Review of Indian Social Science Research: Recent Developments

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Abstract:

Even while social science research is becoming increasingly important in India, its standards and caliber are still deteriorating. Academic research and higher education have structural flaws that place more emphasis on quantity than quality of research. India is a metaphor for the disorganized and random organisation of social science research. The goal of the current study is to describe how social science research is doing in India. The social science doctoral research work conducted in India between 2017 and 2018 will be examined using data from a number of publications of the ICSSR committee review and the UGC annual report. The report also attempted to identify certain social science problems and obstacles that India faced both before and after independence. The main funding sources and the role of the government in advancing social science research are carefully explored. The practitioners have been advised to consider suggestions and policy implications to encourage the amazing growth of social sciences in India.

Keywords: Higher education, problems and difficulties, government funding, structural flaws, social science research.

Introduction:

Describe research. Depending on who you question, you will receive a different response. Some will claim that we frequently perform online product comparison research on websites. Journalists regularly survey the public on well-known issues of public concern, such as elections and budgets, to gauge viewer interest. Important lectures and information found on Google help academic students complete their assignments. Organizations in the business world use forecasting to deal with opportunities and dangers. Before starting a firm, a businessman might undertake a pilot study to understand consumer demand and buying trends. It will be regarded as "social science research" when all of these categories of research are conducted by social scientists using a systematic research procedure and design. Higher education and research that broadens the scope of innovation and knowledge in the economy might enable socioeconomic progress.

Social scientists, research methodology, research ethics, and societal contributions are all aspects of social science research. Social science research serves as a gauge for national development. In social science study, a number of societal phenomena are explored, including inequality, poverty, unemployment, and illiteracy. All of these significant problems enable the government formulate policies to address long-standing economic problems and determine the economic structure of a nation. A field of study known as social science conducts

research on how society functions or how people interact with one another. Empirical methods are primarily the focus of social sciences. Creating a qualitative or quantitative social analysis of a certain area can help the country grow and thrive.

Modern social sciences' growth in India both before and after Independence

Before discussing the current and upcoming prospects of social science research in India, it is essential to understand the state and position of social scientific research following independence. The first phase of the social science research is broken down into two sections: 1947–1969 and 1969–1990. India's rich culture and customs made it the most popular research subject among academics in Asia and the West before independence. Following the British occupation of India in the 19th century, modern social sciences emerged. British colonizers frequently gather information to address issues in the strange Indian civilization caused by competing interests. They carry out social science study to learn more about Indian culture and customs. Numerous well-known Indian economists were affected by current social science research and employed it as a "problem solving instrument" rather than a "analytical tool" after the introduction of western education.

For instance, renowned Indian economist Dada Bhai Naoroji highlighted a number of India's economic issues in British policies. Numerous social, moral, and political intellectuals who emerged during the pre-independence era contributed to India's march towards self-reliance. Up to 1980, 10,000 PhDs had been awarded in total (Ruprail 1983). Universities are in charge of conducting social science research throughout this time.

Following independence, the government has made resolving persistent economic issues like poverty, malnutrition, unemployment, and overpopulation a top priority. Government created a mixed economic structure with balanced growth as a result. In the 1950s, a number of research institutions were founded to promote the development of the economy in an equal manner. The National Council of Applied Economic Research in Delhi, the Indian Statistical Institute in Calcutta, and the Delhi School of Economics are a few of the well-known institutions. The Directorate of Economics and Statistics of the Ministry of Agriculture also established eleven agro-economic research centres at this time to investigate rural development and to identify the sources of change by conducting village surveys (EPW, 1983: 993).

The departments of economics at the renowned Indian institutions in Bombay, Madras, and Calcutta are already well-established. Other areas of social scientific study, such as political science, sociology, public administration, and development studies, attracted a lot of attention in the 1960s. The creation of the Indian Council of Social Science Research (ICSSR) in 1969 was the most notable action the Indian government took to advance the social sciences. It was a pivotal period in the growth of social scientific inquiry in India. The ICSSR classified social sciences, which include a variety of fields like public administration, economics, management, education, political science, history, linguistics, and demography (Dube, 1980).

The International Directory of Social Science Organizations lists the following as the Council's primary goals:

• To check the momentum of social science research; and • To offer sufficient consultations to its users.

• To support social science research initiatives, projects, and the administration of grants to organisations and

individuals conducting social science research.

• To support fellowships and grants for social science research.

• To identify the areas where social science research should be promoted.

• To continue targeted amplification for advancing research in underserved fields.

• To provide monetary assistance to organisations, associations, and periodicals that conduct social science research.

• To hold workshops on research methods and technical training to advance intellectual research.

• To coordinate multidisciplinary research programmes and activities.

• To support books, journals, and publications of social science research.

An important turning point in the growth of social science research in India is the ICSSR. The ICSSR makes it possible to maintain high standards for research and to support researchers financially and academically. With the help of government financing and policies, social science research has a solid framework in the current environment.

Despite all of these successes, there are still some significant problems, difficulties, and limitations in Indian social science research, which are covered later. According to the UGC's annual report for 2016–17, there were a total of 231,487 students enrolled in M.Phil. programmes (194159) and PhD programmes (37328) throughout Indian universities and colleges in the academic year. Scientific research received the most doctoral degrees in 2016–17 (27671), followed by the faculty of arts (7636), with a total of 27671 degrees awarded. 51.85% of PhDs given by scientific and art departments. 24283 M.Phil degrees were granted during the 2016–17 academic year, with 10260 of those going to the faculty of arts and sciences and 5626 to the faculty of science.

The aforementioned justifications showed the current state of social science research, which is a subject that Indian scholars are quite interested in. According to the female enrolment rates, there were 92 women enrolled in higher education for every 100 men in 2016–17. Various public and commercial organisations support and regulate research and development activities. The research has slightly improved and development as a result of the rising demand for technical and vocational skills. In addition to India's modest increase in knowledge, it continues to lag behind many other growing economies in terms of academic research and technical know-how. India's presence in the world's academic institution rankings is abhorrent.

Goals of the research
• To evaluate the rate of social science doctorate research growth.
• To describe the main concerns and issues surrounding social science research.
• To determine the government's contribution to the advancement of social science research.
• To make recommendations for how to develop social science research in terms of policy.

Methodology:

Based on secondary sources, the current study provides a broad and preliminary assessment of social science research in India. University news and numerous monthly publications are used as the main data sources to meet the study's aims. Additional information has been taken from the Indian Council of Social Science Research (ICSSR) report and the UGC's 2016–17 annual report. To bolster the study, numerous reports, websites, and comments on social science studies have been examined. The mandatory data was compiled, recorded, and tabulated by integrating databases into excel spreadsheets, which then allowed for the analysis of the necessary interpretations.

Review of Literature:

Social science research is discussed in a substantial body of literature. The goal of the current study was to broaden public perceptions of social science research through the review of literature from numerous national and international periodicals. This section contains summaries of academic publications from various projects reports that shed light on the state of social science research in India from diverse angles.

In order to comprehend the situation and crises facing social science institutions in India, Pandian (2002) surveys higher education and social science resources. The study's survey spans all levels of regional government and examines social science research platforms in India. The study's findings imply that south India has a respectable level of social science resources and higher education. Libraries, social science institutions, documentation centres, archives, and professional groups make up south India's research resources. The four southern Indian states of Andhra Pradesh, Karnataka, Kerala, Tamil Nadu, and the Union Territory of Pondicherry are all evenly divided among these resources.

India's social science partners were sought out by Tyagi and Johri (2004). The author used bibliographical information from the Social Science Citation Index (SSCI) for the years 1997 and 1998 to support the study. According to the current study, the USA, followed by the UK, is the academic partner who collaborates with India the most frequently in the field of social sciences.

The publications of the Tata Institute of Social Sciences (TISS) and several other Indian departments of social sciences were investigated by Angadi et al. in 2006. The current study has examined 358 publications made by social scientists working in different research departments in India. The study's time frame includes the years 2001 through 2004. The study's findings indicate that Economic and Political Weekly, Indian Journal of Social Work, and Indian Journal of Labour are the three journals that social science researchers most frequently read.

In their working paper titled "The Web Impact of Open Access Social Science Research," Kousha & Thelwall (2007) examined how the internet and web citations may help social science research perform better. The Fourth Review Committee's 2007 study, "Restructuring the Indian Council of Social Scientific Research," looked at the motivations underpinning social science research. The study reveals that social science is motivated by two forces: (a) to understand society's functioning in its many facets, including social, cultural, political, and economic ones by examining the factors that shape them; and (b) to evaluate the practical needs of

decision-makers in government, civil society, the private sector, and other sectors for trustworthy data and expert analysis. Additionally, the University Grants Commission (UGC) has developed programmes to support Centers for Advanced Studies in academic units with eminent faculty. In order to widen the strength of potential university departments in the social sciences and strengthen their research capacities, UGC also oversees specific assistance programmes.

Using a variety of variables, Gupta, Dhawan, and Singh (2009) compared the state of social science research in "Social Science Research in India, China, and Brazil- A Comparative Study." The current analysis focuses on the annual average publishing rate in relation to the global publication share. The output of national publications from various nations is used to gauge and compare their research profiles in various subsections. The parameters of the study include regional research production, national publications, international collaborative articles, high productivity institutions, and highly cited papers.

Papola (2010) exposed the criticism of social science research conducted in India in recent years in his working paper titled "Social Science Research in Globalizing India: Historical Development." The study's conclusions indicate that the criticism of social science research is attributable to unmet expectations on structural aspects of the economy. Internationally, social science research's quality and standardization fall short of the intended outcomes.

The research production and productivity of social scientists at the Centre for Development Studies (CDS), Thiruvananthapuram, from 1998 to 2008 were examined by Sudhier and Abhila (2011). According to the data, CDS researchers authored 599 research articles in total between 1998 and 2008. 38.23% of these publications are journal articles, 23.54% are book chapters, and 15.3% are working papers. During the study period, Kerala's development challenges accounted for 32% of the CDS research projects, followed by industry, technology, and development (26%). The majority of the contributions were single-authored (56.59%), and the remainder were multi-authored (43.41%), according to the analysis. The study's findings show that the degree of authorship collaboration is 0.43. More than 665 journal articles have been published, with 33.19% appearing in foreign journals. The Indian Journal of Labour Economics comes in second with 7 (3.06%) articles, and Economic and Political Weekly provides the most with 79 (34.50%).

A comparative Analysis of Social Sciences Research Publications in Four South Asian Nations by Gupta & Mahesh (2013) attempted to examine the state of social science research in four South Asian countries from 1996 to 2011. According to the current comparative study, Pakistan, Bangladesh, Sri Lanka, and Nepal published 2477, 1159, 590, and 335 papers in the social sciences, respectively, with average annual production of 154.81, 72.44, 36.87, and 20.94. According to the survey, Bangladesh received the greatest h-index scores in the social sciences, followed by Pakistan in psychology (16), decision science (12), and business, management, and accounting (10), and Sri Lanka in business, management, and accounting (10).

India's current state of social science research

Accurate information on the number of social scientific institutes, their funding sources, and the nature of their

activity is difficult to come by.

The following list of six current researchers pursuing social science research in India is based on the findings of the fourth review committee, ICSSR 2007.

1. University social science departments and UGC postgraduate policies.

2. Institutes of management, agricultural universities, and specialised universities.

3. Research institutions that are ICSSR-supported.

4. Independent research organisations with a focus on social science.

5. Government-sponsored research organisations

6. Independent consulting companies.

Universities, government research institutions, and independent research institutions are the three primary types of organisations in India that carry out social science research.

One of the best places to find research scholars is at universities. Universities provide specialised information and opportunities for field experimentation. In universities, standards for knowledge creation, research, publishing, and citations are being investigated.

Different research metrics, such as disciplinary and transdisciplinary research, peer review practises, and the involvement of other internal and external intellectual networks are all learnt. Universities have significant authority when it comes to awarding degrees, establishing the curriculum, and holding exams. Although many of the ICSSR institutes also offer MPhil/PhD programmes by affiliating their students to the relevant state universities, higher degree programmes like the Masters, MPhil, and PhD are often handled by academics at the university.

There are various further types of universities, including:

State public, state private, central, deemed, and other universities are examples.

According to ICSSR 2007 in 2010, India has more than 400 universities and 500 social science departments. 795 universities now exist, according to the UGC's annual report for 2016–17. The University Grants Commission oversees all Indian universities (UGC). India has 123 deemed universities, 360 state public universities, 262 state private universities, and 47 central institutions. Rajasthan reportedly has the most universities (74), followed by Gujarat and Uttar Pradesh, which have 72 and 59, respectively. According to the most recent UGC report (2016–17) on higher education in India, 34.17% of the 13 million students who were enrolled in higher education institutions in India during 2016–17 studied arts, humanities, and social sciences.

At the 433 universities and the 20,600 affiliated colleges, there are roughly 500,000 faculty members. This number of instructors in the humanities and social sciences is roughly half. A slightly similar pattern can be seen in the percentage of social science and humanities doctorates, which made up about 36% of the total 13,237 new doctorates awarded in 2016–17. In India, there is no official method for evaluating and ranking educational institutions in relation to their research outputs. The following is a list of some of the well-known centres for social science research:

Different Ministries of the Indian Government create government research institutions (GOI). At both the Central and State levels, the GOI has founded a number of prestigious research institutes. The Indian Council of Agricultural Research (ICAR) and the Institutes for Rural and Urban Development are two of these eminent institutions. 67 such institutions that do industry-specific research are listed in the 2007 ICSSR study. Government research institutes' primary goal is to provide databases and publications that will aid decision-makers. They might not conduct purely social science research. However, many of their research projects include internal sub studies and social science-heavy approaches.

Independent research organisations

The ICSSR is an independent organisation that was established with the goal of conducting innovative research across all social science fields. Despite being run by social scientists; it is sponsored by the government. Over the past 38 years, the ICSSR has approved about 3000 research projects through its 25 research centers. This corresponds to 75 projects on average every year.

Table 1.Categories of social science institutes in India

Universities with social science departments	Government research institutions	Autonomous research institutions	Total
500	67	152(25*+127**)	719

* ICSSR institutes funded by GOI; ** other institute

Source: annual UGC report 2016-17

Based on an assessment of publication records, research programmes, contribution to aspecific area of study, recognition by the Government, composition of faculty, and emphasis on dissemination of research including conferences and seminars, the institutions have instead been grouped into two broad categories – 'established centers for research' and 'emerging centers for research'. Lack of substantive and comparable data on each of these institutions does not permit a ranking of these institutions.

Table 2. Established centers for social science research

Established Centers for Social Science Research		
1	Delhi School of Economics, University of Delhi: Delhi	
	Department of Economics	
	Department of Sociology	
	Department of Geography	
2	School of Social Sciences, JNU: New Delhi	
	Centre for the Study of Social Systems	
	Centre for historical studies	
	Centre for Political Studies	
	Centre for the Study of Regional Development	
	Centre of Social Medicine and Community Health	
	Zakir Husain Centre for Educational Studies	
	Centre for Economic Studies and Planning	

3	Madras Institute of Development Studies (MIDS): Chennai
4	Institute for Social and Economic Change (ISEC): Bangalore
5	Centre for Development Studies (CDS): Trivandrum
6	Institute of Economic Growth (IEG): New Delhi
7	Centre for Women's Development Studies(CWDS): New Delhi
8	Centre for the Study of Developing Societies (CSDS): New Delhi
9	School for Women's Studies, Jadavpur University: Kolkata
10	National Institute of Advanced Studies (NIAS): Bangalore
11	Department of History, University of Delhi: Delhi
12	Indian Institute of Advanced Study (IIAS): Shimla
13	Centre for Law and Governance, JNU: New Delhi
14	Centre for Studies in Social Sciences (CSSS): Kolkata
15	Centre for policy research New Delhi(CPR):New Delhi

Source: Kaula(1990)

Table 3. Emerging centers for social science research

1	Indira Gandhi Institute of Development Research (IGIDR): Mumbai
2	Department of Social Sciences, IIT: New Delhi
3	Tata Institute of Social Sciences (TISS): Mumbai
4	Department of Social Sciences, Indian Statistical Institute (ISI): Kolkata/Delhi.
5	National Institute of Science, Technology & Developing Studies (NISTADS): Delhi
6	International Centre for Research on Women (ICRW): New Delhi
7	Public Health Foundation of India (PHFI): New Delhi
8	Indian Institute of Dalit Studies (IIDS): New Delhi
9	Department of Economics and Social Sciences, Indian Institute of Management (IIM): Bangalore

Source: Kaula(1990)

Indian funding for social science research

Government of India funding.

The Indian government, along with other organisations like the ICSSR and UGC, generously funds social science research. The Ministry of Human Resource Development reimburses the UGC, which in turn receives its funding from the Central Government of India, for its grants to Central Universities. The state governments provide funding for the remaining universities. It is impossible to accurately depict the overall funding provided by the Indian government to the many social science fields in India.

It is also obvious that social science research is being developed in India with a significant amount of the government budget. The research activities and programmes on which GOI's money are spent cannot be found in a suitable data base. According to reports, just 20% of total expenditures are allocated to research projects. In India, a substantial part of expenditures are allocated to administrative tasks rather than the advancement of

research. The Indian Council for Historical Research (ICHR) received Rs 14.10 crore, the ICSSR was given Rs 68.49 crore, and UGC was given Rs 4,691.94 crore in the 2016–17 budget.

Due to the lack of accurate statistics, it is rather difficult to quantify how much of this is set aside for social science research alone.

Money from other organisations (non- Government funding)

In India, there are many non-state organisations that support social science research. Even if their contribution to funding was extremely little when compared to other non-state sponsors, they are nevertheless helping to advance social science research in India, which is highly laudable. These organisations include the UN, international multilateral institutions like the World Bank and ADB, as well as bilateral institutions like DFID, CIDA, USAID, and NORAD. These organisations have supported research on employment, education, health, and poverty. The Ford Foundation, the Ratan Tata Trust, the Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation, the ICICI Centre for Child Health and Nutrition Foundation, and others are notable non-state donors of social science research.

International research grants

The majority of colleges and universities receive their funding from the government, although others choose to collaborate with non-governmental organisations to strengthen their research faculties. The community and people resource of aur economy stand to gain greatly from updating their knowledge and skills in this way. For instance, the School of Social Sciences at JNU and Delhi University is obtaining project-specific grants from different international donor organisations. Now, PhD candidates can apply for funding from Sephis,a Dutch organisation that supports researchers doing doctoral work in underdeveloped nations.

Important concerns and challenges in Indian social science research

There are still certain flaws and concerns in India's social science research, despite all the money and well-organized research, as is stated below:

Our economy greatly benefits from our collaboration with international organisations to advance social science research, but on the flip side, there is an alarming push for "indigenization of research" in India. Without a doubt, working on international projects, travelling to foreign countries, and attending seminars and conferences will increase our expertise, but it willwestern values also leave a mark.

The social sciences in India today have not only acquired Western study themes but also Western methodology and procedures. Some significant themes and topics, like as nationalism, peasant movements, the rise of the working class, revolts, etc., are being disregarded. In India, "imbalanced research" in relation to rural and urban areas is another significant problem. In India, social scientists tend to be concentrated in metropolitan areas, despite the urgent need to examine challenges in rural India. Big cities draw social scientists because they offer

greater quality of life and higher pay. This leads to a significant research bias when looking at issues in neglected areas. Some researchers perform research and come up with unreliable conclusions because they lack a proper understanding of the problem's core cause.

This detrimental contribution leads to unbalanced research in the social sciences. People who live in cities, for instance, study difficulties relating to landless labour, but they are only able to sympathies rather than empathies by providing insightful policy recommendations and remedies. The growth of our economy depends heavily on the connections between social science research and policy consequences. There aren't many studies in social science research that try to have an impact on policy or that can critique the current policies to make them better. The unsuccessful projects are a direct outcome of India's failing policy implementation. The policy and social science research are not sufficiently connected. Another problem impeding the progress of social science research is a research gap in the field. The research fields in social science are undervalued and given little weight. The institutions only encourage and promote a limited number of fields. For instance, economics is taught at every college and university in India, but compared to other academic fields like anthropology and public administration, sociology is given less weight. One of the main obstacles to undertaking research is a lack of funding for the social sciences. Even if the Indian government is working hard to encourage research methods, there is still a pressing need to support academic programmes rather than administrative ones.

India suffers a significant manpower loss as a result of the migration of its research intellectuals and highly qualified scholars to industrialized nations in quest of better career prospects and a higher standard of living. Although most researchers receive their education and training in India, the developed economies ultimately benefit from their work.

Conclusion:

This mapping report on social scientific study summarizes a variety of evidences, facts, and numbers and shows that India has one of the oldest traditions of research and writing. In this regard, it should be noted that the origins of Indian social sciences can be traced to the third century, when Manu wrote the Dharma Shastra and Kautilya wrote the Arthashashtra, 2400 years ago. Following independence, India adopted contemporary social science research, which had a significant impact on the country's economic prosperity. The framework of government directories and databases was essentially rebuilt with the establishment of the Indian statistical system with CSO and NSSO. Since the ICSSR was introduced in 1969, a variety of research projects have been conducted.

In addition, there are other factors that are taken into account for the future expansion and development of social science research in India. Due to an over-reliance on their western counterparts, social sciences have flawed perceptions that need to be addressed. In this environment, it is important to place an emphasis on research conducted by experts, consideration of research priorities, and reorientation of theoretical and methodological frameworks. The government of India must encourage intellectuals who lack research opportunities in order to stop brain-drain. Research scholars should have adequate financing to assist them both academically and financially. To promote balanced research, social science institutes must host frequent seminars and workshops in underserved and rural areas.

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