potentialities to engage the systemic forces and to counter the US hegemony. The need of the hour is to nurture the hope for the emergency of a multipolar world order and to strengthen the antisystemic forces noted above. It is equally important to realize that the globalization engendered by liberation is regressive, reversible and catastrophic and therefore it should be either be reversed or redirected to minimize its catastrophic effects.

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# INTRODUCTION TO SOCIAL SCIENCE RESEARCH

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## Abstract

*Research is one of the most important of the human endeavors. Research is a systematic pursuit of new knowledge and a careful and critical examination for seeking facts or principles. It is diligent investigation made in order to ascertain something. Research mainly involves research or repetition of a search. It is a critical and exhaustive investigation or experimentation aimed at revision of accepted conclusions in the light of newly discovered facts. Thus, social research is the process of unraveling the hidden and not so obvious social realities, social facts, general trends or principles through systematic investigation and logical thinking. Its purpose is to extend, correct or verify the knowledge so as to build theory or facilitate practice by finding answers--- intellectual or practical-to the social problems. It is one of the more dependable ways of knowing the past present and future of the society.*

*In this synoptic backdrop we shall try to understand the fundamentals of social science research in terms of its meaning, nature, importance, methods, issues and suggestions for improving its utility in abroad way.*

## Key words

Social sciences, Behavioural sciences, Correlation, Experimental research, Causal-comparative research, Code of conduct, Simulator, Objectivity.

## Introduction

In the world of knowledge a few things are as important as research. Research is one of the most important of the human endeavors. It is variously viewed as a systematic pursuit of new knowledge (Mohsin, 1984)<sup>1</sup>: as a careful and critical examination seeking facts or principle: and as a diligent investigation made in order to ascertain something (Webster's International Dictionary). Research mainly involves research or repetition of a search. It is a critical and exhaustive

investigation or experimentation aimed at revision of accepted conclusions in the light of newly discovered facts (Encyclopedia of Social Sciences). It is the manipulation of concepts or symbols for arriving at generalizations to extend, correct or verify knowledge, whether that knowledge is aimed at construction of theory or practice of an art. It is an endeavor to discover intellectual and practical answers to problems through application of scientific methods to the knowable knowledge. Research is one of the possible ways of knowing or obtaining information, the other ways being expert opinion, logic, opinion of others, sensory experience of self and even intuition (Fraekel&Wallen, 1993; 4). It is any careful, systematic patient study and investigation in some field of knowledge, undertaken to discover or establish facts and principles (Wedster's New World Dictionary of the American Language Research). It is a systematized process of obtaining evidence to discover, support or refute facts or principles.

Thus, social research is the process of unraveling the hidden and not so obvious social realities, social facts, social trends or principles through systematic investigation and logical thinking. Its overall purpose is to extend, correct or verify the knowledge so as to build theory or facilitate practice by finding answers to vexing intellectual and practical social problems. It is one of the more dependable ways of knowing the past present and future of the society. Social science research is thus the activity of gathering, analysing and interpreting information for a variety of social, economic, educational and political purposes. Social science research is used to investigate human behavior and relationships. Some common fields of social science research include education, sociology, anthropology, criminology, and psychology.

### **Salience of Social Research**

S. C. Dube lists out six possible uses of social science research for the national development (Dube ,1983; 5). They are:

1. Throwing up valuable background data from which the planners can make their own assessment of the prevailing situation in terms of its magnitude, complexity and ramifications.

2. Helping in testing validity of the assumptions made by the planners in setting their objectives.
3. Carrying out carefully designed analytical studies to illuminate critical areas of policy. Research helps policy makers to have foresight required for effectively tackling problems which are sought to be resolved by the governmental action.
4. Enabling planners to estimate the possible consequences and costs of the different choices available to realize goals underlying the plans. Thus it helps effective implementation of plans.
5. Widely disseminating social science research findings to increase general awareness in respect of the situation to be met as well as the policy to be designed for this purpose. Such dissemination enhances credibility of particular policies by educating the people about their usefulness. It may also help build up popular pressure for reformulation or termination of anti-people policies.
6. Lastly, research studies of diagnostics nature help in determining where and why particular projects go wrong by highlighting their unintended results.

All the above possibilities, it should be remembered become real only when the research is of a proper quality, it is focused on felt needs of society and the planners and policy makers are scientific in their approach and responsive to research findings. Further, social research also assumes importance on account of the complex nature of human behavior, which is the fulcrum around which the social science research revolves.

### **Complexity of human behaviour**

Goode and Hatt have advance four proposition regarding the infinitely variable, unique and the hard-to-measure nature of the human behavior (Goode &Hatt, 1981;2)thus:

- a. Human behavior changes too much from time to time to permit exact scientific predictions,

- b. Human behavior is too elusive, subtle and complex to yield to the rigid categorizations and artificial instruments of science,
- c. Human behavior can be only studied by fellow human observers who may distort the facts being observed on account of their prejudices and predilections,
- d. Human beings have the ability to upset any predictions made about their behavior.

This complexity of human behavior notwithstanding, the methods and techniques of social science research are being increasingly and beneficially being employed in fields as diverse as population census, budget making, sample surveys, slum clearance, economic surveys, election forecasts, plan formulation and plan evaluation. They are widely used in business organizations, university departments, research organizations, higher educational institutions and management consultancies. The keen interest shown by politicians and citizens alike in pre-election and exit poll survey results is an indication of importance of social research.

Broadly speaking, social research can serve the following specific purposes;

1. Clear perception of social problems including their manifold ramifications
2. Discovery of social facts and their logical interpretation.
3. Systematization of existing body of knowledge
4. Measurement and quantification of social reality
5. Establishing the cause and effect relationship between social events and social Phenomena
6. Fighting superstitions and unfounded beliefs by exploding myths so as to enhance rationality in society.
7. Proper planning and policymaking.
8. Prediction of the future state of affairs.

## Types of Research Data

Research data may be grouped into four main types based on methods followed for their collection: They are: observational data, experimental data, simulation data and derived data. The type of research data you collect may affect the way you manage that data. For example, data that is hard or impossible to replace (e.g. the recording of an event at a specific time and place) requires extra backup procedures to reduce the risk of data loss. Or, if you will need to combine data points from different sources, you will need to follow best practices to prevent data corruption.

**Observational Data:** Observational data are captured through observation of a behavior or activity. It is collected using methods such as human observation, open-ended surveys, or the use of an instrument or sensor to monitor and record information -- such as the use of sensors to observe noise levels at the Mpls/St Paul airport. Because observational data are captured in real time, it would be very difficult or impossible to re-create if lost.

**Experimental Data:** Experimental data are collected through active intervention by the researcher to produce and measure change or to create difference when a variable is altered. Experimental data typically allows the researcher to determine a causal relationship and is typically projectable to a larger population. This type of data are often reproducible, but it often can be expensive to do so.

**Simulation Data:** Simulation data are generated by imitating the operation of a real-world process or system over time using computer test models. For example, to predict weather conditions, economic models, chemical reactions, or seismic activity. This method is used to try to determine what would, or could, happen under certain conditions. The test model used is often as, or even more, important than the data generated from the simulation.

**Derived / Compiled Data:** Derived data involves using existing data points, often from different data sources, to create new data through some sort of transformation, such as an arithmetic formula aggregation. For example, combining area and population data from the twin cities metro area to create population density data. While this type of data can usually be replaced if lost, it may be very time-

consuming (and possibly expensive) to do so.

### **Techniques and methods of social research**

Research is a scientific endeavor which will be fruitful only when it is methodically carried out. Scientific method therefore is the soul of research. Scientific method here refers to a mode of investigation whereby scientific and systematic data is obtained. It is based on the following seven premises. They are:

1. Reliance on empirical
2. Evidence
3. Use of relevant concepts
4. Commitment to objectivity
5. Ethical neutrality
6. Generality
7. Public methodology and
8. Prediction based on probability.

Thus, scientific method is a systematized way of knowing reality based on tangible evidence collected by unbiased persons, employing public or open methodologies. Scientific method is not a monolith. It is a conglomerate of a number of individual methods of whom the following six are important. They are (Frankel & Wallen, 1993; 8-11):

- 1) Experimental research,
- 2) Correlation research,
- 3) Survey research,
- 4) Causal-comparative research,
- 5) Qualitative research and
- 6) Historical research

**1. Experimental research:** Experimental research, which involves manipulating conditions and studying effects, is the most conclusive as well scientific of these

methods. The researcher here establishes different treatments and then studies their effects. Results of this type of research lead to most clear cut interpretations. For example, we can compare the effect of different teaching methods, such as lecture method, assignment method and discussion method on student achievement by testing the methods on identical sets of students for ascertaining their relative effectiveness. However, despite its great utility all social problems cannot be studied through experimental methods.

**2. Correlation research:** Correlation research seeks to determine whether or not relationship of some sort exist among two or more variables. It can further tell us to what is the nature of the relation between two or more variables. It can further tell us to what is the nature of the relation between two or more variables. It is also employed for studying relationship among variables within a single group.

**3. Survey research:** Survey research obtains data to determine specific characteristics of a group on the basis of field study using instruments such as questionnaires, interview schedules and informal discussions. It is a widely employed method in social sciences.

**4. Causal-comparative research:** Causal-comparative research is intended to determine the cause for or the consequences of differences between groups of people. This type of research is helpful in identifying possible cause of observed variations in the behavior patterns of two or more groups of people.

**5. Qualitative research:** Qualitative research emphasizes on the qualitative dimension of the subject matter than on the quantity. It is concerned with a holistic picture of what goes on in a particular situation. It also lends itself well to a detailed study of one or a few individuals. Three of the most studies and content analysis.

**6. Historical research:** In historical research some aspect of the past is studied either by perusing artifacts or documents of the period or by interviewing individuals who lived during that time. After this an attempt is made to reconstruct what happened during the time under reference and to explain as to why it is happen the way it happened. A major problem in historical research is availability of documentary sources or resources people of the relevant time and the authenticity



of the information gathered from such sources.

It may be noted that each of the above mentioned research methodologies are useful for conducting research of some kind or the other in social sciences. Each of these constitutes a distinct way of inquiring into the social realities in different fields of sciences. Each of these constitutes a distinct way of inquiring into the social realities. Each represents a unique tool for understanding. Hence, there is nothing like one method being superior to the other. The effectiveness of a particular methodology, in large part, depends on nature of research question one takes up, the context within which research takes place and the ability and background of the researcher. Further, we need to gain insights into what goes on in the social realm in our society, polity, economy, culture, etc., from as many methods as possible. The social science researchers, in fact, should raise a variety of meaningful questions, they should move in a variety of directions, employ a variety of methodologies and use a variety of tools. However, the researcher should be capable of judging suitability of particular methodologies, tools and concepts to his particular research problem. This capability increases with research experience and interdisciplinary exposure.

### **Problems in Social Science Research**

Researches make a number of unwarranted assumption about the nature of the world in which we live. Critical researchers raise a number of issues---philosophic, linguistic, ethical and political – about research, based on the fallacy of these assumptions. Researchers need to understand these issues so as to make their own research works meaningful and relevant. The issues raised by critical researchers are mainly four and they are; 1) the question of reality 2) the question of communication 3) the question of values and 4) the question of societal consequences (Fraenkel&Wallen, 1993; 13-15).

**Issue of Reality:** There are many problems in demonstrating and establishing whether anything “really exists”. Different researches may describe the same action, event or individual quite differently leading critics to assert that there is no such thing as reality but there are only individual perceptions of it. Although it is true that there is no such thing as ultimate reality we cannot once for all “prove” anything,

and we cannot brush aside the fact of perceptual differences. It should however be remembered that the common sense notion of reality or what most people agree as reality, has enabled mankind to solve many vexed question such as finding cures for dreaded diseases, in blooming stone dry deserts, and even in putting a man on the moon.

**Issue of communication:** The critical researchers argue that even if something called a reality does indeed exist there are problems in conveying that reality faithfully and accurately. Sometimes the words that we use to convey the “reality” do not convey the same meaning to all people in all cultural contexts times and spaces. For instance, in cold countries “warm heartedness” is taken as a positive quality complement but in tropical countries like ours the contrary trait of “cold heartedness”, is considered a positive quality. As it is said “ one person's is not a shoe for certain others. Thus, impreciseness of language is a contentious issue in social science research. The issue becomes very critical, particularly when there are cross-cultural transfers or applications f research findings as also in situations wherein researchers or applications of research findings as also in situations wherein researchers are poor in their use of language or they are unaware of the various nuances of words that they use.

**Question of objectivity and values:** The goal of scientific investigation is said to be objective knowledge which is free of bias or prejudice. Therefore, researcher needs to be 'objective' and value-free in the pursuit of his research. Critics however argue that what is studied in social science is never objective but rather socially constructed. There are two views here, some holding that objectivity is possible, others not. Researchers being themselves products of a society they are conditioned by its socio-economic, political temporal and cultural context. Further, all researchers are not equally sensitive to all social phenomena. Their value bases and biases are reflected in the choice of the problems so chosen, in weighing conflicting kinds of evidence and in arriving at inferences. Further, the main stream social science research in India, as elsewhere, is dominated, by Eurocentric ideas or values such as “modernity” and Aristotelian notion of the 'rational man' thereby injecting an ethnocentric bias into research culture.

Five kinds of arguments are advanced for social science not being objective and they are: (1) Researcher's judgments are colored by his or her own experiences.(2) All propositions that a researcher makes are limited in their meaning to particular language contexts. (3) All social science theories are produced by and limited to particular social groups. Sociological investigations into the structure and nature of knowledge have revealed that knowledge is a function of social location. (4) All observations are necessarily theory laden. (5) Like all members of society, the researchers have their values and they are unconsciously influenced by them.

While it is seldom possible to be absolutely objective in understating a social reality it would be wrong to altogether discount the relevance of research on this score. What is needed is a concern for objectivity, cognition of existing limits to objectivity and exploration of suitable means to enhance objectivity in research. There are three important ways in which objectivity could be enhanced. First is the cultural construction of reality which is findings. Second is the value-explication or the researcher revealing his value make-up so that consumers of research are helped in disembedding the biases that may have crept into the research process. Third is the researcher being self-conscious of the likely impact of his values on his research effort and making determined efforts to check such value-impingement.

**Issue of Societal consequences:** The critical theorists argue that the research efforts serve the dominant political interests that generally tend to be conservative or oppressive. It is also pointed out by them that social research is incremental as it mostly focuses on improving existing things than on raising fundamental questions. Further, there are also studies which may have negative impact on society. One may cite any number of cases of research sponsored by industrial lobbies that abuse minds of people about the beneficial effects of drinking, smoking or other addictive habits that are generally known to be harmful. Then there are also ethical considerations in undertaking particular research themes and in asking for or not asking for certain items of information.

### **Ethics in research**

Research is a very important social process with a potentially significant impact on society. This impact however could be positive or negative. The negative potential

of research could be moderated by a code of conduct to regulate the work and behaviour of researchers. The following need to be components of such a code of conduct for researchers in general and social scientists in particular.

1. Protecting participants or subjects of research from physical and psychological harm should be the concern of every researcher. Any research that can cause serious harm or discomfort to any participant should not be conducted unless it is extremely beneficial to mankind. Further, the researcher is supposed to obtain consent of the individuals who may be exposed to certain problems on account of research.
2. Ensuring confidentiality of research data is the second important thing. Certain kinds of data are very sensitive, explosive or harmful to the person or the institution that passes it on to the researcher. Such data should therefore be kept in absolute confidence. Care should be taken to erase all possibilities of identifying the particular respondent or source from the data sheet, if the need be.
3. Not deceiving subjects and if that cannot be helped non-harmful deception may be resorted to.
4. Researcher treatments of his subjects, collaborators, assistants, students, and employees should be marked by ethical considerations.
5. The researcher should respect the individual's freedom to decline participation in research.
6. In planning a study, the investigator has the responsibility to make careful evaluation of its ethical acceptability.
7. The researcher should acknowledge the academic help received from others.
8. The methodology of research should be made public through replication for facilitation further research.
9. Researcher must have a commitment to truth.

### **Qualities of Good Researcher**

Sir Michael Foster has listed some general qualities of a good scientist and they

squarely apply to social scientists. He identified three main qualities of a true scientist as under:

1. Above all other things, the researcher's nature must be such that it vibrates in unison with that which he is in search; the seeker after truth must himself be truthful with truthfulness of nature, which is far more imperious, far more exacting than that which man sometimes calls truthfulness. This quality calls for accuracy of observation and precision of statement.
2. He must be of alert mind. As Foster says “nature is ever making sign to us, she is ever whispering to us the beginning of secrets”. Therefore, the researcher should be vigilant, watchful and alert to pick up all signals about the nature of social reality.
3. Scientific-enquiry, though permanently an intellectual effort, needs moral quality of courage. The researcher needs perseverance, doggedness and supreme courage of conviction to face the consequence of social disapproval when handling controversial themes which are likely to upset the vested interests.

Following Aldous Huxley a fourth quality may be added to the Foster's list thus: the assertion that outstrips the evidence is not only a blunder but a crime and therefore unwarranted assertions are to be avoided. The fourth quality exhorts cautiousness of statement or avoidance of fluent generalizations from inadequate and untested evidence. Cautiousness, in fact, then is the essence of science and as W.K.Brooks says “the hardest intellectual virtue is philosophic doubt. Suspended judgment is the triumph of intellectual discipline” (Wilkinson & Bandarker).

## **Conclusion**

Research is methodical, logical and critical investigation of a phenomenon so as to discover intellectual or practical answers to problems. Research in the field of social science serves many purposes such as policy formulation, developmental planning, predicting and solving social problems, and understanding the social reality. However, social research is constrained by several problems such as

tendency for subjectivity in research, complexity and unpredictability of the human nature which is the object of social research, insufficiency of data, poor funding position value biases of researchers, limits to objectivity, argumentation on the very nature of reality etc. These various problems are pointers to the need for paying increased rather than reduced attention to social science research which clearly, is a tool not only for understanding the social reality but more importantly for improving it.

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## **PUBLIC POLICY AND PUBLIC ADMINISTRATION**

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### **Abstract**

*A lot of people these days talk about public policy. The context in which public policy figures may vary. It may be in conversations surrounding politics, climate change, health, or other topics. However, we never ever really stopped and asked what is it and why it matters? Even if we do not consider ourselves politically involved, public policy is not something that should be overlooked or dismissed. In fact, public policy plays a big role in your own day-to-day life. Therefore this article explains the meaning, importance and methods available for the study of public policies that make or mar our lives.*

### **Key words**

Public policy, Policy sciences, Policy analysis, policy legitimating, Policy evaluation, elite-mass model

### **Introduction**

A lot of people these days talk about public policy. The context in which public policy figures may vary. It may be in conversations surrounding politics, climate change, health, or other topics. However, we never ever really stopped and asked what is it and why it matters? Even if we do not consider ourselves politically involved, public policy is not something that should be overlooked or dismissed. In fact, public policy plays a big role in your own day-to-day life. Public administration is a subject in which public policy figures prominently. Some writers define public administration as a systematic and methodical implementation of public policies. Thus, the scope of public administration is coextensive with public policies. Public policy may even be viewed as a branch of public administration.

### **Meaning of Public policy**

Before we get into more details about explaining public policy and how it works, it

is important for us to define the terms policy and public policy to have a clear understanding of it. Policy refers to a course of action proposed by an organization or individual. Public policies, on the other hand, is the proposed course of action of the government, central, state or local.

Public policy is variously defined. Some would define it as a system of laws, regulatory measures, courses of action, and funding priorities concerning a given topic promulgated by a governmental entity or its representatives. Some define it as the intended or unintended course of action that is broadly followed by a government to fulfill its objectives. It is also defined as the way the government relates itself to its environment. Further, according to some it is process of as the authoritative allocation of values and resources in a society. Public policies include laws, rules, regulations, judgments, case studies, government programs, etc.

Public policy is the means by which a government maintains order or addresses the needs of its citizens through actions defined by its constitution. Public policy is generally not a tangible thing. It is rather a term used to describe a collection of laws, mandates, or regulations established through a political process.

Essentially, public policy is a set of laws, guidelines, and actions decided and taken by governments in order to work in favour of the public. Public policy can dictate things such as: which laws are passed, where funding goes, and which topics concern the general public.

However, public policy is not simply fulfilling election campaign promises. Often, policies are debated and negotiated between parties with different interests, and can also involve parties that aren't in the government themselves, such as experts in fields like science, health, or the climate. In general, public policies are shaped over a number of years and there are several institutions that will contribute to the formation and details of a specific policy.

Public policy is there to influence how other important decisions are made, and it's usually formed as a response to a specific issue that is of interest to the public. Public policy is supposed to offer some sort of solution to a problem. For example, legalizing same-sex marriage is meant to respond to the issue that all members of a society should be treated equally, so implementing this policy does good for the public overall.



There are three important features of public policy. They are: firstly they are goal oriented. In essence, they are directed at attainment of certain goals or objectives. Secondly, they are viewed as the response of a political system to the challenges and problems arising from the environment. Thirdly, they are usually formulated by government or some other paramount authorities.

### **Types of public policies**

According to the three-fold public policy typology the three types of public policies are regulatory policies, restrictive policies, and facilitating policies.

**Regulatory Policy:** Regulatory policies limit industries, corporations, and businesses and mainly influence the private sector. However, social policies such as health policies can be also be included in this category. These policies are mandates that either put requirements or limits to an industry. For example, a regulatory policy might mandate maximum carbon emissions produced by new automotive models. An example of a regulatory policy is the Environmental Protection Act, which regulates greenhouse gas emissions and affects the automotive industry. Monetary policy is also an example of a restrictive policy, as it puts limitations on the banking and finance industries' opportunity to use its money supply. Finally, the Homeland Security Act of 2002 is an example of a facilitating policy. It created a new federal agency and required the cooperation of federal and state departments and agencies. Regulatory requirements are necessary because they protect consumers and the environment. For example, the Clean Air Act resulted in a significant decrease in elevated lead levels in blood in children in the United States, dropping from 88% to 4% between 1970 and 1995, according to the U.S. Centres for Disease Control and Prevention.

**Restrictive Policy:** A restrictive policy can include a policy about making a specific action illegal and are followed by criminal penalties. There are two types of restrictive policies, economic and public. They are economic and public restrictions. Economic restrictions are restrictive policies that economically impact a sector, including a specific business or individual. Examples include tariffs, embargos, intellectual properties, and trademarks. Tariffs occur when a country imposes a tax on particular goods or services imported by another country. An embargo is when a country ban trading and any commercial activity with a specific

country. The federal government protects intellectual property and trademark on behalf of the artist, creator, inventor, or owner. Consumers are protected, as it is illegal to sell in genuine or unauthentic products. Public restrictions are another type of restrictive policy; they impose limitations on individuals. For example, local governments limit alcohol purchasing after certain times and on certain days by restricting convenience stores from selling alcohol to consumers at those times. A citation, revoke of the alcohol selling license, or cease of business operations can be the punitive charge for not complying. Another example of limiting alcohol consumption is the legal drinking age; the National Minimum Drinking Age Act of 1984 made the national minimum legal drinking age 21 years old. If a business violates the law, it can lose its alcohol selling license.

During the COVID-19 pandemic, specific measures were put into place, which limited the public's behaviour and actions. Some examples are the use of masks, the need to quarantine if diagnosed or when COVID-19 symptoms are shown, social distancing in public areas, and closing of businesses and closure of public facilities.

**Facilitating Policy:** Facilitating policies promotes cooperation and engagement between or among governmental agencies, including governmental levels such as federal and state, state and local, or a mix between the three levels. For example, the Homeland Security Act of 2002 created the U.S. Department of Homeland Security. In addition, it required the collaboration of all intelligence agencies such as the Federal Bureau of Investigation, Central Intelligence Agency, Department of Defence, Department of State, Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA), Transportation Security Administration (TSA,) and others.

Public policies are also classified differently. American political scientist Theodore J. Lowi proposed four types of public policies in his article "Four Systems of Policy, Politics and Choice". They are distributive, redistributive, regulatory and constituent. According to another classification they are basically of three types – restrictive, regulatory and facilitating policies.

In the United States, for example, there have been recent changes to the health care system that now require every citizen to have health insurance. After a series of debates, evaluations, and analysis, the federal government arrived at the conclusion that this would be in the best interest of citizens and began crafting bills, insurance

mandates, and other pieces of legislation to establish a system for how Americans receive health care treatment. Through this legal and political process, they have created a new public policy, which contains several different parts in order for it to serve its purpose.

If you're a visual learner, imagine a jigsaw puzzle that contains 250 pieces. Now pretend that each of those 250 puzzle pieces represents a law, Congressional act, or federal mandate related to health care in the United States. When you put all the pieces together properly, you arrive at your complete picture, which, in the case of this metaphor, would be the public policy.

Because public policies are in place to address the needs of people, they are often broken down into different categories as they relate to society. Looking at some examples of these categories should give you an idea of how public policy fits into each area of society.

### **Challenging Public Policy**

As a collection of laws and rules used to manage a society, public policy can often be controversial or passionately debated. Depending on a person's perspective or point of view, public policy can seem unfair, oppressive, or even inhumane.

In underrepresented populations, it is not uncommon for people to challenge public policies that they feel restrict or marginalize themselves and others. For example, policies around women's reproductive rights, marriage equality, and poverty have all been criticized over the last several decades because many believe that they do not represent all citizens or privilege one group over another.

### **Approaches to the study of public policy**

There are various approaches or models to study public policy and they are as follows:

- a. Institutional model/institutionalism
- b. Elitism/ elite-mass model
- c. Group/interest group/pressure group model
- d. Incrementalism

- e. Rational choice model
- f. Marxist model
- g. Systems theory

**a. Institutional model**

It assumes that public policies are products and by-products of public institutions. Public policies have the following features:

1. They are focuses on the traditional organization of government. Describes the duties and arrangements of bureaus and departments. Considers constitutional provisions, administrative, legal/ judicial decisions as the basis of PPS.
2. They focus on formal arrangements such as federalism, executive reorganizations, presidential commission, etc.
3. Traditionally PS and PA scholars have studied government institutions—Parliament, Executive, PM, judiciary/courts, political parties, etc.--that authoritatively determine, implement, and enforce public policy.
4. According to it, strictly speaking, a policy is not a public policy until it is adopted, implemented and enforced by some governmental institution.
5. Government lends legitimacy to policies, they are then legal
6. Government is the chief source of policy.
7. Government extends policies universally to cover all people in society
8. Government monopolizes the power to coerce obedience to policy, or to sanction violators.

**Limitations:**

1. Traditional studies using the institutional approach focused on institutional structures, organization, duties and function, without investigating their impact on public policy.
2. There are powerful informal and non-governmental institutions and individuals who may have a crucial role in policy making

3. By itself it cannot guarantee a valid understanding of the public policies but can be used as one of the inputs

### **Neo-institutionalism model.**

1. Attempts to categorize public policies into 4 areas by the probability of government coercion--immediate or remote--and the object of government coercion--individual or systemic.
2. The concern in this type of analysis is to relate these types of policy to the different branches of government and the behaviours associated with each policy area.

### **b. Elite-mass model**

This theory views PPS as value preferences of governing elite and masses do not make

Policies. Further:

It is also called elitism/elitist model

1. According to it the society is divided into powerful few/ elite(s) and powerless masses. The mass is apathetic and ill-informed; mass sentiments are manipulated by the elite; the mass has only an indirect influence on decisions and policy.
2. Elites share values that are different from masses. The elites who are few are not typical of the mass; elites are drawn disproportionately from the upper strata
3. Elites have higher income, more education, and higher status than the mass
4. A policy-making elite is active and it acts in an environment characterized by apathy towards masses and information distortion, to govern the masses who are largely passive. Active elites are subject to little influence from apathetic masses.

Public policies flow downward from the elites to the masses. As communication flows only downward, democratic popular elections are symbolic in that they tie the mass to the system through a political party and occasional voting.

1. The prevailing public policies reflect elite values, which are generally status quo- All elites agree on basics of a social system and the need for preservation of existing values, i.e., private property, limited government, and individual liberty.
2. Policies may change incrementally but the elites are conservative and won't change the basic system. Only policy alternatives that fall within the range of elite value consensus will be given serious consideration
3. The elites shape mass opinion more than vice versa. Public officials and administrators merely carry out policies decided on by the elite, which flows 'down' to the mass.
4. There is continuous movement of non-elites into elite positions, but only after they accept elite values, in order to maintain stability and avoid revolution.
5. Changes in public policy will be incremental rather than revolutionary, reflecting changes in elite values (not mass demands).
6. Responsibility for the state of things rests with the elites, including the welfare of the mass.
7. Competition among governing elites centres around a narrow range of issues, and elites agree more than they disagree; there is always agreement on constitutional government, democratic procedures, majority rule, freedom of speech and of the press, freedom to form political parties and run for office, equality of opportunity, private property, individual initiative and reward, and the legitimacy of free enterprise and capitalism. The masses cannot be relied on to support these values consistently, thus the elite must support them.

### **Pressure group model**

Interaction among groups is the central fact of politics. Groups comprise of individuals with common interests banding together to press their demands (formal or informally) on government. It is also called equilibrium theory, as in physics. Influence is determined by numbers, wealth, and organizational strength, leadership, access to decision makers and internal cohesion.

1. It assumes that public policy results from a system of forces and pressures of groups acting upon and reacting to one another.
2. Groups usually focus on the legislature, but the executive is also pressured by interest groups.
3. Agencies may be captured by the groups they are meant to regulate, and administrators become increasingly unable to distinguish between policies that will benefit the general public and policies that will benefit the groups being regulated.
4. Individuals are important in politics only when they act as part of or on behalf of group interests. The group is the bridge between the individual and the government.
5. It further assumes that the task of the political system is to: 1) establish the rules of the game, 2) arrange compromises and balance interests, 3) enact compromises in public policy, and 4) enforce these compromises
6. There is overlapping group membership which keeps groups from moving too far out of the political mainstream
7. Policy makers respond to group pressure by bargaining, negotiating, and compromising among competing demands. Executives, legislators, and agency heads all put together coalitions from their consistencies to push programs through.
8. Political parties are coalitions of groups. In the US context Democrats have traditionally been central city, labour, ethnics/immigrants, the poor, Catholics, liberals, intellectuals, blacks, and Southern blue collar workers. Republicans have been wealthy, rural, small town, whites, suburbanites, white collar workers, conservatives, and middle class.
9. This policy is formed as a result of forces and pressures from influential groups. Pressure groups are informally co-opted into the policy making process. Regulatory agencies are captured by those they are supposed to regulate. No one group is dominant all the time

on all issues. The group is the bridge between the individual and the administration. The executive is thus pressured by interest groups.

10. The task of the system is to:

Establish the rules of the game

Arrange compromises and balance interests

Enact compromises in policy

Enforce these compromises.

### **Systems model/ theory**

This theory relies on information theory concepts such as input, output, and feedback. Public policy is viewed here as the response of the political system to forces brought to bear on it from the outside environment.

1. It sees the policy process as cyclical.
2. It asks, "What are the significant variables and patterns in the public policy-making system?" What goes on within the 'black box' of conversion of demands into public policy? What are the inputs and outputs?
3. The environment surrounds the political system. In this model, "environment" means physical: natural resources, climate, topography; demographic: population size, age, and distribution, and location; political: ideology, culture, social structure, economy, and technology.
4. Forces enter the political system from the environment either as demands or as support.
5. Demands are brought to it by persons or groups in response to real or perceived environmental conditions, for government action.
6. Support is given wherever citizens obey laws, vote, pay taxes, etc., and conform to public policies.
7. The political system is a group of interrelated structures and processes that can authoritative allocate resources for a society. The actors are the legislature, the executive, the administrative agencies, the courts, interest groups, political parties, and citizens.



8. Outputs are decisions and actions and public policy.
9. The political system is an identifiable system of institutions and processes that transform inputs into outputs for the whole society.
10. The elements with the system are interrelated and it can respond to forces in the environment, and it seeks to preserve itself in balance with the environment. The system preserves itself by producing reasonably satisfactory outputs (compromises are arranged, enacted and enforced). It relies on deep rooted support for the system itself and its use, or threat of use, of force.

It asks questions such as:

- 1) What are the significant characteristics of the environment that generate demands?
- 2) What are the significant characteristics of the political system that enable it to endure over time and turn demands into output?
- 3) How do environmental inputs affect the political system?
- 4) How do characteristics of the political system affect public policy?
- 5) How do environmental characteristics affect public policy?
- 6) How does public policy through feedback, affect the environment and the political system itself?

### **Incrementalism/ Incremental model**

An incremental policy model relies on features of incremental decision-making such as: satisfying, organizational drift, bounded rationality, and limited cognition, among others. Such policies are often called "muddling through" & represent a conservative tendency: new policies are only slightly different from old policies. Policy-makers are too short on time, resources, and brains to make totally new policies; as such, past policies are accepted as having some legitimacy. When existing policies have sunk costs which discourage innovation, incrementalism is an easier approach than rationalism, and the policies are more politically expedient because they don't necessitate any

radical redistribution of values. Such models necessarily struggle to, improve the acceptability of public policy.

Criticisms of such a policy approach include: challenges to bargaining (i.e. not successful with limited resources), downplaying useful quantitative information, obscuring real relationships between political entities, an anti-intellectual approach to problems (i.e. the preclusion of imagination), and a bias towards conservatism (i.e. bias against far-reaching solutions).

### **Streams and windows model**

This model posits three streams (problem stream, political stream and policy streams) which are always simultaneously ongoing. When the three streams converge, a policy window opens, and a new policy may emerge.

**The problem stream** focuses the public's and policy-makers' attention on a particular problem, defines the problem, and calls for a new policy approach (or else the problem fades). Attention comes through monitoring data, the occurrence of focusing events, and feedback on existing policies, through oversight studies so program evaluation. Categorization of the problem is important in determining how the problem is approached and/or resolved: values, comparisons, and categories.

**The political stream** is where the government agenda is formed: the list of issues or problems to be resolved by government. This occurs as the result of the interaction of major forces such as the national mood, organized interests, and dynamics of public administration (jurisdictional disputes among agencies, the makeup of government personnel, etc. The players are often quite visible, as members of the administration, appointees and staff, legislature, media, interest groups, those associated with elections, parties and campaigns, and public opinion. A consensus is achieved among those groups and a bandwagon effect or title effect occurs as everyone wants to be in on the policy resolution and not excluded.

**The policy stream** is where alternatives are considered and decisions are made. Here the major focus is intellectual and personal; a list of alternatives is generated from which policy makers can select one. Policy entrepreneurs and other play a

role, such as academics, researchers, consultants, career public administrators, Congressional staffers, OMB staff, and interest groups. Trial balloons are sent up to gauge the political feasibility of various alternatives, either publicly or privately. They must be acceptable in terms of value constraints, technical constraints, and budgetary constraints. Consensus is developed through rational argument and persuasion (not bargaining). Tilt occurs when a plausible solution begins to emerge.

**When these three streams converge, a policy window may open**, because of a shift in public opinion, a change in Congress, or a change in administration, or when a pressing problem emerges. Any one stream may change or by its own, but all three must converge for a policy decision to emerge.

### **What types of policies may emerge?**

1. **Incremental Policy Output:** This model relies on the concepts of incremental decision-making such as satisfying, organizational drift, bounded rationality, and limited cognition, among others. Basically can be called "muddling through." It represents a conservative tendency: new policies are only slightly different from old policies. Policy-makers are too short on time, resources and brains to make totally new policies; past policies are accepted as having some legitimacy. Existing policies have sunk costs which discourage innovation, incrementalism is an easier approach than rationalism, and the policies are more politically expedient because they don't necessitate any radical redistribution of values. This model tries to improve the acceptability of public policy.
2. **Deficiencies of Incrementalism:** Bargaining is not successful with limited resources. Can downplay useful quantitative information. Obscures real relationship being political skills. Anti-intellectual approach to problems; no imagination. Conservative; biased-against far-reaching solutions.

### **Policy process model**

Policy creation is a process that typically follows a sequence of steps or stages:

Identification of a problem (also called "problem definition") and demand for government action. Different stakeholders may define the same issue as

different problems. For example, if homeless people are using illegal drugs such as heroin in a city park, some stakeholders may define this as a law enforcement issue (which, in their view, could be best solved if police presence in the park is stepped up and if the individuals using illegal drugs are arrested and punished); on the other hand, other stakeholders may view this as a poverty and public health issue (which, in their view, could be best solved if public health nurses and government medical doctors and substance abuse counsellors were sent to the park to do outreach with the drug-using individuals, and encourage them to voluntarily enter "detoxification" or rehabilitation programs).

#### Agenda setting

Formulation of policy proposals by various parties (e.g., citizen groups, congressional committees, think tanks, interest groups, lobby groups, non-governmental organizations).

Policy selection/adoption and legal enactment of a selected policy by elected officials and/or houses of representatives. At this stage, policy legitimating is conferred upon the selected policy solution(s).

Policy implementation, which involves civil servants putting the selected policy option into practice. Depending on the choice made by the executive or legislative branch, this could involve creating new regulation (or removing existing regulations), creating new laws, creating a new government program or service, creating a new subsidy or grant, etc.

Policy evaluation. After the policy has been in place for a year or several years, civil servants or an independent consulting firm assesses the policy, to see if the goals were achieved, if the policy was implemented effectively, etc.

This model, however, has been criticized for being overly linear and simplistic.[14] In reality, stages of the policy process may overlap or never happen. Also, this model fails to take into account the multiple factors attempting to influence the process itself as well as each other, and the complexity this entails.

## **Rational/Rational choice model**

The rational model of decision-making is a process for making sound decisions in policy-making in the public sector. Rationality is defined as “a style of behaviour that is appropriate to the achievement of given goals, within the limits imposed by given conditions and constraints”. [15] It is important to note the model makes a series of assumptions, such as: 'The model must be applied in a system that is stable'; 'The government is a rational and unitary actor and that its actions are perceived as rational choices'; 'The policy problem is unambiguous'; 'There are no limitations of time or cost'.

Furthermore, in the context of the public sector policy models are intended to achieve maximum social gain. Simon identifies an outline of a step by step mode of analysis to achieve rational decisions. Ian Thomas describes Simon's steps as follows:

1. Intelligence gathering - A comprehensive organization of data; potential problems and opportunities are identified, collected and analyzed.
2. Identifying problems — Accounting for relevant factors.
3. Assessing the consequences of all options — Listing possible consequences and alternatives that could resolve the problem and ranking the probability that each potential factor could materialize in order to give a correct priority to said factor in the analysis.
4. Relating consequences to values — With all policies there will be a set of relevant dimensional values (for example, economic feasibility and environmental protection) and a set of criteria for appropriateness, against which performance (or consequences) of each option being responsive can be judged.
5. Choosing the preferred option — the policy is brought through from fully understanding the problems, opportunities, all the consequences & the criteria of the tentative options and by selecting an optimal alternative with consensus of involved actors. [16]

The model of rational decision-making has also proven to be very useful to several decision making processes in industries outside the public sphere. Nonetheless, there are some who criticize the rational model due to the major problems which can be faced & which tend to arise in practice because social and environmental values can be difficult to quantify and forge consensus around.[17] Furthermore, the assumptions stated by Simon are never fully valid in a real world context.

Further criticism of the rational model include: leaving a gap between planning and implementation, ignoring of the role of people, entrepreneurs, leadership, etc., the insufficiency of technical competence (i.e. ignoring the human factor), reflecting too mechanical an approach (i.e. the organic nature of organizations), requiring of multidimensional and complex models, generation of predictions which are often wrong (i.e. simple solutions may be overlooked), & incurring of cost (i.e. costs of rational-comprehensive planning may outweigh the cost savings of the policy).

However, Thomas R. Dye, the president of the Lincoln Centre for Public Service, states the rational model provides a good perspective since in modern society rationality plays a central role and everything that is rational tends to be prized. Thus, it does not seem strange that “we ought to be trying for rational decision-making”.[18]

1. This model tries to understand all the alternatives, take into account all their consequences, and select the best.
2. It is concerned with the best way to organize government in order to assure and undistorted flow of information, the accuracy of feedback, and the weighing of values.
3. It is related to techniques such as PERT, CPM, OR, and linear programming. This model tries to improve the content of public policy.

### **Deficiencies of Rationalism**

1. There is a gap between planning and implementation.
2. Ignores role of people, entrepreneurs, leadership, etc.

3. Technical competence alone is not enough (ignores the human factor).
4. Too mechanical an approach, organizations are more organic.
5. Valid models must be multidimensional and complex. Predictions are often wrong; simple solutions may be overlooked.
6. The costs of rational-comprehensive planning may outweigh the cost savings of the policy

### **Public sector strategic planning model**

1. It is an attempt to combine the incremental and rational approaches to public policy-making.
2. It is an attempt to reconcile the day-to-day demands with long range strategies for the future.
3. It doesn't see the organization as wholly determined by the political environment, neither does it ignore risks.
4. It takes an active stance (versus passive) toward the future with an outward looking, aggressive focus sensitive to the political environment. It tries to place the organization in a distinctive position vis-a-vis the political environment. It concentrates on making decisions (unlike the rational model) but blends rational analysis with economic and political analyses (unlike the incremental model). It is highly participatory and tolerant of controversy, it concentrates on the fate of the whole organization; the fate of subunits is secondary.

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