

# NCERT Solutions for Class 11 Sociology Chapter 5 Doing Sociology: Research Methods

---

## Class 11 Sociology Chapter 5 NCERT Textbook Questions Solved

---

Question 1.

Why is the question of a scientific method particularly important in sociology?

Answer:

A science is expected to be objective, factual and verifiable but this is relatively difficult in comparison to physical sciences.

Sociologists used scientific method to discover social facts. Like the physical and natural sciences, sociology also has developed various scientific methods in its subject matter. Sociology being a scientific discipline, the main element is the method used to derive facts. For sociologists being social scientist, it is not very important how much they know or what they know instead of them, important is how they know? How do they derive facts?

Sociologists derive their facts through research methods, using different techniques and tools. Research is the 'aim' and the method is the means for sociologists to attain their aim.

Social research is an attempt made by sociologists in order to discover social facts, to study cause effect relationship and wherever possible to do predictions with certain limitations.

Therefore, in sociology, use of scientific methodology is very important, being a scientific discipline.

Question 2.

What are some of the reasons for 'objectivity' being more complicated in social sciences, particularly disciplines like sociology?

Answer:

Objectivity means to study things as they are, without being influenced by one's own feelings, thoughts, whims and fancies.

Objectivity refers to a condition where if two or more than two people observe a phenomena and give the same reaction to that, then it can be labelled as objective.

- There is lack of objectivity in sociology and the reason is that, the sociologists who do the research about a person in society is himself/herself a part of it. It is quite natural that he/she will have their own biases influenced from his/her beliefs, values, attitudes, traditions, customs and family traditions. “
- Another reason of subjectivity in sociology is that of content. Social phenomena are abstract, they are complex having multidimensional, multifaced and cannot be measured by fixed standards.

This is the reason for 'objectivity' being more complicated in social sciences particularly disciplines like sociology.

### Question 3.

How do sociologists try to deal with these difficulties and strive for objectivity?

Answer:

Sociologist being social scientist does not base their findings on 'what ought to be' or imagination, commonsense or their own perception and experiences.

Sociologists use scientific methodology to derive social facts, e.g. to study social phenomena like changing joint family structure in Indian society to nuclear families.

Sociologists would not depend on his own knowledge and experiences instead he/she may use survey method to discover reality of the issue.

To attain objectivity of the discipline sociologists adapt to systematic research which have following features:

- Use of Scientific methodology:  
Sociologists are doing research using systematic and objective procedures. They are using statistical methods like observation, social survey, sociometry and case studies etc.
- Emphasis on 'what is' instead of 'ought to be'.

### Question 4.

What is meant by 'reflexivity' and why is it important in sociology?

Answer:

Reflexivity refers to the fact that our sense of order is a result of conversational process. It is created in talk. Yet we usually think of ourselves as describing the order already existing around us.

Reflexivity is one of the ideas of ethnomethodology which is a technique devised by Garfinkel. One of the practical aspects of reflexivity is the importance of carefully documenting whatever one is doing. It also ensures that others can retrace the steps we have taken to arrive at a particular conclusion and see for themselves if we are right. It also helps to check and re-check our own thinking or line of argument.

### Question 5.

What are some of the things that ethnographers and sociologists do during participant observation?

Answer:

The term 'Ethnography' is usually applied to the acts both of observing directly the behaviour of a social group and producing a written description there of.

Ethnographers particularly social anthropologists do field work. Sociologists also involved in a community study would certainly do field work in any form of case study.

Basically it is participant observation. Sociologists spend a long time with the people being studied. They learn their language, follow their rituals and traditions and participate in their day to day activities, according to their lifestyle.

By and large by devoting so much time with that particular social group, they become insiders and learn about the whole way of life in a holistic way.

- Unlike the social anthropologists the sociologists focus on various types of community in their field work.

- To understand the lifestyle and any behavioural, cognitive or emotional characteristics, sociologists spend a lot of time with that particular group instead of staying with them.’

#### Question 6.

What are the strengths and weaknesses of participant observation as a method?

Answer:

Observation refers to the systematic process of collecting information through direct participation and the observation of group, tribe or community, included in the study. Observation may be participant or non-participant.

In participant observation researcher lives in the group of people as an active member of the group whereas in non-participant observation researcher works as a neutral observer. He/she may use CCTV cameras, video-cameras to get information.

Participant observation is a major method for the collection of required information.

This method has its strengths as well as weaknesses which are as follows:

Strengths of participant observation:

1. Provides first hand information: Being direct study participant observation provides opportunity to study social phenomena, events and relationship scientifically from natural setting. The researcher may get real and true behaviour of the members.
2. Provides opportunity to get comprehensive and intensive study: An active member of the group may go in depth of the problem and may get reliable information. Such information help the researcher in understanding their internal values.

Verifiability of information is possible:

Whenever the observer is in doubt regarding any information it can be re-examined and verified.

Weaknesses of participant observation:

- High level expertise required: Researchers have to be objective. Having been member of the group the individualistic bias is very much possible. The advantage of unfamiliar quality cannot be obtained.
- Time consuming: A lot of time is to be spent in establishing rapport with other members and have to wait for the events, the observer wants to observe particularly.
- Expensive method: It requires a lot of time and expertise, the method involves high expenditure.

#### Question 7.

What are the basic elements of the survey method? What is chief advantage of this method?

Answer:

A survey is a quantitative macro research method. It is an attempt to provide a compressive perspective on same topic.

- It is used to collect information about people's attitudes, beliefs and behaviour.
- It involves the collection of standardised information from the population being studied.
- Standardised information is gathered by asking same questions to all respondents in exactly the same order.

Surveys rely on questionnaires as the main technique of data collection.

Surveys are of two types:

1. Descriptive survey: It provides an accurate measurement of the distribution of certain characteristics in a given population. For example, income distribution, extent of literacy in a particular area.

2. Analytical survey: It is concerned with different variables. For example, a researcher may want to look at the relationship between level of prosperity and sex ratio.

- The information collected through a questionnaire in a survey is statistically analysed to reveal the pattern of regularity. These findings are presented as pie charts.
- Survey research is usually done by large teams consisting of those who plan and design the study (the researchers) and their associates and assistance who may get the questionnaire filled up.
- If the population of the study is too large, the survey will be based on information gathered from a representative sample of the population.
- The small sample that is carefully selected using the above mentioned principles is such that the sample represents the entire group of population under study. The results obtained from the study of the sample are generalised to the entire population.

Advantages of survey

- It allows to generalise result for a large population by actually studying only a small portion of the population. Therefore, with the help of survey one can study with manageable investment of time, efforts and money.

Question 8.

Describe some of the criteria involved in selecting a representative sample.

Answer:

Sample selection process depends on two main principles:

1. Principle of stratification: All the relevant sub-groups in a population should be recognized and represented in a sample. For example, if one is doing research on attitude towards religion, it would be important to include members of all religions as well as both men and women within each religious category.

2. The second principle of sample selection is that of the actual unit, i.e., village, person, household is selected on the basis of pure chance. This is referred to as randomization, which itself depends on the concept of probability.

Question 9.

State some of the weaknesses of the survey method.

Answer:

Weaknesses of survey

1. In a survey it is not possible to get in depth information from respondents. This is because the time spent on each respondent is very limited.
2. Since a survey involves a large number of investigators, it becomes very difficult to ensure that the complicated questions are asked from all respondents in exactly the same way.
3. Question that are asked in survey cannot be of personal or sensitive type. This is because there is no long-term interaction between the investigator and respondents.
4. In a survey unlike what is in an observation method, it is very difficult for the investigator to know for sure whether the response given by the respondent is true or not.

Question 10.

Describe main features of the interview as a research method.

Answer:

Features of interview include:

1. Purposeful conversation through face to face interaction.
2. A social interaction which results in transfer of information from the interviewer to a researcher.
3. Interview may be personal, conducted face to face, or by telephone (which has certain advantages for more sensitive topics), or may be conducted through a postal questionnaire (which gives people more time to consider their replies).
4. The questions put to interviewees may treat them as a respondent who supplies information about their own circumstances, activities and attitudes, or as an informant who supplies factual information about social phenomena within their experience and knowledge, such as the number of rooms in their home, an estimate of their total household income, characteristics of their local community, trade union or employer.
5. Less commonly, people are invited to be proxy informants for a respondent who is not available, such as a wife answering questions on her husband's job.
6. Interviews vary in style and format, from the structured interview based on a questionnaire (which is typical in sample surveys), to the unstructured interview based on a list of topics to be covered, to the depths. Interview or qualitative interview which may last hours and range widely around the topics is an interview guide.
7. A somewhat different approach to interviewing consists of the group discussion, in which four to twelve people discuss the topic of interest to the researcher, under the guidance of the researcher.

8. The research interview has some similarities to other interview situations, such as job selection interview, in that it is an interaction between unequals rather than an ordinary conversation: the topics are chosen by the researcher and interviewers must reveal nothing of themselves in case this biases responses.

9. Researcher's control over the interview is greatly increased by the use of computer-based questionnaires for personal and telephonic interviews, such as Computer- Assisted Telephone Interviewing (CATI) system.

## **Class 11 Sociology Chapter 5 NCERT Extra Questions**

---

### **Class 11 Sociology Chapter 5 Very Short Answer Type Questions**

---

Question 1.

Why do we need research ?

Answer:

- To compare social processes of past and present.
- To see how we are developing
- To see what issues are popular in present day society.

Question 2.

What type of historical information is used by social scientists?

Answer:

Social scientists generally confine themselves to three major sources of historical information:

- Documents and personal accounts
- Materials of culture history
- Personal sources of authentic observers and witnesses.

Question 3.

List the central concerns of "order and stability" in society.

Answer:

The main focus is on:

- The way social institution helps to maintain order and continuity in social life.
- The way structural arrangements in society influence behaviours.

Question 4.

What is meant by validity?

Answer:

When a statement is logically correct; so that one's reasoning follows logically from one's own premises is called validity.

Question 5.

What is observer bias?

Answer:

The tendency for observers who are aware of the hypothesis under test to see and record what might be expected, rather than what actually happens. To guard against this, we can use observers who have no knowledge of the predictions being made.

Question 6.

What is research?

Answer:

To study a problem through the collection and/or analysis of data is called research. Psychologists more usually use the term to refer to an investigative process such as the experiment or the case study.

Question 7.

What are social norms?

Answer:

A way of thinking or behaving that is considered appropriate and proper within a particular society, and most members of that society adhere to. Compliance with the social norms of a society may lead to acceptance by societal members, non-compliance to rejection.

Question 8.

What is unstructured interview?

Answer:

A type of interview in which the interviewer asks questions spontaneously, rather than sticking to scripted questions. This allows the interviewer to pursue issues that arise during the interview. In this way, interview is guided by the responses given by the respondent (person being interviewed).

### **Class 11 Sociology Chapter 5 Short Answer Type Questions**

---

Question 1.

List the characteristics of observation.

Answer:

According to Black and Champion, the characteristics of observation are:

- Behaviour is observed.
- It enables understanding of events affecting social relations of the participants.
- It looks at reality from the perspective of the observed person himself.
- It defines regulant and recurrences in social life by comparing data in one study with those in other studies.
- It is focused on hypothesis free inquiry.

Question 2.

Write about the principles of the observation process in sociology.

Answer:

The principles associated with observation process are called observation process.

- Principle of inter-subjectivity of reliability: Repeated observation of the same responses by the same observer shall yield the same data.

- Principle of inter-objectivity: Repeated observation of the same responses by different observers shall yield the same data. An observation is taken as valid if one has observed what he wants to observe.
- Principle of validity: Data shall be obtained of such a kind and in such a way that legitimate inferences can be made from the manifest level to the latent level.

Question 3.

Elaborate on the comparative method used for the study of sociology.

Answer:

This method entails the study of different groups and institutions in order to examine similarities and differences. The features under examination may occur within the same society or they may appear in different societies e.g. rates of mobility between different castes and classes belonging to same society may be mutually compared or the same variable appearing in different societies could be compared.

The comparative method is one way of testing hypotheses. The main difficulties of the method arise when there is no hypothesis or when it has not been clearly formulated or the unit for comparison has not been defined properly. Since social facts can only be observed, not artificially produced. Under experimental conditions, the method of comparing similar cases in a systematic way is the best.

Question 4.

List the characteristics of case study method.

Answer:

Following are the characteristics of case study method:

- Case study strives towards a holistic understanding of cultural systems of action.
- Case studies must always have boundaries.
- Case study is not sampling research. The case has to be selected so as to maximize what has to be learnt.
- They focus on one or two issues that are fundamental to understanding whatever is being examined.

Question 5.

What do you mean by interview bias?

Answer:

Interview bias: Biases that appear in research findings because of the social nature of the interview. There are three major sources of such bias: the interviewer (who may, for example, have prejudices or ask leading questions); the respondent (who may wish to lie or evade questions); and the actual interview situation itself (especially the physical and social setting).

Question 6.

What do you mean by interviewer's bias?

Answer:

Interviewer's bias: The distortion of response to a personal or telephonic interview which results from differential reactions to the social style and personality of interviewers or to



their presentation of particular questions. The use of fixed wording questions is one method of reducing interviewer bias. Anthropological research and case-studies are also affected by the problem, which is exacerbated by self-fulfilling prophecy, when the researcher is also the interviewer.

Question 7.

What is objectivity?

Answer:

The ability to carry out an investigation and to collect data without personal interpretation or bias to influence the process. If we have to rely on a subjective interpretation of an event (such as 'Was that an act of aggression or of playfulness?'), we may find it difficult to maintain our objectivity. Psychologists may choose either to concentrate on actions which are unquestionably relating to the behaviour of interest (stabbing someone in the back, for example, could hardly be interpreted as playfulness) or relying on the shared agreement of more than one observer of the same event (inter-observer reliability).

Question 8.

What is observation?

Answer:

This term is used to describe any situation where an observer records behaviour that is exhibited by a participant. The term 'observation' may be used as a technique for gathering data (i.e. we observe somebody doing something) or as the design of a study. It leads to such a variety of usage. To give a precise definition of the term 'observation' means contrasting it with an experimental study. In an observation there is no manipulation of an independent variable. There are different types of study that would be classified as 'observational' under this definition.

Question 9.

What is reliability?

Answer:

If a finding is repeated, it is described as being reliable. Within the general meaning of the term, it is also used more specifically within psychological assessment and research. For a research finding to be reliable, it must be shown to exist on successive investigations under the same condition (replication).

For a psychometric assessment to be reliable, it should have both internal and external reliability. Answers to a questionnaire or inventory may be checked to see if respondents answer all questions in the same way or if they contradict themselves. This is a measure of internal reliability. Responses may also be checked over a period of time to see if there is stability of measurement over times. If respondent gives the same responses or obtains the same scores consistently over time, then the measure is said to have external reliability.

**Class 11 Sociology Chapter 5 Long Answer Type Questions**

---

## Question 1.

Discuss the research process in sociology.

Answer:

### Steps in Research

1. Selection of a specific problem (relevant, current): The problem should have sociological significance. Define and formulate the problem. Reviving literature/secondary research-use different sources e.g. Internet, magazine together information about the problem (reliable sources). Find out information about a specific aspect of the problem. This helps to formulate a conceptual framework. Now the path for the research is paved. Formulating a hypothesis. Assumption/tentative, conclusion/opinion of the researcher on certain aspects of the problem – may/may not be true.

### 2. Measurement – [Quantitative and Qualitative]:

By assigning values to variables that can be measured by features, attributes etc. It means research from abstract to concrete and further to a conclusion. It involves validity and reliability-reliable sources and measuring.

What do you want to measure objectively? When the researcher gets the same result, if he conducts a research in the same way as another researcher in the same circumstances by using quantitative methods like statistics and analysis of data.

3. Choosing a research design/technique: Survey is the best research technique. It is a method used to gather information about a particular issue/problem and also finding out the views of people and/or interests of people. It is the most common/ effective method of research. It is usually quantitative.

- Sample survey: A small audience represents the population. These are selected from an area and they represent the whole area.
- Random survey: It is done asking people randomly (people selected at random) and they represent the population.

In a survey, there are three most common ways:

- Question uestionnaire
- Interview
- Case study

4. Collection of Data: After the questionnaire is formed, it is distributed and data is collected from respondents.

Depending upon the problem, the respondents are selected.

Keep in mind the age/gender/class and the kind of questions when distributing the questionnaire.

### 5. Analysis and interpretation of Data:

After the data is collected the whole information is analysed and interpreted. Analysis is always in percentages specially for close ended questions (choices).

eg. Yes – 75% No – 15 %

6. Evaluation: Conclusion of the whole analysis and the interpretation of the data.  
Summary of all the questionnaires/hypothesis Includes

1. Summary
2. Whether your hypothesis has been proved or not.
3. Problems the researcher faces while doing the research such as :
  - Dishonesty
  - No interest
  - Incomplete
  - Stupid answers
  - No time
  - Shyness
  - If someone was offended by a certain question etc.
  - More serious problems.

Besides survey, other methods of collecting data can be used:

- Ethnography-Field work, stay with population for months and find out the stuff.
- Archives-historical facts.
- Do commentary (make a movie about it).

Question 2.

What is questionnaire? Discuss advantages and disadvantages.

Answer:

Questionnaire:

Set of questions prepared by the investigator and given to the respondent with option like yes, no, mock.

A method of collecting data systematically by asking questions which are answered by the respondent.

Types of Question:

1. Close Ended: Fixed choices are given and you have to tick one. MCQuestions, Yes/No/ May be. An analysis is easier.
2. Easier to understand as it is based on facts. Easier for respondent to answer.
3. Objective.
4. Open Ended.
5. Opinion of respondent is asked. Subjective analysis is difficult as you will get different answers for the same question. It gives more detailed information.
6. A questionnaire should be a combination of these with more close ended questions to make analysis easier. This will give us percentage of choice and reasons for that choice.

- Question uestions should not be lengthy.
- Question uestions should be short/precise and to the point.
- Use simple language and convey the same meaning to everyone.
- Question uestions should be sensitive to the audience.
- Question uestions should not be too personal/ more general.
- No G.K. questions like who is the prime minister.

### Advantages

- You can cover a large area in limited time period and large number of people.
- Objective, subjectivity doesn't enter into it.
- Comparatively less expensive.
- Investigator's presence is not required.
- No bias as there is no face to face interaction.
- Many questions can be covered.
- No hesitation for the respondent.

### Disadvantages

- Many a time questionnaires are not taken seriously.
- Might be incorrectly filled out.
- False identity.
- You may not get it back.
- Could be incomplete.
- Can't clarify doubts.
- Illiterate people can't answer.

### Question 3.

What is an interview? Discuss its advantages and disadvantages. (HOTS)

Answer:

In interview, a set of questions are asked face to face by the interviewer. Interview may be structured or unstructured. The success of interview depends on the following factors:

- Interviewer must be framed, sensitive, confident and qualified.
- Have some background of Interviewee.
- Should be well prepared for the discussion.
- Should be in control.
- Patient not pushy.
- Just guide the interviewee.
- Be as objective as possible.
- Has to have alternative questions.
- Should not deviate from the topic chosen.
- Question uestions showed always go from easy to difficult.

### Advantages

- Facial expressions can give away emotions to a certain extent. Almost all questions are answered.

- No false identity.
- Questions are taken seriously.
- Universally acceptable.

#### Disadvantages

- Interviews are time consuming
- Expensive
- There is bias and subjectivity.

#### How can a researcher avoid bias and error?

- Interviewer should not get involved emotionally.
- Not forget the objective of the interview.
- Not deviate from what he /she has to find out.

#### Question 4.

What is observation? Discuss its types.

Answer:

Observation: It refers to systematically attending, recording and processing information through direct participation and observation of the group, tribe or community which is included in the study. •

- There is use of vision for collection of data.
- Collection of data by watching people's behaviour without actually interfering with it.
- Noting down the data as it happens with regard to the cause, phenomenon and effect.

#### Observation – as a sociological research:

- Specific, valid, reliable, accountable, precise
- Precise and no extra details
- Objectivity.
- Researcher's opinion should not be expressed.
- Validity is important. What you are observing must be related to the problem.
- Has to be reliable and accurate.

#### Types of Observation

##### Participant

- When you are a part of the observation, e.g. in a wedding, you are part of music and dancing along with observing.
- Participant takes active part in all activities of the observed group.
- Observed may or may not know the identity of the observer.
- Usually the identity of the observer is not known as the observed will become very conscious.
- Subjectivity is present and will be more as your identity bias.

- Complete participant observation : identity of observer is not known.
- Observer stays with the people for days/months. He gets completely involved in activities of group and stays with them in order to understand them completely and thoroughly.

### Non-Participant

- When you observe from outside. The observer is not part of the group that is being observed, e.g.; sitting out in sangeet.
- Observed may or may not know of the observer's identity.
- More objectivity than subjectivity-less bias.
- Notes more than participant observer.
- Personal bias may contaminate the results.
- Question unantitative data is less and difficult to find.
- Noting sequence is after observation.

Steps involved for participant and non-participant observation:

1. Selection of appropriate group.
2. Familiarise with group and its activities.
3. Do research in sequence.
4. Get involved /observe from outside depending on the type of participation.

Question 5.

Elaborate on the functional method used for the study of sociology.

Answer:

This approach appeared initially as a reaction against the methods and claims of the evolutionists. Functional analysis is a method of sociological enquiry which examines social and cultural items by locating them in a wider context. This usually means showing how these items affect and are affected by others with which they coexist over time, within the same social system. In other words, functional method refers to the functional analysis which is also known as "functionalism". This asserts that the principal task of sociology is to examine the contribution of social items that make the social and cultural life of human collectivities. It examines social phenomenon in a way so as to explain why these items occur at all, why they have persisted?

The central concern is with the source of order and stability in society.

The focus is on:

1. The way social institutions help to maintain order and continuity in social life.
2. The way structural arrangements in society influence behaviour.

It may be said that functional analysis is a method which refers to factors and forces of integration, equilibrium and also disequilibrium. At a given time, inter-relation between components of society can be studied from functional point of view.

Question 6.

What is survey method?

Answer:

Survey: It is a systematic collection of facts about a defined social group. The term usually refers to data collections that employ both interviewing and sampling to produce quantitative data-sets, amenable to computer based analysis.

Sampling and interviewing are employed in many other research designs. It is the combination of the two that has led to the social survey or sample survey, becoming the most important single type of social research, used by all the social sciences, market research and opinion polls.

1. Surveys can be used to provide descriptive statistics for national, regional or local population; to examine the clustering of social phenomena; to identify the social location and characteristics of subgroups for more intensive follow-up case-study research and to analyse causal processes and test explanations.
2. In recent years sociological survey analysis has been greatly extended to include the sophisticated multivariate modelling techniques that are common in econometrics.
3. One of the main attractions of the sample survey for both policy research and theoretical research is its transparency and accountability, methods and procedures can be made visible and accessible to other parties, unlike research designs that depend heavily on the contribution of individual researchers.
4. The key disadvantage is that surveys normally use structured questionnaires, which constrain an enquiry to paths fixed at the start of fieldwork.
5. Other criticism which are sometimes levelled at surveys are that numerical variables rarely provide adequate operationalization of sociological constructs; the highly asymmetric power relationship between researcher and interviewee is detrimental to the quality of the data collected; they provide a false aura of objectivity which makes their result vulnerable to political manipulation.
6. Many of these criticisms can be overcome by good survey design and implementation. Survey interviews may be personal, postal or conducted by telephone. Telephone surveys are particularly common.

Question 7.

What is sample?

Answer:

A group of people that take part in a research investigation and are presumed to be representative of the population from which they have been drawn. Because of the constraints of time, money and practicality, psychologists can hardly ever study the whole population and therefore are forced to sample from it using one of the sampling methods.

Sampling refers to the process by which research psychologists attempt to select a representative group from the population under study. As an entire population tends to be too large to work with, a smaller group of participants must act as a representative sample. In an attempt to select a representative sample and thus avoid sampling bias (the over-representation of one category of participant in the sample), psychologists utilize a variety of sampling methods, such as:

1. Random Sample: Each member of the population under study stands the same chance of being selected.
2. Stratified Sample: The composition of the sample reflects the composition of the population, e.g. 30 percent males, 70 percent females in the population determines that the sample shall contain a selection of 70 percent females, 30 percent males.
3. Quota Sample: The researcher selects a quota of people roughly in proportion to their occurrence in the population (e.g. a quota of different age groups).
4. Opportunity Sample: Roughly a case of selecting whoever is available at the time at that location.

evidyarthi