

14 Judging Research: Is There Even a Need of Evaluating the Research?

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What is research? Research is a process that allows people to explore the facts and knowledge and ascertain them in a systematic way, allowing enlightenment from unknown to known. This statement is composed of two main keywords underlined above. Most of us are aware of the literal meaning of both the words, but in terms of research, it turns out these words are figurative. The fact is, information can always be generated by doing experiments, but the interpretation and analysis of the datasets, clearly depends on the researcher's own perspective, the nature of the question being asked at the beginning and the approach towards it, thereby giving a unique figurative meaning to both the terms. It could be explained further by taking a hypothetical example, suppose there are two researchers, A and B, assigned with a task of analyzing and interpreting the datasets representing the number of restaurants in some small town (X). The data represents the consumption of raw materials used in restaurants like—spices, meat, vegetables, milk, etc. For researcher A, it might reflect simply what people are used to eating in this region. Such an observation is supported by the logical argument made by researcher A that the restaurants are making dishes that people tend to consume more often and thereby, trying to maximize profits. However, what if researcher B sees the problem in an entirely different perspective and argues that the raw material consumption in the restaurants does not necessarily indicate that the observation made by researcher A is true. For supporting his hypothesis, researcher B proposes that the restaurants are producing the dishes made from inexpensive raw materials, and people are accustomed to consuming those dishes, which, in turn, shaped their palette preference and dietary behaviors over a long period. Well, such an observation could only be made if the datasets are analysed systematically and researcher B considered the fact that other restaurants are following the same trend of using inexpensive raw materials for making dishes. Revealing the fact that restaurants in town X are involved in tough competition with each other and produce foods that generate more profits while incurring minimal manufacturing cost.

This example elucidates how the approach of doing research can produce drastically different results in the end. The distinctive methods of doing research were developed over millennia by logical analysis of information by visionaries and several revolutionary minds who existed in these timelines. Essentially research exhibits a

funneling effect whereby, one starts with experiments, observations, analysis of the dataset and ends up in producing few key findings. Irrespective of the discipline in which the research is conducted, the pattern that emerges is the same as mentioned in ancient to modern bibliographic literature. It turns out that every individual is driven by a different motivation to do research. These commonly include:

1. Desire To Be Famous,
2. For The Betterment Of People,
3. In pursuit of Knowledge,
4. Monetary Gains By Translating The Research,
5. Personal Reasons,
6. Reading, Writing, Analysing, and Sharing Information,
7. To Answer Some Long-Standing Questions In History,
8. To Eliminate Doubts, Abolish Lies, Disapprove Myths and Supernatural phenomena.

Every researcher should realize that research not only requires accomplishing certain predefined objectives within a timeframe, but it should begin with a meaningful concern. Therefore, it is very important to choose a topic that is worth all the efforts. Rigorous examination and brainstorming thus become essential to yield credible, coherent and impactful results. The ethical and moral code in research should be strictly followed in reporting the finding(s). If these aforementioned ways of doing research are followed correctly, then the question 'Who Should Judge the Research' becomes irrelevant. According to me, more important is what impact does the research have on humankind. Universally, all the findings are not path-breaking and change the course of further research, but we should appreciate that every discovery is unique in its own way if delivered truthfully no matter how small or big it is, or which disseminating media is used. Even if a significant finding is not acknowledged or is oppressed at first, it is destined to be rediscovered because what may be inconsequential to some may turn out to be a treasure for others. Nonetheless, if needed, research should be evaluated on the criterions like narrative, commitment, peer review, triangulation, reproducibility, transparency, auditing and economization and the translational output or impact.

Research conducted so far in areas of science and technology and art and humanities have allowed the people to excel their views and expand their knowledgebase. Through research, we evolved from logically oblivious cave dwellers to inquisitive thinking entities capable of processing information, making arguments, and improvising to overcome hurdles. We have come to a point in our timeline where

critical decisions made by humanity will dictate its future course and existence. Only time will tell whether we will perish on our beautiful blue planet, or we would break the bounds of physics, explore the mysteries of the quantum world to the vastness of the universe, ultimately finding the true purpose of our existence. For this fantasy to come true, it is imperative that humans should realize that the true meaning of our existence is beyond waging wars, destroying nations, inflicting pain, suppressing intellect, spreading blasphemy and reporting false research for trivial gains. We should understand that the research benefits every one of us if the moment is seized together. We need to progressively keep working together, not just as individuals but as a synchronized conscious system that generates, spreads, and translates the research into everything that is possible. In the end, transcend into a higher civilization and ask ourselves where we go from here. In my view, this would be the greater evaluation of research and the ultimate reward that humanity will ever be able to fetch from it.



Figure 1. A concise map of research, methodology, and some big questions regarding its implications on humanity.



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