

ICSSR Sponsored

Research Methodology Workshop for Doctoral Scholars from 19th March
to 26th March 2018

Theme of the Workshop: *Researching Subalternity in Social Sciences and
Humanities*

Concept of the Workshop:

Primary objective of any research is to establish a pre-existing reality as a (probable) fact with the help of rigorous scientific method. In this way philosophical understanding of a reality (ontology), is it knowable (epistemology), and how it could be known (methodology) becomes most crucial. Subalternity is relatively a new concept in social science research as well as in general parlance. Though the subaltern research is relatively a new area in social research, it has gained prominence in the post-modern world thanks to the emergence of different facets of post structural research on the global horizon. There have been approaches like feminism, queer theory, so on and forth which added dynamism towards the concept of subalternity. Thus, subaltern which etymologically implies lower military rank or order has appended several inferences and became inclusive of all the nuanced alternative voices than of the dominant class (es) in any society.

Originating from the idea given by Antonio Gramsci there's been continuous enrichment creating a niche for 'subalternity' in social science research. There's a subaltern studies group which was led by Ranajit Guha in 1980s, and it made conspicuous different attributes of subalternity like caste, class, gender, etc. in South Asian societies (Guha, 1982). The concept further gained prominence to highlight the complexity pertaining to existing subtleness (and largely hijacking) of the voice(s) of subaltern groups (Spivak, 1988). Therefore, it becomes quite significant and a need to explore new different dimensions of subalternity to make the varied forms of alternative (disadvantaged/discriminated) aspects evident especially in the context of Indian social milieu. Also, in this manner it may act as a true corollary to the post-modern research in the present day globalized world.

Objectives of the Workshop:

The concept of subalternity is relatively new and largely subtle. Therefore researchers involved with this theme needs to have comprehension about this and are to be equipped with ontology, epistemology, and methodology for researching subalternity (caste, tribe, feminism, and minorities) in social sciences and humanities. The proposed workshop is an attempt to contribute in terms of disseminating relevant information to the scholars about the theme. The broad objectives of the workshop are:

- 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

Broad Themes:

In order to achieve the above-mentioned objectives in a given time frame of seven days, some of the key themes have been identified. This will guide the workshop about observing a particular pattern that may be useful for the scholar(s) engaged in different stages of their research assignment. Some of the broad themes which shall be the highlight of the workshop could be read as:

- a) **Comprehending ‘subalternity’ and its significance in Indian context.**
 - Concept of subalternity and its concurrence with post-modern research
 - Overview of researching the concept in social sciences
 - Understanding the concept in humanities
- b) **Ontology, epistemology, and methodology to explore subalternity**
 - Choosing quantitative or qualitative methods
 - Inference from Humanities (Language/Literature) for the theme
- c) **Utilizing qualitative methods- ethnography, case study, narratives, and discourse analysis**
- d) **Exploration through literature- short story/poem**
- e) **Caste, Tribe, Gender, and Minorities in Social Sciences and Humanities**
- f) **Assimilating quantitative information**
 - Quantitative data
 - Analysis of information through statistical tools
 - Utilization of softwares
- g) **Analysis of (collected) qualitative and quantitative data- making conspicuous the existing subtlety**
- h) **Presentation of the research**
 - Publication/ Report Writing
 - Referencing
 - Copyright/ Plagiarism
- i) **Nuanced understanding through small field visit**