



Report

On

**Ten Days Research Methodology Workshop (18th
March 2018 – 27th March 2018)**

**Theme: Researching Subalternity in Social Sciences
& Humanities**

Organized by:

Dr. Ambedkar Chair, Tezpur University (Assam)

In Collaboration with ICSSR, New Delhi



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A ten days research methodology workshop (national level) was organized on the theme ‘Researching Subalternity in Social Sciences & Humanities’ at Tezpur University from 18th to 27th March 2018. The workshop was conducted by Dr. Ambedkar Chair, Tezpur University in collaboration with Indian Council of Social Science Research (ICSSR), New Delhi. The primary aim of organizing such a workshop was to equip doctoral scholars (belonging to social sciences and humanities) working in the area of subalternity, and therefore course (for the workshop) was designed by the coordinators (Prof. K. Kikhi- Chair Professor & Dr. D. R. Gautam- Research Officer, Dr. Ambedkar Chair, Tezpur University) to achieve the same. In tune with the primary aim objectives of the workshop were devised as:

- a) To facilitate and strengthen scholars involved in exploring subalternity
- b) To disseminate comprehension of subalternity in social sciences and humanities to research scholars
- c) To explain ontology, epistemology, and methodology (ies) for researching subalternity
- d) Providing concurrence of subalternity with post-modern concepts as caste, tribe, gender, and minorities
- e) Equipping scholars with qualitative methods supplemented by analysis of quantitative data
- f) Giving empirical exposure from the field
- g) Enabling scholars to prepare their final report, and make their findings conspicuous

In order to have a true national representation in the workshop participants/beneficiaries (37 applicants including local applicants) were selected through recommendations on the applications received till the last date, i.e. 20th February 2018 (187 applications) by the Local Advisory Committee (LAC) of Dr. Ambedkar Chair, Tezpur University. Out of the list of selected 37 applicants, final tally of the participants came to be 30 (including local participants) who have successfully completed the ten days workshop on the said theme. These outstation participants hailed from different institutes like Jawaharlal Nehru University (JNU), Delhi University (DU), Pondicherry University, Central University of Gujarat, Central University of Punjab, Aligarh Muslim University, Mumbai University, University of Madras, University of Hyderabad, Tata Institute of Social Sciences, Anna University, Guwahati University, Berhampur University, and Acharyanagarjuna University (List enclosed).

As mentioned previously in our application, the resource persons were the one with expertise in the respective fields and associated with some of the institutions of eminence. The list with detailed information about resource persons was shared as an enclosure with our application which finally got approved from ICSSR. As conveyed the workshop was organized as a collaboration where expenditure on some of the resource persons (three in number) were to be borne by Dr. Ambedkar Chair (mentioned in the previously shared list). There were fifteen resource persons (4- outside state, 4- within state, and 7- local resource persons) to be supported by ICSSR, New Delhi out of which two (within state) could not make it, and were replaced by two additional local resource persons whose expenditure was not included in the total expenditure towards fund from ICSSR.

As per the schedule, the workshop began on 18th March 2018 sharp at 9.00 a.m. with a welcome address by Prof. K. Kikhi whereby he made the participants aware about the theme of the workshop, and the rationale behind it in social context. He further gave a brief overview of the ten days' workshop to the participants to add more clarity to the participants apart from familiarity.

Day One: 18th March, 2018, Sunday

Session 1: Inaugural Address and Discussion with the Participants

The first session started with opening remarks by Dr. D R Gautam, Research Officer, Dr. Ambedkar Chair, who started the discussion by shedding light on the similarity between Social Sciences and Humanities and the complexities of drawing distinctions between the two. This was followed by a set of formal announcements for the participants.

This was followed by the felicitation of Professor S K Dutta, Former Dean, School of Humanities and Social Sciences, and Dr. Amiya Kumar Das, Assistant Professor, Department of Sociology, Tezpur University by Professor K. Kikhi, Dr. Ambedkar Chair Professor, Tezpur University.



Addressing the Inaugural session of the ICSSR Sponsored National Level Ten Days Research Methodology Workshop themed on Researching Subalternity in Social Sciences and Humanities, Professor Dutta emphasized on the need to adhere to respective guidelines of the parent Universities of the participants. He also expressed his concern about pre-conceived notions in research and how detrimental it could be to the process of research. Further, he encouraged the participants to engage in reading more books highlighting that mere use of Google for the access of information would not be able to generate new knowledge. In conclusion to his address, he wished the participants a fruitful stay and hoped that they would return with rich knowledge and pleasant memories.



Carrying forward from Professor Dutta, Dr. Gautam insisted on the need to contest pre-conceived notions to avoid research bias. He further highlighted how the extensive use of Google for knowledge creation leads to a lack of creativity and thus limits the generation of new knowledge.

Thereafter addressing the participants, Dr. Das, engaged the participants towards understanding of social research. He asserted that ‘Thinking’ and ‘Asking Questions’ formed the core of any research activity. He further argued that, although the West holds domination in the field of Humanities and Social Sciences, Indians have been aptly successful in contributing to the

consortium of knowledge especially in the field of subaltern studies and thus directing the participants to the significance of holding such a workshop. He concluded his address on a similar note with the previous speakers, by encouraging the participants to look beyond the 'Google Guru' if they in fact wanted to generate new knowledge.

The participants to the workshop, then introduced themselves and their PhD topics. Professor Kikhi, speaking on the diverse nature of the participants asserted that the resource persons would be communicated the same to cater to the needs of all the participants. The concluding remarks came from Dr. Gautam.

Session 2: Synopsis Development, Topic Selection and Group Division for Field Visit

Prof K. Kikhi began the second session of the workshop that began with basics of social research. He presented why social sciences or humanities need to organize workshops of this nature vis-à-vis the requirements of the job market, and what ought to be the nature of this kind of workshops. He focuses on the value of social research and pushes the participants to go beyond the marketability to real social relevance that would make their research experience alive. He emphasized that this would be a challenge worth engaging.

After stating the importance of social research, he explained what research is by briefly elucidation inductive and deductive ways of doing research. In preparing the synopsis, he provided with the important points to be noted by every researcher.

1. The statement of the problem
2. Literature Review
3. Statement of Need
4. Statement of Significance
5. Theoretical Framework
6. Method/Design
7. Time frame
8. Budget
9. Bibliography & References



After the presentation, D.R. Gautam took over to provide a brief summary of what synopsis presentation is and answered the questions of the participants. He also discussed the programme schedule of the workshop and the activities that each participant has to engage in. The first exercise as explained, was to develop a synopsis that should fall under any one of the 6 broad themes given to them. The themes were:

1. Issues of Marginalization in the wake of Globalization
2. Silent Exclusion in the Diversified Indian Classroom
3. Multiple Disadvantages : Context of Indian Women
4. India as a Nation: Perspectives about Differing Realities of Minorities
5. Assertion ensuring chaos & hence Empowerment
6. Tribes in the Development of India: Exploration about Different Challenges

The second exercise would be a fieldwork experience where the participants were divided into three groups to understand how ethnography, focus group discussions and case study can be done. The theme selected for the fieldwork is 'Unraveling Subaltern Dimensions'.

Session 3: Movie screening and discussion '*EK RUKA HUA FAISLA*'

Summary of the film: 'Ek Ruka Hua Faisla', the 1986 Hindi film, directed by renowned filmmaker Basu Chatterjee, is a remake of the Golden Bear winning American motion picture '12 Angry Men' of 1957. The film revolves around a 19-year-old boy who has been alleged as a murderer of his father by the court. A panel of twelve jurors is appointed to decide whether the boy is guilty or not. Jurors have to form a unanimous decision which will lead to the boy's death sentence if found guilty. At the beginning all eleven jurors agreed that the boy was guilty except one juror. Despite their repetitive efforts to convince the eight juror, he stood on his ground firmly and did not alter his opinion. Being bestowed with democratic, supportive and transformational leadership qualities, the eight juror highlighted new facts about the case which eventually showed that the boy was not guilty. The other jurors subsequently started to change their minds and voted in favor of the accused boy. The third juror was however aggressive and has a sense of self-importance and did try to prove that the boy was guilty but finally gave up.



Discussions on the film: The participants put forward their perspective about the content and style of the film. Societal problems being portrayed in the film like class stratification, relation between power and dominance, stigmatizing poor people, stereotyping, hostile treatment to minorities, silencing minor voices through hegemony, etc. were addressed by the participants. D.R. Gautam concluded the session elaborating that the characteristics of the eight juror is ought to be followed by the researchers; one has to be rise above personal biases to seek truth and must have openness to experience. A high degree of intellectual curiosity, creativity and a preference for novelty will take a researcher to empirical reality. A researcher must be an active constructivist possessing the capability to think logically and take part in group discussion and should also be an attentive listener.



Day Two: 19th March, 2018, Monday

Session 1: Researching Subalternity (Keynote address)

In the first session of second day of National Level Ten Days Research Methodology workshop on Researching Sabalternity in Social Sciences & Humanity, Prof N. Sukumar from University of Delhi gave his keynote address which was held in screening hall of Department of Mass Communication and Journalism, Tezpur University. Addressing the session prof Sukumar specially focused on the emergence and current trends in the area of subaltern study. Prof Sukumar emphasized on the need to retrospect and said that horizon of the study needed to be widen. He also mentioned that it was not only history and politics but subaltern study should cover other area of academia too.



Prof Sukumar also highlighted the emergence and need of interdisciplinary research and said “Much more interdisciplinary study is emerging thus subaltern study also should look towards it.” He also highlighted the need for connecting different discipline if it comes to caste.

Talking about history and emergence of subaltern study in 1980s Prof Sukumar said that it challenged the dominant paradigm i.e. criticism of western research. He said that European Scholars claimed that Indian doesn’t know how to unite history. Sukumar also asked “Did subaltern scholars address real problems and whether it came up to expectations?” he also criticized about the introduction of elitism in the area.



Highlighting the importance of literature in subaltern studies Sukumar mentioned the works of ‘Kamla Devi’ which raised the issue of sufferings of Dalit women.

Prof Sukumar also talked about construction of caste and varna system. He said, “caste is not just a reference point, it is like a community having root in culture and tradition”. Stressing on the need of strong relation between academia and activism Sukumar said “Academician cannot be arm chair larder who only talk about social issues. Talking about need of and importance of

creativity in research he also said that if someone was trying to deconstruct the existing knowledge then he/she must have innovative rationality.

Session 2 - Comprehending Equity

The 2nd Session of the day was started by Dr. D.R. Gautam. He introduced the resource person for the session Dr. Rajkumar who is an Associate Professor in the University of Delhi. The lecture began after felicitation of the resource person by Ms. Gayatri, a participant of the workshop and scholar from Tezpur University.

The lecture circled around the difference between equality and equity and the need to study conditions that brought about socio-economic disparities. In schools, students are treated as equal as possible, however, regardless of the equality, we see different results. Rajkumar said that it is important to address the hours students spend outside of school, since it is these hours that define the outcome of a student's performance. In other words, the socio-economic disparity that divides individuals outside the classroom defines performance.



The speaker mentioned the need for activism and to educate ourselves to social realities. He further went on to state that the issue of equity in India centers on Brahmin control over education. Capitalism, in extension can be equated to Brahminism since capitalism produces false consciousness about merit and leads to accumulation of wealth as opposed to communism where an individual produce as per their capacity and takes as per their need.

The lecture then revolved around the need for – 1) Distributive Justice, and 2) Corrective Justice. The latter calls for societal restructuring; a ruler might be in his position wrongfully, thereby, the need for corrective justice as a tool for equity. The speaker discussed the former using John Rawls' *Theory of Justice*, a work of political philosophy and ethics, in which the author attempts to solve the problem of distributive justice.

The latter part of the lecture dealt with Charles Tilly's *Durable Inequality*, denial of opportunity, hoarding of opportunity by the elite, vertical inequalities and horizontal inequalities. The speaker concluded with the sentence, "Equity is a process and equality is the outcome."

After a series of question and answer with the speaker, the session was concluded by a few summarized points given by Dr. D.R. Gautam.

Session 3: Understanding the concept

This session was taken by Prof. N. Sukumar who initiated the discussion through the concept of 'Self'. The concept of "Self" as an idea, where we locate our self as a Subject. There are two things myself and other self. "I" depends on individual self and we cannot understand the subjectivity of "I" in isolation. Self is key side of human experiences and its increasing sense internal fragmentation and chaos like how individual self is alienated and different intellectual.

Imagine yourself before 20 years and after 20 years, there is huge of difference. There is always difference when we imagine our self in private room, public gathering, before marriage, after marriage so on.

Self at cognition level, where we make ourselves different from other and we think we are unique from other people. At the time when someone says any things which create cognitive dissonance in our mind then we simply reject that thing. How other person looking me that question keep roaming in our mind which is negative process. Other person idea about us which creates cognitive dissonance makes us disturb. Some time we feel shameful to reveal our identity in front of others because we think they might judge our certain values.



In our society we are hegemonies by symbol, space, language, institutions and socio-economic practices. If some says that we can't do that thing that time we ask question to our self is it really "I can do or not" and it's called self-actualization. In other words, for our purposes, self-actualization can be thought of as the full realization of one's creative, intellectual, or social

potential. “The psychological process aimed at maximizing the use of a person’s abilities and resources. This process may vary from one person to another” (Couture et al., 2007).

Counter Hegemony is a push and pull struggle among people of all classes. It is the state of a culture that is arrived at through negotiation over what the norm or 'common sense' should be. This relates to the way in which people experience and understand reality and view the world.

For doing research it’s not necessary to follow the same research methodology but for that we must have knowledge of existing methodology.

Session 4: Looking Caste

Dr. Rajkumar who was the resource person for this session began the lecture by contesting that there seems to be no relation or institution which does not come into conflict with caste. He stressed on the aspect that caste and untouchability is not one way round. There is always an object and the other is subject. Some wants caste to perpetuate so portrays only one side of the picture whereby the hierarchical structure comes out to the fore. In a way, it is the people who become the prisoners of conspiracy. So, he largely emphasized that a single understanding of caste must be broken, instead it should be looked at from a non-conformist perspective. He criticized Andre Beteille for describing about caste in isolation and also criticized M.N. Srinivas on the usage of terminologies Brahminization and Sanskritization.

Further he talked about caste in three ways- Caste as Hegemony, Caste as Spiritual Fascism and Caste as Politics. He explained as to how hegemony existed on its own way. Institutions like family, religion, school, etc. becomes agencies of perpetuating such ideals. He made mention of Rousseau that if you want to perpetuate your authority permanently, make your authority as your right. In caste, as spiritual fascism he described how fascism commands absolute obedience; irrational attitude being the hallmark of fascism and also talked about how the elements of deceit and violence get perpetuated eventually and finally in caste as politics, he described how it is always the rulers or the dominant caste which rules over the others. It operates at various socio-cultural-political levels of the society. It also depends on who gets what, when and how which very much implies the process of legitimate use of power being discussed by Max Weber.

Day Three: 20th March, 2018, Tuesday

Session 1: Methodological Issues in Understanding Subalternity

The first session started with the introduction of Professor N Jayaram, Visiting Professor at the National Law School of India University, Bengaluru and Ambedkar University Delhi, and Visiting Research Mentor at Christ University, Bengaluru. Considered an authority in the field of Research Methodology, Professor Jayaram has authored over 140 research papers and 300 book reviews. Professor Kikhi, Dr. Amberkar Chair Professor, Tezpur University felicitated Prof. Jayaram.

Addressing the participant at the ICSSR Sponsored National Level Ten Days Research Methodology Workshop themed on Researching Subalternity in Social Sciences and Humanities, Professor Jayaram emphasized on the intricacies of method, in other words Methodological Issues in Understanding Subalternity.

Drawing on the history of the existence of literature associated with understanding the idea of subaltern studies, he asserted that for the time when the first book on subaltern studies was published in 1982, there had been 12 subsequent volumes with over 1000 essays that had been published. Emphasizing on the need to understand subaltern studies as a method in itself, Professor Jayaram insisted on the need to introspect on the concept of subalternity, as a whole and not simply as a perspective.

He further went on to draw on the roots of the word subaltern, asserting that the same had been pulled in from the Latin equivalent – ‘subalternus’; ‘sub’ meaning ‘below’ and ‘alternus’ meaning “every other”, thus making it “below every other”.

He went on to distinguish between ‘subaltern’ and ‘subalternity’ stating how the subaltern, as a concept indicated ‘of inferior rank’ which he asserted that, could mean, subaltern caste, subaltern in terms of religion, subaltern in terms of gender, subaltern in terms of race – which could also be in the same society and last but not the least sexuality. Subalternity on the other hand, he reiterated is an attribute and essentially meant ‘being a subaltern’. In terms of the operationalization of subalternity, Professor Jayaram argued that, if one is a subaltern he/ she would share at least one of the following attributes – dispossession, marginalization, oppression, exclusion or exploitation.

To move further on the epistemological position of subaltern studies, Professor Jayaram contested the age old saying that ‘Facts speak for themselves’ while asserting that ‘Facts need to be always inevitably explained’. Building on the spirit of constructivism, he opined that social reality doesn’t have meaning of its own but it’s Human Beings who give meaning to them, in other words, is socially constructed and the evidence of this he indicated was clearly visible in “Ek Ruka Hua Faisla”, the film that was screened the previous day. Quoting Max Webber, he went on to further add that human beings have the capability of giving meaning to their actions and this is the reason why social scientists have to face complexities in conducting research.

Again going back to history, Professor Jayaram described how the epistemological position of subaltern studies in 1982, when the first book on the subject was published, was completely elitist in nature. He asserted that the authors of the time were mostly ‘the white men’ or upper-caste male members of Indian society. Knowledge of our history, he said, is confined only to the top-down model making it, most often than not – incomplete and at times even distorted. To consolidate his argument, he cited the example of how the British anthropologists and administrators looked down on Indian traditions and customs perceiving them from the Victorian frame of reference.

Highlighting the relationship between Gramsci's hegemony and the concept of subalternity, Professor Jayaram insisted as to how the respective concepts were actually in a state of classic dualism, implying that if one understood either of the concepts the other is only natural to imbibe. Even so, in the first book on subaltern studies, published in 1982, authored by Ranajit Guha, used dictionary meaning of the word subaltern instead of building on the concept of hegemony and this is for what Ludden later criticizes Guha, asserting that the non-usage of the concept of hegemony only indicates a theoretical vacuum on the part of Guha.

Concluding his lecture, Professor Jayaram dwelled on the concept of standpoint epistemology while also arguing against solipsism, stating that such a stance is too radical in nature and if such is the case, groups such as children, on whom extensive research is being carried out is not possible. Asserting on the need to take into account the idea of the 'social construction of reality', he urged the participants to conduct their research in the respective manner.

The lecture was followed by a vivid question and answer round with intriguing insights being put forth in the discussion. Subsequently, with the concluding remarks of Dr. D R Gautam, Research Officer, Dr. Amberkar Chair, the session was brought to a close.



Session 2: Social Theory & Research Methods

Prof. N. Jayaram began his session by stating that biasness is something inevitable in our research. In this context he mentioned about Max Weber who argued that to deal with biasness we need to recognize our bias in the very beginning.

He then mentioned that in research we generally do two sets of inter-related activities i) asking question ii) attempt to answer. While asking questions we ask both theoretical questions and empirical questions. He made it clear that to formulate theoretical questions we only need different theories, whereas to formulate empirical questions we need to have evidence in the form of data. Data can be both primary and secondary. Primary data consists of both quantitative

as well as qualitative data. In this context he mentioned about advantage and limitation of using secondary data. As secondary data is not collected for our own purpose it may not adapt to our study, but it is easily available. Secondary data gives objectivity, trends and pattern.

Jayram also talked about methods of collecting primary data in his lecture. He mentioned about four main methods of collecting primary data i) Interview ii) Observation iii) texts iv) content analysis.

He in the later part of his session talked about different methods separately. He mentioned that interview consists of giving stimulus to people and collecting response. In interview there are four instruments which help into collecting response. They are- a) questionnaire b) Interview schedule c) interview guide / checklist d) focus group discussion. He mentioned that Observation can be of two types i.e. Participant observation and non-participant observation. A participant observation is conducted when one does qualitative research or ethnography. Texts can be of three types Oral, script and visual. Content analysis can be done both in qualitative as well as quantitative way.

He also pointed out that in case of questionnaire and interview schedule stimulus is artificial whereas in case of interview guide and focus group discussion stimulus is more contextual and hence more natural. In case of secondary data ontology is not reflexive therefore epistemology goes with it is positivistic. In qualitative study people who are chosen for asking questions called respondents whereas in case of qualitative study they are called participants. Prof. Jayram ended his session by stating that for research three things have to be considered in mind, i.e. time, money and energy.

Session 3: Researching the area in Humanities

The session started after lunch at 2:00 P.M with an introduction by Prof. K. Kikhi about the speaker - Mousumi Guha Banerjee. Dr. Banerjee teaches in the department of English Literature, EFLU, Shillong.

Dr. Banerjee started her talk by referring to the book, Orientalism by Edward Said and mentioned that “it was the point where consciousness began that the Orient can even think of themselves”, and contrasted with that of Marx who said that the Orient cannot think for themselves. She mentioned about Gayatri Spivak, Ranajit Guha and Homi. K. Bhaba and that they were trying to reformulate the relationship between the Occident and the Orient, and de-occidentalize the Orient.

Dr. Banerjee with the help of a power-point presentation delivered a very highly animated and energetic talk. She discussed about various issues like subaltern consciousness, importance of practice of theory, objectivity, Orientalism, Self and Other, representation, and the nature of selection is important for the researcher. She also mentioned de-otherising the other, and that the East is not a career, but rather it has its own reality. She particularly mentioned four important points – Master-narrative, Hegemony, Resistance and Hybridization. She also mentioned about Foucault’s distinction between author and writer and made a reference to the famous book,

‘Emperor Writes Back: Theory and Practice in Post-Colonial Literature’ by Bill Ashcroft, Gareth Griffiths and Helen Tiffin.

In her talk, she initially started with Post-Colonial studies with Guha’s quote and then proceeded to discuss the concept of Subaltern studies where she mentioned about famous Historians who contributed to this scholarship. She defined the term ‘subaltern’ and then talked about how it is relevant to Third World countries. Here, she mentioned about Homi K. Bhaba’s post-colonial theory which involves analysis of nationality, ethnicity and politics with post-structuralist ideas of identity and indeterminacy, defining postcolonial identities as shifting, hybrid constructions. She also mentioned about the challenges facing post-colonial writers. She emphasized that when it comes to English literature, it is not just confined to British literature but includes all writings that are in English.

In her very engaging talk, there were numerous discussions between the participants and the speaker throughout. She encouraged everyone right from the start to participate by asking queries, no matter how irrelevant they might be. There was a lot of discussion after the talk and everyone benefited from the proceedings.



Session 4: Analysing Gender Dynamics

The session started after the tea-break at 4:15 P.M and Dr. Banerjee talked about gender studies in this session and she began with Simone de Beauvoir iconic quote, “One is not born, but rather becomes a woman”. Talking about gender, she said that gender is truly ubiquitous and emphasized ‘*degendering*’ of gender.

Her talk was divided into three parts and she used slides. She gave a basic understanding of sex and gender. She referred to Simone de Beauvoir’s famous book “The Second Sex” and stressed on the term ‘essence’. She also that gender is not a fact and that the various acts of gender create the idea of gender. She distinguished between biological sex and social gender. She discussed

Simone's argument that women's inferior position is not a natural or biological fact but one that is created by society. Here she mentioned about Ferdinand de Saussure's concept of 'signifier' and 'signified' and Derrida's 'difference'. Emphasizing the relationship between texts and contexts, she said that whole lot of contexts lie beneath texts and that texts can be anything (picture, film, folktales etc). According to her view, gender is not just about women, it is also about men and that there is a misconception of 'womanization' in gender studies.

She highlighted the most important question in gender studies which is the debate over equality, also known as equality-difference debate. Discussing difference between men and women is problematic as it might reinforce the hierarchy. In such cases, equality becomes difficult. She referred to the work of many well renowned scholars in gender studies. She differed with Sherry Ortner's idea of women having a secondary status in society, and women being closer to nature while men being closer to culture. She also cited other scholars such as Hester Euisenstein, Alica Jardine, Ann Snitrow, Ann Oakley and their works along with their arguments. Her talk touched upon many concepts such as masculinity, femininity, feminine writings, eternal feminine, binary division, liberation of women, maximizers, minimizers, center and periphery and others.

Her talk was long and it evoked discussion and debate among the participants. She discussed the many contemporary issues in gender studies and raised some important questions for the researchers. She concluded by saying that gender studies must be a humanist discourse, it is not just about women. Her energetic delivery made it a very interesting talk.

Day Four: 21st March, 2018, Wednesday

Session 1: Religious Minorities in Social Sciences & Humanities

The 1st session of the day began with a brief introduction and felicitation respectively by Prof. K. Kikhi, and Dr. Gautam of Ambedkar Chair, Tezpur University.

Prof F.A. Qadri of NEHU, Department of History deliberated on the topic of 'Religious Minorities in Social Sciences & Humanities'. He had written works in both English and Urdu and is an expert in Medieval Indian History. He had been a visiting fellow in Oxford University, twice in University of London, and has worked in Canada and Paris as well.

Prof Qadri began his lecture with Ibn Khaldun's contribution to sociology. He considered him as the "real father of Sociology" since his contributions, which were important and extensive, dates back to the 14th Century. The question that Ibn Khaldun wanted to answer was 'what kept society together', therefore, paving a way for theories of social cohesion. Prof Qadri also talked about the brief biography of Ibn Khaldun and how he began his academic profession.



The speaker said that some of the central formulae of modern age academics are reflected in Ibn Khaldun's theories. Karl Marx's Stages of Human History, which provided the dynamics for dialectics; the conflicts between groups that led to dialectics of materialism, Max Weber's typology of leadership, Vilfredo Pareto's Circulation of Elites, among many others. They seem to be the by-product of Ibn Khaldun's philosophies which prevailed in North Africa and Muslim Spain.

Prof Qadri also talked about Abdul Fazal and his contributions that highlight two types of Muslim historiography – a) Arab Historiography b) Iranian-Persian Historiography. Abdul Fazal combined Persian historiography with the conspectus of Arab historiography which was a unique approach at the time.

After discussions on Indian Historiography, the speaker ended of his lecture by going into economic history where he talked about two economists – a) Abid Hussain, and b) A.M. Khusro, after which questions were taken from the students. The session was concluded by Dr. D.R. Gautam where he gave comments as well as summaries on the topics of the lecture.

Session 2: Doing Tribal Research

The session was taken by Prof. Virginius Xaxa, Professor of Eminence, Tezpur University. He began by questioning how we conceptualize 'tribe'. He also said that tribe is often discredited as concept, so he stressed that a perspective is important to reflect substantive issues of tribe. He tried to locate tribe from the colonial era, from how it was a kinship led group to a more administrative category. Tribes today are a mismatch as to how it was described and how it actually is. It was thought to be homogenous, but this notion does not hold true as it is as diverse and complex in reality. They are thought to be as people without history but that does not mean that they do not have history. Conceptualisation of tribe is important, some refer it as ethnic minorities and sometimes it is also referred to as language, caste, etc. Tribe is a society where kin relations become important in discussing its foundation. He discussed how tribes were autonomous earlier but gradually becomes a part of the larger structure by incorporating them within the colonial state. Thereon they were integrated in terms of land, market economy, apart from politics which in a way led to their further impoverishment from this earlier subsistent

existence. In this context marginality should be understood as they no longer remain autonomous.



He also discussed as to how the tribals faced historical injustice and how they became victims of double colonialism- Colonialism of whites and colonialism of browns. He discussed that the problems of the tribals should be addressed by locating them within the social structure overlooking the structure that colonialism created. He also stressed the fact that the more they are integrated; the worst is the status and the less they are integrated more is the autonomy. But they are getting absorbed into the larger Hindu society. So he concluded by emphasizing on the fact that the tribals should be looked at from their own independent identity, that is their own respective tribes instead of looking at them in terms of their changes from a general context.

Session 3: Research Design & Sampling

Prof. Kikhi began his session with the introduction of research design. When the social science researches tend to focus more and more on qualitative and field intensive work, where one does locate research design and sampling is an important question. To locate research design, Prof. Kikhi briefly explained what is a research problem, review of literature and formulation of hypothesis, after which the researcher needs to construct his/her research design. In simple words, he defined research design as the cumulative decisions taken by the researcher concerning his/her research questions and problem. He quoted P. V. Young who defines research design as the arrangement of conditions for collection of data in a way that it is meaningful. It can be regarded as the blueprint for the collection of data and measurement of data. To sum up, it is the decisions of 'what' 'why' 'where' 'who' and 'how' questions of the research and based on what questions are asked by the researcher, it will define what kind of research it will become.



One of the important decisions to be taken while constructing the research design is regarding sample design. Prof. Kikhi described the various types of research design

1. Observational Design
2. Statistical Design
3. Operational Design

After this, Prof. Kikhi explained the steps involved in sample design which are decisions regarding type of universe, sampling unit, source list and sample size. Once sample size is decided based on whether the universe is finite or infinite and what the research problem demands, there are various approaches to select the sample. Prof. Kikhi elaborated the broad two ways- probability and non-probability sampling technique in which sample for data collection is selected. He detailed each type of sampling techniques within probability and non-probability sampling with examples.

1. Simple random sampling/chance sampling
2. Systematic sampling
3. Stratified sampling
4. Stratified random sampling
5. Quota sampling
6. Cluster sampling
7. Area sampling
8. Purposing sampling
9. Convenience sampling
10. Judgment sampling
11. Snowball sampling

The session ended with clearing of doubts among the participants regarding different types of sampling techniques.

Session 4: Discourse Analysis

The session went underway with the introduction of Professor D P Nath, Department of Culture Studies, Tezpur University, who was introduced and subsequently felicitated by Professor Kikhi, Dr. Amberkar Chair Professor, Tezpur University.



Elaborating on the concept of Discourse Analysis, Professor Nath, insisted that Discourse Analysis teaches one to be critical of ‘commonsensical taken for granted knowledge’. He opined that knowledge is not objective for a discourse analyst as it depends on the analyst, as to which perspective they want to adopt.

Emphasizing on the fact that one’s interpretation of reality is culture/ society specific and changes with the passage of time, Professor Nath, insisted that knowledge is in fact generated through social interaction creating room for multiple realities.

He went on to describe how discourse analysis is not limited to the field of linguistics and essentially consists of socio-cultural perspectives. He further highlighted how the social and cultural perspectives of discourse are in fact interrelated to language. Quoting Foucault, Professor Nath argued that discourse generates knowledge about all forms of truth encompassing knowledge while language shapes our knowledge of reality.

Critical Discourse Analysis(CDA), he asserted provides theories on how discourse could be studied to find out its relations with social and cultural developments in different social domains. Shedding light on Norman Fairclough’s approach to Critical Discourse Analysis through intertextuality and critically evaluating the same, Professor Nath insisted that text analysis is not sufficient for discourse analysis – because it does not provide the scope to link societal, cultural and structural processes. Although Critical Discourse Analysis is political in nature and not bias free, yet the method is justified by its functions, which Professor Nath described as relational and ideational.

He further, in the context of Foucault and his concept of power, asserted that it shouldn't be looked at from an oppressive angle but also added that inequality is also inevitably perpetuated through language to maintain the status quo.

Concluding his lecture, Professor Nath went on to describe the 3 levels of discourse analysis – micro, meso and macro and the importance of discourse analysis in developing an understanding on how specific actors construct an argument and how these arguments fit into wider social practices.

The lecture was followed by a vivid interaction session with intriguing insights being put forth in the discussion. Subsequently, with the concluding remarks of Dr. D R Gautam, Research Officer, Dr. Amberkar Chair, the session came to a close.

Day Five: 22nd March, 2018, Thursday

Session 1: The Subaltern in Literary Theory/Criticism

Prof. Danta started his talk by speaking on the 'subaltern' in literature and to explain his point he gave the example of songs like Waka Waka by Shakira that are actually songs of resistance, pain, anger etc. but nowadays these songs become songs of celebration for the middle class. He said that it is something similar when it comes to subaltern literature and often the original meaning gets lost. Here, he spoke a bit about activists and academicians and that neither of them like each other.



Prof Danta, with the help of different type of songs, described how songs can be a way of resistance and that songs have their own history and they are interpreted differently by different people at different times. Songs often contain secret messages. He gave the examples of songs like 'Sheela ki Jawani' which originated in Bombay bars, are misappropriated by different people.

He also talked about the lives of blacks in America, slavery etc. He mentioned economic aspects related to slavery and how sugar trade played an important role in the spread of slavery in the West. He mentioned how literature, taking the example of Shakespeare's *Tempest*, legitimizes 'Othering of Others'. He also touched upon sensitive issues like representation of rape by media, illogical defence of caste system by giving many examples.

Prof. Danta's talk was informative, interesting and well-structured. It evoked curiosity amongst the participants and there was an engaging discussion throughout the session. He patiently interacted with all the participants during the question-answer session after the talk.

Session 2: Reading Texts & Subalternity

Prof. Das started by speaking about his topic for the session, 'Reading texts' and he used slides to show texts. The first slide was an ambiguous picture and he stressed on interpreting signs. The second slide was a poem where he asked the participants to give their views. The main focus was on interpretation of the text and he said, "Interpretation may give different results even if it involves data". In the next slide, he spoke about Gandhi who used to write in Gujarati but being a practical person, he translated his writings into English. Gandhi justified writing his autobiography, which is a western method saying that there is no harm in adopting and indigenizing foreign practices and institutions if they were not patently evil.

Prof Das described the idea of deconstruction by citing the works of different authors and their works. Deconstruction is the practice of reading, removing contradictions, it is not an irresponsible act and that is its relation with subalternity. He gave many examples of authors and their works to explain 'Deconstruction' like Barbara Johnson's *Teaching Deconstructively* (1985) and Barthes/BalZac (1975), Paul de Man's *Semiotics and Rhetoric* (1973). To make the participants understand the process of deconstruction, he used many poems and writing from different writers.



He discussed Roland Barthes' Death of the Author where he explained the concept of writerly-readerly, the former meaning active reading and the latter meaning passive reading respectively. Barthes' work shows the destruction of the authority of the author. He also discussed Hayden White's Metahistory (1973) in which he said that history is not neutral; rather it is subject of exercise and the plot of the event is important to construct texts. And the same applies to subaltern studies. According to Prof Das, reading skill is a complex game and it is important to study the writer of the text, meaning is slippery. And post-structuralists see all knowledge as textual.

During his talk, he also discussed these concepts - Orientalism, marginalized meaning, dominant meaning objective stable reality, discourse, gender construction, Feminism, post-colonialism. He concluded by saying that we need to read for ourselves and we make choices. It was a very brief yet enlightening talk and there was a short discussion at the end.

Session 3: Doing Ethnography

The resource person for this session was Dr. Madhurima Goswami who began by describing about ethnography and continued the rest of the lecture based on the video being displayed related to her doctoral work. She stressed the fact that rapport building with the host populations becomes very important in order to have a proper understanding of them. She also mentioned about Cultural Systems Paradigm where ideas, values, etc becomes important for understanding particular cultural system. She also discussed about atic and amic strategies in doing fieldwork and also how space and time plays an important role while doing ethnographic research. Space does not have identity of its own, we give them. So what is true must be brought out rather than using our own logic or exaggerating a phenomenon. The difference between real ethnography and critical ethnography were also highlighted in the lecture.



Session 4: Triangulation

Dr. D.R. Gautam of Tezpur University gave the lecture on the topic of Triangulation in social science research. It was started off the students who were asked to give their take on what the term meant to them. The speaker then continued the lecture by introducing Denzin's 1978 work where he mentions that triangulation in social science means the mixing of methods, mainly qualitative and quantitative.

It has similarities with an appeal made in a cricket match where the umpire requests a second opinion from a third umpire. Bringing another viewpoint to the decision process helps the umpire to make a more accurate decision, highlighting that the same can be done in social science research using the triangulation method.



The speaker then explained the different types of triangulation given by Campbell and Fiske (1959) which are – 1) Data Triangulation – where you'd have more than one data regarding the same research problem, 2) Investigator Triangulation – where there will be more than one investigator working on the same research problem, 3) Theoretical Triangulation – where the investigator uses more than one theoretical framework for the research problem, and 4) Methodological Triangulation – where a combination of different research methods would be used to arrive at a conclusion.

The need for more than one viewpoint, questions, methods and data, Dr. Gautam said, is because the a few samples may not be enough to arrive at an accurate conclusion. There is a need to arrive at a commonality of finding – a cumulative congruence.

After the speaker talked about the different basic paradigms of social science research (ontology, epistemology and methodology), the lecture was concluded by highlighting the advantages of using triangulation methods – 1) enhancement of understanding, 2) widening of viewpoint, 3) value free concepts, 4) uncovering the deviant of a phenomenon, and 5) integration of theories.

The last session of the day was concluded after a brief question and answer session.

Day Six: 23rd March, 2018, Friday

Session 1: Glimpses of Researches undertaken in North-East India

Addressing the participants at the ICSSR Sponsored National Level Ten Days Research Methodology Workshop themed on Researching Subalternity in Social Sciences and Humanities, Dr. Paul Pudussery started off his lecture with describing the 21st century as the century of knowledge. He argued that, this is a particular age where one is flooded by knowledge - while knowledge for scientists lurks around in their labs, for the social scientist the lab is the world around them.

Emphasizing on the techniques of seeking knowledge or 'knowing', Dr. Pudussery reiterated that knowledge could be obtained either through empirical or non-empirical means. While non-empirical means of seeking information consisted of authority, logic, intuition and mysticism; empirical means of collecting information consists of science, drowned in data and commonsense, which Dr. Pudussery, on a lighter note opined, is not quite common.



For social science researchers, he insisted, that there is a need to fuse methodology of the west and the antiquity of the east so as to generate a 'glocalised' approach to social sciences research. He went on to explain how adaptation is an essential component of research.

Shedding light on the flow of research in great detail, he went on to emphasize on importance of reviewing literature at every stage of the research flow. Carrying forward the discussion, Dr. Pudussery listed down at least ten revolutions of recent times that affected research, they being: knowledge and information revolution, economic and technological revolution, population revolution, social relationship revolution, globalization and localization revolution, ecological and aesthetics and value revolution.

On the topic of the kind of research being conducted in the North-East, Dr. Pudussery highlighted that most of the research was anthropological in nature. Citing works like 'unruly', hills he further suggested that there was a need to look at more comparative perspectives with

reference to ethnographic studies conducted on tribes of the region. He reiterated that mere ethnography conducted on one particular tribe was not enough at least for doctoral theses, which, he opined required more academic rigor.

The lecture was followed with a brief but fruitful interaction with intriguing insights being put forth by participant in the discussion. Subsequently, with the concluding remarks of Dr. D R Gautam, Research Officer, Dr. Amberkar Chair, Tezpur University, the session came to a close.

Session 2: Case-Study

Paul Pudussery began his lecture by pointing out that there are two types of researchers .One is quantitative and another one is qualitative based on two different methods. But he clearly preferred mixed method over one method because according to him one single method cannot justify the research in social sciences. He mentioned that in most of the ethnographic studies we went back to past, most of which we don't understand.

He then pointed out the task of researcher as problem solving actors and mention about steps of the processes of this problem solving. The steps as mentioned by him are-

- i) Recognize ii) Define iii) Evaluate iv) Make decision v) Generate idea.

Pudussery also talked about constructive processes and further mentioned about its characteristics. These are –

- I) Sources (institutionalization / de-institutionalization)
- ii) Understanding (compartmentalization, de- compartmentalization)
- iii) Structure (static and dynamic)
- v) Nature of knowledge.

Paul Pudussery mentioned about research processes and in reference to his arguments he then gave example of 'Aamrat Aata' by showing its advertisement.

Pudussery in his later part of the lecture talked about case study method. He mentioned that “the case study approach is an empirical inquiry that investigates contemporary phenomena within real life context, aimed at better understanding of complex phenomena.” Case studies commonly explore, describe and explain. It can be both empirical and theoretical. Case study processes are detailed, intensive, contextual, bounded, phenomena, real life situations.

Pudussery in his last part of the lecture discussed about various dimensions of research .For him main dimensions of research are- I) methodological dimensions

- ii) Epistemological dimensions
- iii) Ideological dimensions

iv) Sociological dimensions

v) Ontological dimensions.

Paul Pudussery finally ended up his lecture by putting some sides on research design, review of literature and process of development of instrument.

Session 3: Analysing Qualitative Data

This session was taken by Dr. Sumesh S. S. (Assistant Professor, Tezpur University) who generated a discussion to provide information about the analysis of qualitative data, and various steps involved in it.

He began with a general proposition as, “My inside is amenable to me & only outside is amenable to U”. “Ur outside is amenable to me & Ur inside is not amenable”

Often..What you think is understood by as what you SAY as what you THINK... What you do is understood by as what you SAY as what.

THEORETICAL CONSIDERATIONS

He mentioned that, ‘I didn’t have too much hope for a couple of years. I was alone with my problem. Today, I know I’m not alone. There are a lot of people who care. And by their caring I care.... I would not wish this on anyone but I’m glad it happened to me, a lesson about life and a lesson about me’. (Formerly homeless man to a group of college students) (Marvasti 1998: 177)

- Provide Shelter/home
- To tell a tale of redemption, the speaker must first expose the stigma of his/her past before speaking about accomplishments of the present.

About Grounded Theory he told that it was discovered by Glaser & Strauss *The Discovery of Grounded Theory* (1964)

- Argued qualitative analysis could systematically generate concepts & theories based on observational data
- Inductive / grounds-up approach to data analysis. Components
- Simultaneous data collection & analysis
- Pursuit of emergent themes through early DA
- Discovery of basic social processes
- Inductive construction of abstract categories
- Sampling to refine the categories
- Integration of categories into a theoretical framework

Grounded theory

- Abstract concepts should remain grounded in empirical observations, and if necessary, be revised to reflect changes in the data
- Generate: substantive and formal
- Substantive theories - explain a particular aspect of social life
- Formal theories -explain social issues at a higher level of abstraction

Coding in Grounded Theory

- coding the data using ‘sensitizing concepts’ (Blumer 1969)
- Sensitizing concept -working tool for analysis revised or elaborated to fit the nuances of the topic
- What, if anything does the concept illuminate about these data?
- How, if at all, does the concept specifically apply here?
- Where does the concept take the analysis?
- Answer such questions-make decisions about boundaries and usefulness concept. (Chamarz, 2002)

Coding Concerns

- Remaining empirically sensitive & flexible
- Revising / supporting -coding strategy – academic literature & collecting more data
- Allowing for the possibility that coding strategy may raise more research questions & call for more data collection

Research Memos

- Way of elaborating on your analytical categories and actually beginning the task of writing the research report
- It is a statement of your analytical judgment & interpretation of the data

Suffering as a Moral Status- Memo

Suffering is a profoundly moral status as well as a physical experience. Stories of suffering reflect and redefine that moral status. With suffering come moral rights and entitlements as well as moral definitions – when suffering is deemed legitimate. Thus the person can make certain moral claims and have certain moral judgments conferred upon him or her. Chamarz, 2002 –

Research Memos

- Way of elaborating on your analytical categories and actually beginning the task of writing the research report
- It is a statement of your analytical judgment & interpretation of the data

Qualitative Data Analysis

- Data Reduction
- Data Display
- Drawing Conclusions

Data Reduction

- With *data reduction*, the potential universe of data is reduced in an anticipatory way as the researcher chooses a conceptual framework, research questions, cases, and instruments.
- Once actual field notes, interviews, tapes, or other data are available, data summaries, coding, finding themes, clustering, and writing stories are all instances of further data selection and condensation. (Huberman and Miles 1994: 429)

Data Display

- Reading & rereading data transcriptions
- Notes on the margins (res memos)
- Highlight imp passages/themes as representations of particular concepts

Drawing Conclusions

- Making meaningful statements – how data illustrates the argument
- Drawing meaning from displayed data (Huberman and Miles 1994)
- Factors???

Narrative Analysis

- Stories & Story telling
 - What stories convey & How?
 - Differing positions – Engaging debate – Knowledge production
- Narrative Analysis

Sequence Genre

At first, I tried to collect interviews by **using ‘cultural’ stages** ... But their memories didn’t seem to be organized by this cultural sequence. I switched, instead to an event sequence of interviewing that focused on **major turning points**; alcohol use and first involvement in crime; parental divorce, gang membership, drug use, and delinquency; first arrest and first commitment; first crime partner. This technique improved the retrieval of life history information.

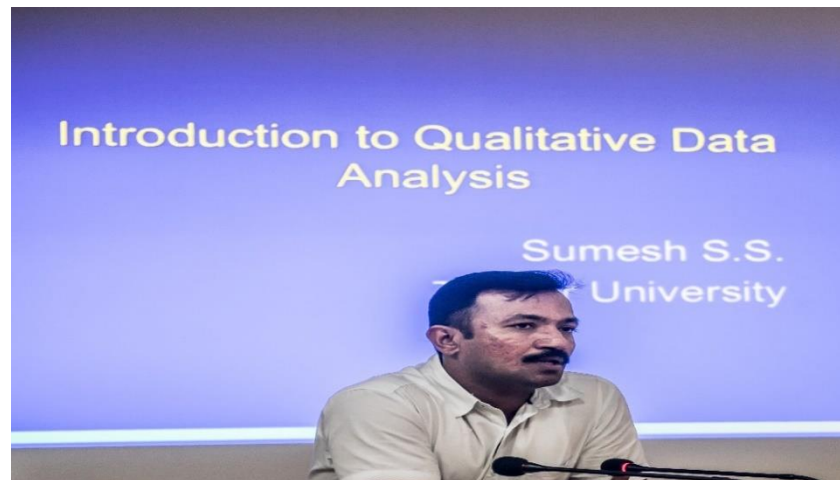
Genre

- When we hear stories, for instance, we expect protagonists, inciting conditions, and culminating events.
- Habitual narratives
- When events happen over and over and consequently there is no peak in action
- Hypothetical narratives
- Which depict events that did not happen?
- Topic-centered narratives
- Snapshots of past events that are linked thematically

Multiple Ways

- Content
- The substance of the story
- Structure
- How the story is told
- Functions

- The purposes the story serves
- Context
- In what place or setting the story is told



Narrative Practice

Where do I begin? [She chuckles.] Well, I have always been good with counting money – ever since I was a child. My parents bought me a toy cash register when I was ten and I had a lot of fun playing with that.... So when I finished high school and it was time to go to college, I decided business administration was the right career for me. I got very good grades in college, as you can see in my resume, and worked as an intern at The First International Bank during the summer...
Gulbriun & Holstein

Narrative Practice

- Interpretative Practice
- Narrative Composition
- How story is told, or how it is made coherent & meaningful
- Narrative Linkage- descriptive connection
- Footing – point of view
- Narrative Control
- Contextual factors
- How stories are monitored and edited

Self-Presentation

- Because I already told you

It was during that period that [name] the socialist leader led the gigantic procession against Mrs. Indira Gandhi, the Prime Minister of India, in Delhi. And I was a political leader [names place and party] I had to participate in that. So I went by train to Delhi but returned by plane.

After the return I was in [name] Nursing Home for 16 days bleeding. And so he [husband] was very angry he said 'do not go for any social work do not be active' this and that. But afterwards I never became– [pregnant]

Riesman – Social Positioning

Content Analysis

- Text as reflection of public opinion
- Medium of Expression
- contain records of event, values, rules and norms, entertainment, and traces of conflict and argument. ...
- CA-allows us to construct indicators of worldviews, values, attitudes, opinions, prejudices and stereotypes, and compare these across communities. In other words, ...
- CA- is public opinion research by other means

Session 4: Publishing Academic Research

In this session Prof. Debabrata Das, faculty member of Department of Management Studies & Director of Centre for Open & Distance Learning (Tezpur University), gave an insight to the doctoral scholars about academic writing for publication. In his introductory remarks he mentioned the importance of academic publication which has been universally acknowledged as a source to enhance as well as enrich the existing pool of knowledge. In this line, academic publication is considered as an inevitable aspect for professional growth in academic career.



Taking the discussion further he mentioned different logical steps to write a research paper after giving two models for writing a paper. These steps included:

- a) Determination of goal- the goal should be fixed on the basis of research type involved in it, e.g. argumentative paper generally takes controversial aspect and therefore paper (here) should be filled with logic to support any proposition, while analytical paper may involve an articulation to highlight newer dimension of any given information.
- b) Appropriate topic- this is one most crucial exercise for an author as it gives an insight as well as an invitation to the reader. Therefore, apart from adding clarity a title should hold potential to incite interest towards its reading, as told by the resource person.

- c) Content- Prof. Das mentioned that ultimately it is the content of paper which can highlight the true merit involved in it. According to him, it should be a true piece of academic research writing which may raise as well as resolve the necessary questions pertaining to the selected area. It may necessary involve (i) definition of the problem, (ii) suitable methodology that may add rigor to the research conducted/presented, (iii) presentation of the results in a lucid form with a justifiable discussion, and (iv) conclusions should be given in a concise manner with a scope of further research on the area.
- d) Citation/Reference- all the participants were told that giving all the citations and reference is not only ethical but mandatory in the wake of copyright issue/plagiarism. Regarding referencing, he mentioned that there is a particular style (of available different styles) adopted by a publication and a submission of paper needs to comply.
- e) Abstract, and Keywords- in the session it was emphasized to submit an abstract of the research paper along with few keywords utilized in the final draft of submission manuscript.
- f) Where to publish- it was suggested by Prof. D. Das that the entire exercise of writing research paper may go in vain if appropriate place for publication is not selected. He guided all the scholars to make a decision (of selection) by comprehending the mandate of the academic journal/book, etc. and thereafter building coherence to the same.

The lecture on the topic was followed by a discussion in the form of answers to the questions raised by several participants, and finally concluded by Dr. D. R. Gautam.

Day Seven: 24th March, 2018, Saturday

Session 1: Presentation of Data

Prof. T. B. Subba, began his lecture by emphasizing how presentation of research is an art as well as a science and how data collected must be aesthetically connected. A proper flow is required whereby honesty of what we do, accuracy of data, and effectiveness of it becomes important elements. Vague usage of terminologies must be avoided. Data alone does not stand on its own; rather it must be brought into perspective. The sciences follow the IMRAD format of research whereas the social sciences have no such standard format. He also emphasized on the aspect of language which makes the research work more appealing and readable. There should be clarity in writing the chapter headings, usage of word stock, key concepts, etc. Interpretation of data is different from analysis of data as it is related to the problem of study. Generalisations should be crafted carefully and should not be pompous that will not be able to justify. References and bibliography must be accurate, consistent and complete. A small section of the limitations of the study should also be spelt out which will enable to provide scope for future research. What could not be done can be added as suggestions for further work.



Session 2: Religious Minorities in India

Prof. T. B. Subba started with a brief introductory discussion about religions in different parts of the border. He said that, there are many religious minorities in national and international contexts. In India the Muslims are the largest religious minority group among the minorities. Also, the Hindus are the largest majority religious group in India counting the Adivasis and the Dalits in Hindu fold.



The constitution of India in its written document ensure right to practice any religion to every citizen irrespective of differences but failing of governance had monitor individual and groups to construct the feeling of hatred, discrimination and differences among the citizens. He stated that the presence and feeling of Majoritarianism is dangerous for a diverse country like India, and can lead towards a fascist's society.

India is a secular country, but the word secular is not understood properly. We have violated secular values more than once making the minorities feels insecure. Democracy in India is still evolving in its operation and it is yet to attain the final stage of maturity democracy.

Prof. Subba stated that the blending of politics and religions and cultural differences is the main causes of communal violence, atrocities, rape and disturbances in the society.

Finally, he concluded the session with a message do minorities have no space in Indian Democracy.

Session 3: Introduction to Quantification and Issues of Measurement

Dr. Joydeep Baruah began his lecture with the basics of quantitative research and how to make sense of numbers. To begin explaining quantification, he first located its position within the framework of research. He talked about the processes of getting numbers, that is by counting and though measurement. He defined quantification as mapping of observable attributes onto a set of numerical representation or numbers. He explained with examples and emphasized on the importance of having operational definitions.

After explaining the basics of quantification, he went on to describe the problems associated with quantification. The first problem is that of understanding the attribute's relationships, that whether its an empirical relation system or a numerical relation system. The second problem is understanding the logical aspect of quantities. He elaborated the problem of understanding direction of the data.



He moved on to explain issues of measurement, idea of scale, elements of scale, various data type based on scale. On elucidating various data type, he explicated the idea of reliability and validity, sensitivity of idea and dimensionality of data. He then talked about the importance of data type as the analysis of data depends on its type. He spoke about normalization of data that are of different scale to give meaning to data while engaging in comparative studies. He emphasized the need to understand how different formulas are derived which gives an understanding of what their statistics stand for. To substantiate this he gave the example of mortality rate which is calculated in negative while literacy rate is calculated in positive.

He concluded the session with a brief question answer session with the participants.

Session 4: Analysing Quantitative Data

The second session conducted by Dr. Baruah dealt with Analyzing Quantitative Data. He elaborated that there are several software available for calculation of quantitative data and the researcher must choose appropriate software suitable for his or her objectives of research. While presenting data the researcher must also know which set of data is pertinent for the study and must redundant the rest. Dr. Baruah elaborated the application of several statistical tools like Arithmetic mean, Geometric mean, harmonic Mean, Median, Mode, Standard Deviation, etc. with the help of examples. He also delineated when to use which statistical tool and how one is different with other. He also explained the two types of statistics available like parametric statistics and non-parametric statistics. All tools are based on certain assumptions and results will be meaningful only if assumptions are fulfilled.

The session ended with interaction among participants and Dr. Baruah. Dr. Kikhi concludes the session with summing up the lecture and a vote of thanks to Dr. Baruah

Day Eight: 25th March, 2018, Sunday

Field Visit to Tribal Village (Tea Estate, Harigaon Village)

A field visit was organized to orient participants towards (empirical) doing of a research on subalternity. The entire group of participants were divided (on their volition and willingness) into three groups, each for one type of qualitative method, i.e. one group was assigned to undertake 'Ethnography', while the second and third group was respectively involved in conducting Focus Group Discussion (FGD), and Case Study in the selected village. The study was followed by a street play performed by the students of Tezpur University. The play was about bringing social transformation in Indian society, and making villagers aware about different schemes of the government of India.

Some of the Snapshots from the field





Day Nine: 26th March, 2018, Monday

Session 1 & 2: Presentation of Synopsis Developed by the Participants

It was a deliberate exercise as a part of re-orienting doctoral scholars towards developing a research synopsis with the inputs they have received in the form of different session conducted in the workshop. The themes (six in number) to develop a proposal were announced during the inaugural sessions on 18th March 2018, and each participant was asked to choose any one topic to prepare and present their proposals. Each of the presentation received a critical discussion and inputs from the participants as well as the available resource persons.

Session 3 & 4: Contemporary Significance of Researching Subalternity

Parmait. S. Judge is professor in dept. of sociology in G.N.D.U Amritsar. He said Subaltern occurs with the dissolution of Marxism. When he went to surat for studies there one of his friend

was working on “Meera in the cyber of people”. She found out that there is no personal history regarding Meera. It is a power of myth and people are not clear about it. Same like subaltern mean history of people and globalization is people and moderns. There are so many other things, which have no historical facts.



He said that Gyanendra Pandey was not categorical correct in his studies. The categorical analysis was not correct. Judge criticized the book “Remembering Partition” written by Pandey, he said he was so disappoint after reading a particular book. The problem with that book was they didn’t clearly mention the things happened with the people of Punjab, who came from Pakistan that time.

He said the shortcoming of new facts and concepts are we just reading and talking about Dalits or minorities and not doing anything new. The concept of “Humiliation”, Humiliation only comes when you have pride, so people are not clear about their facts. He concludes that we do not have new concept because we do not have new facts that’s why we just created our own concepts regarding past.

The basic concept of doing research is basically finding new knowledge, if we do not do anything new then what is the purpose of our research. In social sciences study and natural science, the major difference is fundamentalisms. The scholar of sciences can falsify their concept and it can be research, but it is not possible in social sciences. In social science the particular theory never dies, that theory exist somewhere in contemporary times.

It is very important for the scholars of social sciences to do important work and also look at the theory and importance of theory in contemporary times and also see the particular perspective and work over that thing.

Having value is not bad in research. Max Weber in his study regarding Persian people and he was biased regarding them so some where we can say that reflexivity in research is good. But we should be particular about the changing perspective. Like in same study you support Marxist and functionalism then it will not work out. We should have some particular perspective in our study.

Balance theory, he said the kind of situation Dalits have that situation only Dalit people can understand. The feeling that Dalit women have that feeling researcher cannot articulate with the help of language. So whenever we do research then we must have some cultural understanding of that particular community and if not have then that research do is worthless. Research is different thing, if we do not have cultural understanding then it will look like autobiography where we do not need to experience the feeling and situation of other people.

In social science, it is difficult to do research because we are dealing with human and not objects. Human behavior is not certain it constantly changing and then things also go change.

Day Ten: 27th March, 2018, Tuesday

Session 1: Formulating Research Questions

Dr. Sumesh S S from Tezpur University, Sociology Department delivered a lecture on the topic formulating Research question. The lecture started off with understanding the concept of, what is subaltern? He opines subalternity as an alternative narrative about our understanding of reality, subaltern is an alternative of unlearning what ones have learn already or known already. There can be more research questions to answer one objective and Literature is most useful when we write a thesis supported either by field or by literature.

Dr. Sumesh hold on to the facts that we have our own system of knowledge, but our system of knowledge had been colonized by the western system of knowing and understanding the reality. He insisted that a researcher need to start thinking about the research early on and further insisted that open-ended question is risky for carrying out the studies.



For rationale formulating the research questions, the speaker had suggested methods like (i)exploration (ii)description(iii) understanding (iv) explanation (v)prediction (vi) change (vii)evolution and (viii) assessment for framing research question. Focusing on doing literature review, He had suggested what a researcher had to look into like (i) What is already known about the area?(ii)What concepts and theories are relevant? (iii) What research methods and strategies

have been used in this area? (iv) Are there any controversies? (V) Are there any inconsistencies in findings? (Vi) Are there unanswered questions

To search and find relevant literature, He recommended- to read books and article we know, or recommended by experts, keep notes based on our reading, note the keywords use.

Session 2: Doing Literature Review & Engagement with Library

Taking the last session of workshop Dr. S.S Sumesh from sociology department, Tezpur University gave very important and informative presentation on collecting and reviewing important and related literatures.



He stated that researching relevance literature for study was important part of the study and one must answer some questions while researching literature. He highlighted some important questions like, what is already known about this area? What concept and theories are relevant? What research methods and strategies have been used in this area? Are there any controversies? And are there any unanswered questions??

Dr Sumesh in his presentation also revealed the need for literature review for research. He explained that review of literature not only helps in developing analytical framework but also it informs a researcher about mistakes done by others and also about questions which are still unanswered. “Review of literature doesn’t not only help in finding variables but also help in building different theoretical and methodological approaches for study.” Dr Sumesh said. He also warned about the use of internet in finding literature.

Dr Sumesh also explained two main approaches to a literature review i.e. systematic review and narrative review. He also heighted the differences and utility of these two approaches. He also talked about meta-analysis and meta ethnography and their use in quantitative and qualitative research.

Session 3: Feedback

A small feedback session of around sixty minutes was organized where all the participants gave their feedback about the workshop attended by them. They have done a review of all the aspects

and gave their suggestions for further improvements. A brief individual description about the gains made through different lectures in the workshop.



Session 4: Summing Up & Distribution of Certificates

The last session of the ten days' workshop was about summing up of the entire exercise for the beneficiaries/participants which was followed by the distribution of certificates to all the participants by the Prof. P.K. Das (Dean, School of Humanities & Social Sciences, Tezpur University) who was the chief guest.



The coordinators of the workshop, Prof. K. Kikhi & Dr. D. R. Gautam, have briefly mentioned about the different sessions of the workshop, the rationale of organizing those sessions and the field visit, and also a summary of all the sessions to the benefit of participants. They both thanked ICSSR, Tezpur University, all the resource persons, and participants for their cooperation towards conduct of the workshop. A thoughtful reflection was added by Prof. P. K. Das who mentioned the need of organizing workshops like this to make the scholars aware about doing social research to unravel the subtle lying realities. Further, he encouraged all the scholars by giving them wishes along with the certificates of participation. In this way a ten days methodology workshop on researching subalternity in social sciences & humanities was successfully completed with valuable collaboration from ICSSR, New Delhi.