

## **Role of Theory In Research And Its Importance**

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### **Abstract**

Theory plays a vital role in research. Theory provides explanation, understanding and meaningfulness to research. Theory helps to predict facts and to identify unexplored areas/research areas. Research without theory is less emphatic to establish the relationship among attributes, variables or data. It, at the outset, should emphatically establish or explain how and why something is as it is in any kind of research. It helps to explain and extend knowledge about a phenomenon. On the other hand, theory and research together lay the foundation for practice. Theory helps to link the abstract and concrete which ultimately results in relevant and research application-oriented practice. This conceptual article substantiates the relevance of theory in research from initiation to end of research/research results.

Keywords: Theory, Theoretical Explanation Knowledge, Conceptual base and guide, Theoretical Content and Context, Research Conception and Conviction, Intellectual personality and Soul.

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### **Introduction:**

Theories act as a conceptual base for understanding and analyzing the research of any nature, be it in natural/ pure sciences or social sciences. Theories are important for explaining a phenomenon. Theories provide simplified explanations of complexity in reality. Theory guides and concludes the research. Theory guides and interprets the results of research/study.

Theory, in research, gives structure, color, complexion, and beauty to the subject matter being discussed from initiation to end. It beautifies your research and gives intellectual personality to your research.

Theory is not data, facts, typologies, taxonomies, or empirical findings. But theories operate at the conceptual level, are based on logic rather than on observations. Whereas, data, facts and findings operate at the empirical or observation level.

Theory provides a context for prediction and can generate new/future research. Theory helps to conduct top-quality research which is rarely possible without theory. Researches of all kinds should have a theoretical base, at the initial stage of inception itself, for the studies in all subject matters. Theory is essential both in quantitative and qualitative research. Theory is relevant in all stages of research.

### **THEORY, AS A BASE, FOR RESEARCH**

Theory, in the context of research, lacks no sanctity. Theory gives sanctity and charm to research despite being given less importance. Research, for that matter, starts with and ends with theory. Theory helps researchers to gain an overall understanding of the concepts involved and concludes with theory that gives sanctum sanctorum to any kind of research, in any field of study. It is being said that research without theory is like a human body without flesh - it is only a skeleton having bones without flesh. It can be inferred that theory gives beauty to research. It entices the people towards research and to see the research in toto and its wholesomeness. Skeleton can never be a beauty, it is only a structure of bones. It is in this context, it is insisted that theory paves and leads the way to the noble thought process of conception and conviction in the outcomes of research. Theory is the soul of research.

It is also being insisted and reiterated by thinkers that the theory helps to see the forest instead of a single tree. Henceforth, the importance of theory, as part and parcel of research, is inevitable and essential, in any field of research.

### **THEORY AS A GUIDE**

Theory, as a fulcrum of research, guides researchers throughout the research process. It guides the researcher in every stage of research from problem formulation to data interpretation. It guides the researchers in every aspect of research. It is rightly being pointed out that “THEORY WITHOUT PRACTICE IS EMPTY; PRACTICE WITHOUT THEORY

IS BLIND”. Theory has a high degree of explanatory power. It gives meaning to the numerical data and thereafter gives beauty to research. The importance of theory is emulated in the following paraphrase as “EXPERIENCE WITHOUT THEORY IS BLIND, WITHOUT THEORY – NOTHING TO LEARN, WITHOUT THEORY – THERE IS NO LEARNING AND THEORY IS A WINDOW INTO THE RESEARCH / WORLD”. It is a base for what to look for and how. You are going nowhere without theory. Theory at the outset is the foundation and guidance for research. In other words, theory is integral to research and research is integral to theory.

### **THEORY AND RESEARCH ARE LIKE SIAMESE TWINS**

Theory helps to carry out full-fledged research. It helps to construct a building beyond a structure alone. In other words, theory helps to build a house that is not only made up of bricks and mortar but the other elements of a building too. Hence, it can be concluded that no research is spanning (without) theory. The anatomy of research reveals not only the bones but also the flesh/theory forming part of the research.

Moreover, theory helps to generate hypotheses that can all be tested by research. Ultimately, the theory and research have a strong relationship between them. Finally, theory and research altogether act as a foundation for practice in reality.

### **THEORY LEADS TO TOP-QUALITY RESEARCH**

The researchers in any field of study have to initiate their research from theory in the respective fields of study. The study of theory provides a background for the study and thereafter guides in every stage of research. The data or numerical numbers may be part of research but they alone cannot satisfy research requirements. On the other hand, the theoretical explanation for such data or numerical numbers gives wholesomeness to research. Hence, theory cannot be excluded in every part of research. This is being emphasized, because in recent years, the researchers, by utilizing statistical software, are giving more importance to numerical data / numbers without giving theoretical explanation or interpretation to the data which they utilized in their research. As stated earlier, a research without theory / theoretical explanation is just like a human body without flesh. In other words, the data with theoretical explanation provides beauty to any kind of research. Let researchers give equal importance to both, to beautify their research whether it is a quantitative or qualitative research. Let researchers reflect such aspects in their study.

## **INTERRELATIONSHIP BETWEEN THEORY AND RESEARCH**

The interrelationship between theory and research is complex. A sound theoretical basis is required for sound research. Theory and research are interdependent to make sense of research outcomes. Theories help to generate hypotheses. Such hypotheses can be proved or disproved with the help of research. Moreover, the research can strengthen the theory or may lead to rejection or revision of theories. The proper theoretical perspective provides meaning and significance to the findings of the study. It presents a systematic view and logical presentation of a phenomenon. The empirical data is being given sense by theory. While theories operate at a conceptual level and are logical whereas data, facts and findings operate at the empirical or observation level. When both of them are integrated, they give a beautiful picture of the study/research.

### **ENDNOTE**

As an end note, it can be concluded that the theory acts as a base for research. It makes the research a full-fledged one like a building beyond a structure alone. It makes research beyond a pile of stones. Theory gives wholesomeness and soul to the research. Any study without theory is like a thorn without a rose. Hence, theory is the foundation on which the superstructure is built - beyond bricks and mortar. No research is possible without theory. Without theory, the research is empty. At the outset, the researchers have to realize the importance of theory whenever they undertake any kind of study/research which would help them to present their results beyond numerical data or numbers alone. This is the present need to focus on by researchers.

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