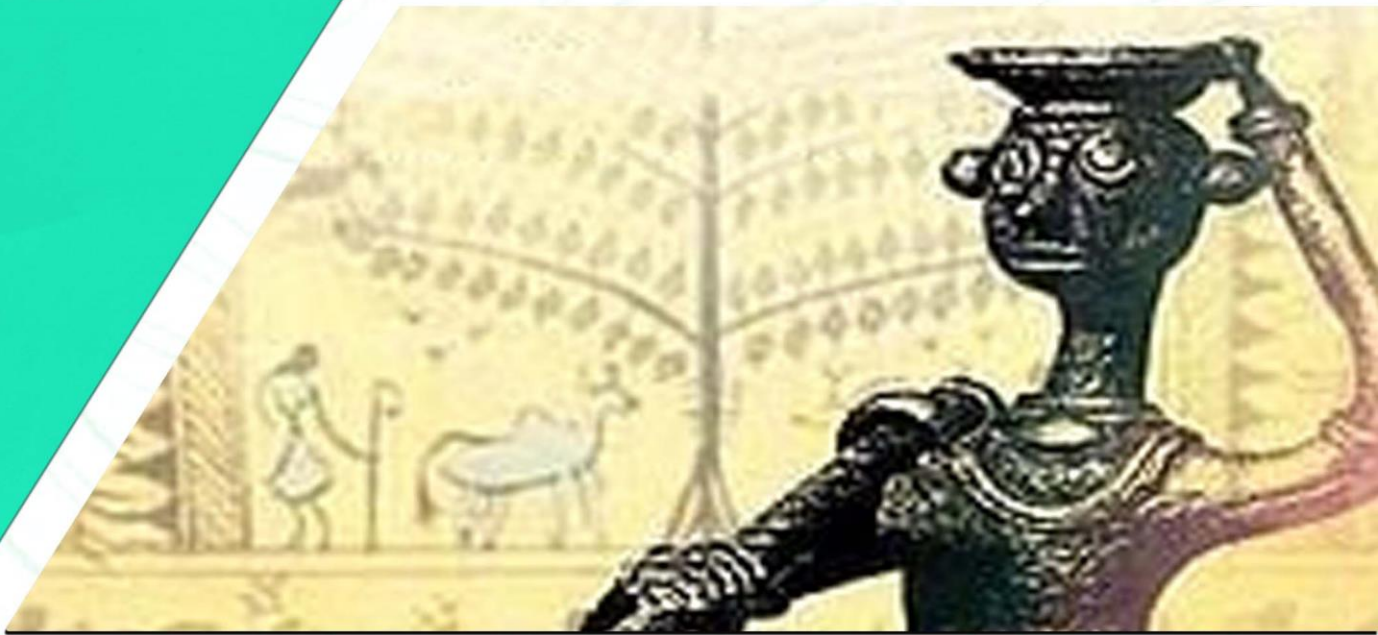




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# BATS102 TRIBAL STUDIES

: APPROACHES AND RESEARCH METHODS



**BA (TRIBAL  
STUDIES)**  
**2<sup>ND</sup> SEMESTER**

**Rajiv Gandhi University**

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## About the University

Rajiv Gandhi University (formerly Arunachal University) is a premier institution for higher education in the state of Arunachal Pradesh and has completed twenty-five years of its existence. Late Smt. Indira Gandhi, the then Prime Minister of India, laid the foundation stone of the university on 4th February, 1984 at Rono Hills, where the present campus is located.

Ever since its inception, the university has been trying to achieve excellence and fulfill the objectives as envisaged in the University Act. The university received academic recognition under Section 2(f) from the University Grants Commission on 28th March, 1985 and started functioning from 1st April, 1985. It got financial recognition under section 12-B of the UGC on 25th March, 1994. Since then Rajiv Gandhi University, (then Arunachal University) has carved a niche for itself in the educational scenario of the country following its selection as a University with potential for excellence by a high-level expert committee of the University Grants Commission from among universities in India.

The University was converted into a Central University with effect from 9th April, 2007 as per notification of the Ministry of Human Resource Development, Government of India.

The University is located atop Rono Hills on a picturesque tableland of 302 acres overlooking the river Dikrong. It is 6.5 km from the National Highway 52-A and 25 km from Itanagar, the State capital. The campus is linked with the National Highway by the Dikrong bridge.

The teaching and research programmes of the University are designed with a view to play a positive role in the socio-economic and cultural development of the State. The University offers Undergraduate, Post-graduate, M.Phil and Ph.D. programmes. The Department of Education also offers the B.Ed. programme.

There are fifteen colleges affiliated to the University. The University has been extending educational facilities to students from the neighbouring states, particularly Assam. The strength of students in different departments of the University and in affiliated colleges has been steadily increasing.

The faculty members have been actively engaged in research activities with financial support from UGC and other funding agencies. Since inception, a number of proposals on research projects have been sanctioned by various funding agencies to the University. Various departments have organized numerous seminars, workshops and conferences. Many faculty members have participated in national and international conferences and seminars held within the country and abroad. Eminent scholars and distinguished personalities have visited the University and delivered lectures on various disciplines.

The academic year 2000-2001 was a year of consolidation for the University. The switch over from the annual to the semester system took off smoothly and the performance of the students registered a marked improvement. Various syllabi designed by Boards of Post-graduate Studies (BPGS) have been implemented. VSAT facility installed by the ERNET India, New Delhi under the UGC-Infonet program, provides Internet access.

In spite of infrastructural constraints, the University has been maintaining its academic excellence. The University has strictly adhered to the academic calendar, conducted the examinations and declared the results on time. The students from the University have found placements not only in State and Central Government Services, but also in various institutions, industries and organizations. Many students have emerged successful in the National Eligibility Test (NET).

Since inception, the University has made significant progress in teaching, research, innovations in curriculum development and developing infrastructure.

# **SYLLABUS**

## **Tribal Studies: Approaches and Research Methods**

### **Unit-I Tribal Studies in India**

- a) Emergence and growth,
- b) Approaches to study the tribes

### **Unit-II: Fieldwork Tradition**

- (a) Historical background and Significance of fieldwork
- (b) Ethics in fieldwork
- (c) Ethic and Emic perspectives

### **Unit-III: Collection of Data**

- (a) Methods and Methodology
- (b) Quantitative and Qualitative Research

### **Unit – IV Tools and Techniques in Research**

- (a) Survey and Sampling, observation, interview, case study, genealogies, participatory and focused group discussion
- (b) Sources of data: primary and secondary sources

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# INTRODUCTION

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## NOTES

The tribal people are rich in cultural heritage and skill of art and craft but they are still marginalized in respect to higher education as well as in other walks of life. In the present age of globalization the world has shrunk into a village as the society has advanced in technology. But the tribes, who are the custodians of Indian culture in the real sense, are far behind in this race of advancement.

The greatest challenge that the Government of India has been facing since independence is the proper provision of social justice to the scheduled tribe people, by ameliorating their socio-economic conditions. Scheduled Tribes, Scheduled Castes and de-notified tribes constitute the weakest section of India's population, from the ecological, economic and educational angles. They constitute the matrix of India's poverty. Though the tribal community are the sons of the same soil and the citizens of the same country, they are born and grow as the children of nature. From the historical point of view, they have been subjected to the worst type of social exploitation. They are practically deprived of many civic facilities and isolated from modern and civilized way of living since so many centuries.

The British rulers really did something in providing certain facilities in villages and towns such as, education, transport, communication, medical etc. though inadequate and mainly with self-interest. But it did nothing for ameliorating the socio-economic conditions of tribal people, except to the people in North-East region of the country, because of certain reasons. First, the British administrators thought it expedient generally to leave the tribal community alone, as the task of administration in the hill areas was difficult and costly. Second, it was considered desirable to keep away the tribal community from possible political influence from the world outside. Third, some of the British officers genuinely felt that left to themselves, the tribal people would remain a happier lot. The Scheduled District Act of 1956 had, therefore, kept most of these areas administratively separate, the same situation was allowed to continue under the Government of India Acts of 1919 and 1935. However, post-independence this policy was abandoned and new policies of tribal development and integration were initiated. The Constitution of India has made definite provisions for the welfare and upliftment of the tribal people throughout the country.

There is an increasing interest in tribal studies in contemporary times. Besides academic interest, government organizations and NGOs also have shown their increasing interest in tribal development and as such in tribal studies. In recent years, national and international funding agencies (ICSSR, UGC, UNESCO, Ford Foundation) have been funding researches to study tribal culture and life. Tribal studies has assumed an interdisciplinary commitment over the last several decades.

This book, *Concepts and Methods*, is written in a self-instructional format and is divided into five units. Each unit begins with an *Introduction* to the topic followed by an outline of the *Unit objectives*. The content is then presented in a simple and easy-to-understand manner, and is interspersed with *Check Your Progress* questions to test the reader's understanding of the topic. A list of *Questions and Exercises* is also provided at the end of each unit, and includes short-answer as well as long-answer questions. The *Summary* and *Key Terms* section are useful tools for students and are meant for effective recapitulation of the text.

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# UNIT I TRIBAL STUDIES IN INDIA

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## Structure

- 1.0 Introduction
- 1.1 Unit Objectives
- 1.2 Emergence and Growth of Tribal Studies
  - 1.2.1 Beginning of Tribal Studies in India
  - 1.2.2 Stages in Tribal Studies
  - 1.2.3 Present Trends in Tribal Studies
  - 1.2.4 Characterizing Indian Tribes
  - 1.2.5 Emerging Fields of Knowledge in Tribal Studies
- 1.3 Approaches to Study the Tribes
  - 1.3.1 Anthropological Approach
  - 1.3.2 Historical Approach
  - 1.3.3 Folklores
  - 1.3.4 Emic and Etic approaches
  - 1.3.5 Human Rights Approach
  - 1.3.6 Policy Approaches to the Tribes
- 1.4 Summary
- 1.5 Key Terms
- 1.6 Answers to ‘Check Your Progress’
- 1.7 Questions and Exercises
- 1.8 Further Reading

## NOTES

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### 1.0 INTRODUCTION

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The origin of the term ‘tribe’ has been discussed in the previous unit. The unit also defined its meaning and scope. As we know the concept of tribe was never in use before the British rule. Hence, the concept of tribe in India is a colonial legacy. Therefore, post-independence, the word ‘tribe’ is not used in the anthropological sense. We use it as an administrative concept. Moreover, there are tribes who are not scheduled in the Constitution and exist in an anthropological sense. Therefore, in India tribes are studied either in the colonial sense or as an administrative concept or as an anthropological category. There exists different approaches to study the tribes. In this unit, we shall discuss the historical background and different approaches to study the tribes. Moreover, studies on tribes show different perspectives which have emerged from such studies. We shall also discuss the nature and types of such studies to understand the interdisciplinary perspectives in tribal studies.

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### 1.1 UNIT OBJECTIVES

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After going through this unit, you will be able to:

- Trace the establishment of tribal studies in India
- Describe the characteristics and features of the Indian tribes
- Analyse the emerging fields of knowledge in tribal studies
- Explain the anthropological approach to study tribes
- Describe the emic and etic approach to tribal studies
- Assess the policy approaches to tribes in detail

## 1.2 EMERGENCE AND GROWTH OF TRIBAL STUDIES

### NOTES

Tribal studies, as a discipline are of a recent origin and emerged when different universities started offering Post-graduation courses, M. Phil courses, Ph. D programmes or Post-graduation diploma programmes in tribal studies. But the interest in the study of tribes dates back to the colonial period. In India, the study of tribes started with the administrative support during the British period with an objective of generating data for the smooth administration of tribes. The government of independent India took interest in tribal studies as its welfare measure of the people of India in general and the tribes in particular. In this section, we shall discuss the history of tribal studies and its growth over the period.

### 1.2.1 Beginning of Tribal Studies in India

During the 18<sup>th</sup> century, the British government felt the need to have an ethnographic account on different tribes of India with a view to rule them easily. They were not anthropologists by training and profession, but their account on the tribes provided ample information on the tribal history of India. A number of foreign anthropologists visited India to record the customs and traditions of the Indian tribes. British anthropologist W. H. R. Rivers came to India in 1904 and studied the Toda tribe of South India, which was published in 1906. Another anthropologist, Alfred Radcliffe-Brown came to India to study the Onge tribe of the Andaman Islands in 1906 and 1908. A monograph on the Onge tribe was published in 1922 under the title *The Andaman Islanders*. Therefore, during the colonial period, we have works on tribes which are administrative accounts and ethnographic studies. Most of the data were collected from fieldworks.

Among the Indian scholars, **S. C. Roy** is regarded as ‘The Father of Indian Ethnography’. He was a lawyer by profession. He settled in Ranchi to establish his practice as a pleader (legal practitioner). Gradually, he came in contact with the tribal people of Chota Nagpur. He gradually developed an interest in their life and culture. As a lawyer, S. C. Roy used to visit the interiors of Chota Nagpur on commission from courts and could observe the tribals from close quarters. He was distressed by the way tribals were treated in the court of law. He emphasized the need to study the tribal customary laws in order to do justice to their cases. Roy was of the opinion that having knowledge about the history of a tribe would help us appreciate its culture better. He studied the Munda, Oraon and Birhor tribes and published the information he collected on them. He first published a monograph on the Mundas.

The later ethnographic works of S. C. Roy are *The Oraons of Choto Nagpur: Their History, Economic Life and Social Organization* (1915), *The Birhors: A Little-known Jungle Tribe of Chota Nagpur* (1925), *Oraon Religion and Customs* (1928), and *The Hill Bhuiyas of Orissa* (1935). Because of his deep and sound understanding of tribal life and culture, the government often sought his advice whenever the government faced administrative problems in dealing with the tribals. He proved how timely intervention by an anthropologist could lead to the end of stress and strain in the society. He emphasized the need for giving anthropological training not only to the administrative and judicial officers, but to the forest and excise officers also, who were posted in tribal areas.

Another anthropologist who contributed immensely to tribal studies in India was **D. N. Majumdar**. He conducted fieldwork among the Ho tribes of Bihar, which later



## NOTES

was published as a book in 1937. He was the first Indian to study and write about the impact of non-tribals on the life of Indian tribes. He also pleaded for the application of the findings of anthropology to the task of development and policy formulation. His posthumous book, *Himalayan Polyandry, Structure, Functioning and Culture Change: A field study of Jaunsar-Bawar* (1962) contains a detailed discussion of the community development programmes in Jaunsar-Bawar in Uttaranchal.

J. K. Bose's book on *Culture Change among the Garos* (1985), based on his field work in 1941 is significant from both methodological and empirical points of view. In this book, Bose has studied the Garo tribe who had migrated to the plains of Mymensingh (present Bangladesh) adjacent to the Garo Hills around 1891 and had adopted cultivation. On the basis of field study, he studied the changes taking place among the Garos in their new settlement with reference to their original settlement in Garo Hills.

Another popular work on the tribes was the one conducted by **M. N. Srinivas** among the Coorgs. In his one year of fieldwork among the Coorgs, he gathered data on marriage and family, which was published in 1942.

Probodh Kumar Bhowmick is another Indian scholar who studied the tribes on two accounts: To prepare ethnography and to work towards the upliftment of the tribes. He believed that research does not merely lie in 'knowing about underprivileged' rather in 'doing something for the upliftment of the underprivileged'. Since 1955 P. K. Bhowmick carried out his activities for the socio-economic development of the tribes in general and the Lodha tribe in particular. He founded the Ashram-cum-Research Institute *Bidisha*, where traditional knowledge on tribes culminates with the social research for their upliftment according to the changing needs of modern times. His twin objectives are reflected in his book *Applied-Action Development Anthropology* published in 1990.

Renowned anthropologist L. P. Vidyarthi studied the tribal village named Ghanhra under the auspices of Census Operation in 1961. The study of this Munda village reflects how Manjhi, a section of Munda tribe, has adopted the Hindu style of life and become a caste. His book, *Cultural Contours of Tribal Bihar* (1966) explains the historical, geographical and social background of the tribes of Chota Nagpur. Some concepts like unity and extension, sanskritization and desanskritization, tribalization and detribalization have also been attempted in the context of tribal Bihar. The book explains the factors responsible for bringing changes in the tribal societies of Bihar. **L. P. Vidyarthi** and **B. K. Roy Burman** wrote a book under the title *The Tribal Culture of India* (1976). Taking data from secondary sources at the Indian level, the authors have attempted to present a comparative and comprehensive view on the social, economic, political and religious life of the Indian tribes. The book also presents a good amount of information on folklore, art, course of life and personality structure in the context of tribal India. The book highlights the character of tribal village, matriliney and polyandry in tribal India. It also deals with the approaches, planning and programmes for tribal development and cultural changes among the tribes of India.

### 1.2.2 Stages in Tribal Studies

The researches conducted on the tribes of India may be reviewed at par with researches on Indian anthropology in three chronological phases of development, namely:

1. Formative phase (1774-1919)
2. Constructive phase (1920-1949)
3. Analytical phase (1950-1990)

## NOTES

**1. Formative Phase**

It may be noted that though the scholars have identified these three phases of development, it does not mean that one phase completely replaces the other phase. Also, there have been different rates of development of tribal researches in various parts of India.

Tribal research in India owes its foundation to the establishment of the Asiatic Society of Bengal (1774). Sir William Jones, the founder member, piloted a number of researches and publications on subjects concerning the tribes. Hereafter, the British administrators, missionaries, travellers and other individuals interested in tribal studies collected data on tribes and wrote extensively about their life and lifestyle. They collected ethnographic data and published a series of handbooks on the tribes. They also wrote about tribal life and culture in *The Journal of the Asiatic Society of Bengal* (1784), *Indian Antiquary* (1872) and later in the *Journal of Bihar and Orissa Research Society* (1915) and *Man in India* (1921).

The British government appointed a large number of scholarly-oriented British administrators in tribal areas to enquire about their habits, religion and other cultural aspects to facilitate easy rule. These generalized works about the land and people of different regions were followed by some detailed accounts by scholars who were greatly influenced by British anthropologists like Rivers and others who published monographs on different tribes of India.

These works by British administrators are still valuable for basic information about the life and culture of the tribes and castes in different regions of India. Risley, Dalton and O'Malley wrote on the people of East India, Russel of Middle India, Thurston of South India and Coorke on people of Northern India during this period. Besides, there are some other works on tribes by some administrators. Mention may be made of the following:

- G. Campbell, 1866: *The Ethnology of India*
- R. G. Latham, 1859: *Ethnography of India*
- H. H. Risley, 1891: *The Tribes and Castes of Bengal*
- George W. Briggs, 1920: *The Chamars*

Under these influences, the first Indian, who was later known as the 'Father of Indian Ethnography' to write exhaustive monographs on the tribes of the country was S. C. Roy, who published a monograph on the Munda (1912) and the Oraon (1915). He is also called the 'Father of Indian Ethnology'.

**2. Constructive Phase**

Tribal study in India entered its second phase—constructive phase—when social anthropology was included in the curriculum of the two important universities of Mumbai (in 1919) and Kolkata (in 1921). Scholars like G. S. Ghurye, Irawati Karve, A. Ayyappan provided the initial stimulation to organize scientific anthropological researches. They did this by conducting field expeditions, writing books and articles and also by training researchers for undertaking anthropological researches especially on various aspects of tribal culture. These scholars have worked across disciplinary boundaries.

A big advancement in tribal studies came in 1938 when the joint session of the Indian Science Congress Association (ISCA) and the British Association was held. During the session, the progress of anthropology in India was reviewed and the plans for future anthropological researches in India were discussed.

## NOTES

During the constructive phase, different anthropologists studied and analysed their doctoral data critically and brought out a certain amount of theoretical sophistication in tribal researches in India. D. N. Majumdar's work on changing Hos of Singbhum entitled *The Affairs of a Tribe: A Study in Tribal Dynamics* (1950), M. N. Srinivas' publication *Marriage and Family in Mysore* (1942), and N. K. Bose's *Hindu Method of Tribal Absorption* (1941) brought the turning point in tribal studies in India. During this time, missionary turned anthropologist Verrier Elwin, came out with a series of his problem-oriented publications on the tribes of Madhya Pradesh and Odisha. His publications like *The Baiga* (1939), *The Agaria* (1942), *Maria, Murder and Suicide* (1943), *The Muria and Their Ghotul* (1947), and *The Religion of an Indian Tribe* (1955) were important insights in tribal studies. *A Philosophy for NEFA* and *Democracy in NEFA* were his further contributions to tribal studies.

Christoph von Fürer-Haimendorf's publication like *The Chenchus. A Jungle Folk of the Deccan* (1942), *Tribal Populations of Hyderabad* (1945), *The Reddis of the Bison Hills: A Study in Acculturation* (in collaboration with Elizabeth von Fürer-Haimendorf in two volumes, 1945), were landmarks in tribal studies. His works on Apatanis also were subsequent additions to tribal studies. The tradition of tribal studies as the exclusive focus by the progressive British scholars, administrators, missionaries and the British and Indian anthropologists continued till the end of forties of the 20th century.

### 3. Analytical Phase

After Independence, the tribal studies in India witnessed an analytical and action-oriented approach. As a result the tribal communities began to be studied with an interdisciplinary approach. The constitutional commitments to ameliorate the conditions of the tribal communities gave a boost to study and evaluate the processes of change in the tribal communities. The Census operations of the Government of India also intensified the schemes of tribal studies. The tradition of tribal research was further enriched during the contemporary analytical phase. A number of non-governmental organizations came up in the country to look into the welfare of the tribal people. They drew the attention of the government to the tribal problems and their possible solutions.

During the early period of the analytical phase, D. N. Majumdar, M. M. Das, L. P. Vidyarthi, K. N. Sahay, B. N. Sahay, S. C. Sinha, P. K. Bhowmick and N. K. Behura contributed to the tribal studies from an analytical viewpoint. The analytical tradition is upheld by present scholars of tribal studies like A. K. Kapoor, V. K. Srivastava, K. K. Mishra, Jagannath Das, L. K. Mahapatra, Ashim Adhikary, V. S. Sahay, Tamo Mibang, M. C. Behera, Malli Gandhi, Karma Oraon, Soumya Ranjan Patnaik, Prafulla Mohapatra and many others.

#### 1.2.3 Present Trends in Tribal Studies

##### Interest of Government Organizations (GOs) and Non-Government Organizations (NGOs)

Beginning with the colonial interest to study the tribes for the purpose of administration, the interest in the study of tribes has been diversified and has travelled a long way. It is not the academic interest, but the necessity of the development practitioners which has strengthened the studies on the tribes and about the tribes. No doubt various government organizations and NGOs have taken interest in tribal studies. The University Grants Commission (UGC), Ministry of Tribal Affairs, Indian Council of Social Science Research

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(ICSSR) and many funding agencies provide financial assistance to research projects on tribes and their ways of life. Dibrugarh University, Assam, for example, has made a study of demographic profiles of more than 10 tribes of North-East under Special Assistance Programme of University Grants Commission, New Delhi.

K. S. Singh, in his project 'People of India' and in various seminars and conferences, has contributed to the tribal studies. His approach is basically anthropo-historical studies of the tribes and tribal–non-tribal relations. In the academic sphere, various universities having centres, institutes and departments promote research works on tribal studies. Recently V. K. Srivastava has made a survey of ICSSR funding to tribal researches in the country. In many states, there are tribal research institutes and many research institutes are coming up which conduct researches on different aspects of tribal way of life. The Anthropological Survey of India conducts studies not only on socio-cultural aspects of the tribes, but also on physical aspects. Recent interest in Indigenous Knowledge Systems (IKS) has given a new impetus to the study of tribes.

Scholars study the various aspects of tribal life from interdisciplinary perspectives. Not only that, they study different tribes and topics in the course of their academic pursuits contrary to the earlier tradition of studying one tribe for a long time. This is because language is not a problem for field scholars and there are earlier works available as base work. Moreover, refined field methods like participatory rural appraisal are also available. Jagannath Das, V. S. Sahay, A. K. Kapoor and many others have studied a number of tribes. M. C. Behera has also studied a number of tribes with distinct research objectives and methodological perspectives. On the basis of his study of the Puroiks (2001-02) of Arunachal Pradesh, he has contributed to the understanding of the concept of *foraging mode of thought*. He has also produced two ethnographic reports, namely *Impact of Orange Cultivation on Traditional Role of Galo Women* (1999), *Village India: Identification and Enhancement of Cultural Heritage* (2000) on the Galo and the Minyong group of Adi tribe respectively. He has—after working among the Khamptis—produced a book entitled *Planning and Socio-Economic Development of the Tribals* (1994).

The growing academic and applied interests in tribal studies has increasing institutional support in the form of a National Commission or Tribal Research Institutes in many states, Line Ministry of Tribal Affairs, and Centres, Institutes and Departments in Universities. Institutional interests in tribal studies sometimes aim at promoting and preserving tribal culture. The Bhasha Research and Publication Centre was established in 1996 as a voluntary organization for the study, conservation, and promotion of tribal languages, literature, history, culture, arts, and crafts. It is also concerned with the socio-economic welfare of the tribals and protection of their human rights. Bhasha's work is mostly conducted in the western tribal belt of Maharashtra, Madhya Pradesh, Gujarat, and Rajasthan. It also extends to other regions, primarily through its activities among migrating communities, especially the de-notified and nomadic tribes. In order to save the tribal languages from extinction and to preserve their vast cultural and literary treasures, Bhasha publishes a magazine called *Dhol* in 11 tribal languages (Ahirani, Dungri Bhili, Panchamahali Bhili, Kunkna, Dehvali, Rathawi, Bhantu, Choudhri, Gor-Banjara, Pawri, and Marathi). The editor of each issue is a folklorist/compiler of oral literature in his or her respective community. *Dhol* has emerged as a platform on which tribal intellectuals can share their cultural knowledge and practices with the other tribes of India. The COATS (Council of Analytical and Tribal Studies), Koraput provides M. Phil and Ph. D degrees in Tribal Studies at the Berhampur University. Besides, it is engaged in researches pertaining to tribal development of the region.

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Tribal studies have been introduced as a research subject at M. Phil and Ph. D. levels of many Universities like Rani Durgavati Vishwavidyalaya, Jabalpur; Rajiv Gandhi University, Itanagar; Indira Gandhi National Tribal University, Amarkantak and many others. Except one University (Kannada University, Hampi) there are no independent Post-graduation (P.G.) programmes in other Universities. However, P.G. Programme in anthropology is combined with tribal studies in North Orissa University, Guru Ghasidas University and Central University of Orissa. Moreover, Tripura and Himachal Pradesh University have introduced P.G Diploma in tribal studies. Universities like Assam University, Nagaland University, Anand Agricultural University, Kannur University have centres of tribal studies, mainly to promote research activities.

The Central University of Jharkhand has established four centres pertaining to tribal studies. These are Indigenous Cultural Studies, Tribal and Customary Law, Tribal Folklore, Language and Culture and Tribal Music and Performing Arts. Krishna Kanta Handique State Open University has introduced a paper on 'Tribal Social System' in its Programme Masters of Social Work. Rajiv Gandhi University also has introduced Tribal Studies as a subject at the Under-graduate level in distance education. Quite a good number of journals are now available on tribal studies. You will also find that many state governments have started with tribal research institutes. This growing importance of tribal studies can be attributed to its relevance and in its expanding scope in contemporary times.

Tribes are studied as a stage in the process of social change. Obviously, there are theoretical works. The development practitioners show interest in action-oriented researches. Language and identity issues have become a thrust area in tribal studies. Due to the conversion to alien religion, many scholars take interest in the study of the identity and cultural process of the tribal communities. Resource management and people's knowledge in bio-diversity has also become a thrust area of research in tribal studies. Documentation of culture and knowledge system of the tribes has been undertaken by many scholars. As the tribes are conscious of their rights and duties, there are attempts to safeguard their rights on land and forests. Impact of different policies and Acts on these resources and on tribal rights has emerged as an interesting area of study. So is the case with the area of health and hygiene. The tribal system of medicine and its efficacy is now the interest of study for many scholars. Documentation of customary laws has been the thrust area of study for many research organizations. The syllabus is so designed as to focus on the above aspects through four papers.

### 1.2.4 Characterizing Indian Tribes

We all are aware that the term 'tribe' is a colonial construct. The colonial ruler divided the Indian society into tribes and castes; the analogy for the group of people as tribes was drawn from the Australian and African experiences. Risley used this analogy to define tribes in the 1901 Census. According to Risley and Gait, a tribe is a collection of families or groups of families having the following characteristics:

- Bearing a common name, which as a rule, does not denote any specific occupation
- Generally claiming a common descent from a mythical or historical ancestor and occasionally from an animal, but in some parts of the country held together rather by the obligation of blood feud than by the tradition of kinship
- Usually speaking the same language and occupying, professing, or claiming to occupy a definite tract of the country

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- Is not necessarily endogamous; that is to say it is not invariably the rule that a man of a particular tribe must marry a woman of that tribe and cannot marry a woman of a different tribe

Risley's attempt to define a tribe, in contrast to caste is clearly apparent in his definition of a tribe. Tribes were not occupational groups; their names do not specify any occupation. On the other hand, caste names mostly denote the occupations of the members. For example, *Lohar* (ironsmith), *Swarnkar* (goldsmith) or *Teli* (oil presser) caste names also indicate their respective occupations. In caste system, the principle of caste endogamy is strictly followed, which was in Risley's opinion not the case with the tribes.

Contrary to Risley's definition, the tribes in contemporary India have an occupation or set of occupations and they speak many languages. They are mobile and have migrated to different parts of the country. For example, Santhals who are the native people of Chota Nagpur plateau have also settled in Assam for occupational reasons since a very long time. Isolation is disappearing. A section of them is as advanced as any middle class community in India. Why do we then continue calling them tribes? This is so because they are scheduled as a tribe in our Constitution.

In India a tribe is always in the process of interaction and we have constitutional nomenclature for it. Though the tribes are in the process of interaction, still they differ in respect of their level of interaction, place of habitation and so on. Therefore, Indian scholars have their schema of characterizing a community as a tribe. All characteristics may or may not be present in a community but these are general aspects for our understanding of what a tribe stands for.

S. C. Dube (1990) has listed the following characteristics of the tribal groups in India:

- Their roots in the soil date back to a very early period. If they are not original inhabitants, they are among the oldest inhabitants of the land. However, their position is different from the American Indians, Australian aborigines and the native African population. They were present much before the white settlers arrived in these countries. There is no doubt of their being the indigenous population of these places.

However, this cannot be true in the case of Indian tribes. Tribes have been living in close contact with the non-tribals for centuries. Some tribes like the Mizos and Khamptis have settled much later in their place of habitation.

- They live in the relative isolation of hills and forests. This was not always so. There are evidences of their presence in the Gangetic plains. It is only because of subordination and marginalization that they have been forced to retreat to inaccessible places.
- Their sense of history is shallow, for them history is restricted to three to four generations. Beyond that it tends to get merged in mythology. But in recent years the oral tradition which was considered to be a weak source of history is accepted as the source material to reconstruct the history of the pre-literate people.
- They have a low level of techno-economic development.
- In terms of their cultural ethos—language, institutions, beliefs, worldview and customs, they are different from the others.
- By and large they are non-hierarchical and undifferentiated. There are some exceptions like the Gonds, the Ahoms and the Cheros who once had a ruling class or the landed aristocracy.

T. B. Naik has given the following features of tribes in the Indian context:

- A tribe should have least functional interdependence within the community.
- It should be economically backward (i.e. primitive means of exploiting natural resources, tribal economy should be at an underdeveloped stage and it should have multifarious economic pursuits).
- There should be a comparative geographical isolation of its people.
- They should have a common dialect.
- Tribes should be politically organized and the community panchayat should be influential.
- A tribe should have customary laws.

Naik argues that a community should possess all the above mentioned characteristics to be eligible as a tribe. A very high level of acculturation with the outside society debar it from being a tribe. Thus, the term tribe usually denotes a social group bound together by kinship and duty, and associated with a particular territory. The society is changing, therefore, the concept shifts to accommodate changes over the period to understand the dynamics.

Today, in India, the term 'tribe' is used to mean:

- The communities included in the list of the scheduled tribes
- The communities that were relatively isolated at one time and later had their integration with the outside world, but have continued to call themselves tribes because of their vested interests
- The communities that still dwell in remotely situated forests and hills and are backward in terms of the indices of development, although they may not have yet found a place in the list of the scheduled tribes

### 1.2.5 Emerging Fields of Knowledge in Tribal Studies

Studies on tribes have not been limited to research engagements only; the nature of study has been diverse, typically including research works, creative world view, and aesthetics. Further, the research is no more confined to knowing the tribal culture and tribes for the purpose of administrative necessity or for the academic curiosity of knowing the 'others'. The study now addresses the contemporary issues both from the empirical and theoretical perspectives. In India, works/studies on tribes that could be summed up in the discipline of tribal studies, cover a wide range of subjects and topics. We have categorized a few of the available works on tribal studies to understand its growing importance as a discipline.

As you know, the discipline tribal studies provides a holistic frame of understanding of phenomena. Further, it is also interdisciplinary even in topical investigation. Tribal studies as a discipline has been included in many University courses in different forms— as a separate paper or a few chapters in a paper. As a result, research works are undertaken by students and faculty members within the discipline providing such courses. There is no doubt that disciplines like sociology, history, economics, political science, social work and development studies have contributed immensely to its growth. For example, in the discipline of history you will find a good number of studies on tribes. Few of such works are as follows:

- *Problem of the Hill Tribes: North-East Frontier 1843-72* (1978) by H. K. Barpujari

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### Check Your Progress

1. State the purpose behind the visit of British anthropologist W. H. R. Rivers of India.
2. Who was the first Indian to study the impact of non-tribals on the way of life of Indian tribes?
3. Who is known as the 'Father of Indian Ethnology'?
4. Why was the Bhasha Research and Publication Centre established?

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- *Glimpses of the Early History of Arunachal Pradesh* (1973) by L. N. Chakravarty
- 'Customary Rights and Colonial Regulations: Thana Forests in the Nineteenth Century' (1993) by Indira Munshi Saldanha
- *History of the Frontier Areas Bordering on Assam: From 1883-1941* (1983) by Robert Reid
- *The North-East Frontier of India* (1884) by A. Mackenzie
- *Tribal History of Eastern India* (1973) by E. T. Dalton
- *Ahom-Tribal Relations: A Political Study* (1968) by Lakshmi Devi

Ethnohistory is also emerging as a branch of tribal studies in recent years. Mention may be made of *The Nyishi of Arunachal Pradesh: An Ethnohistorical Study* (2009) by Tana Showren.

The categorization of various fields in tribal studies made here is often overlapping. For example, exclusion is a conceptual frame of examining the impact of development. Hence, it is a development issue. But the concept being a distinct way of understanding the impact of market driven development process is treated separately in our categorization. Similarly, tribal culture and tribal ethnography do not have much difference except from the methodological perspective while studying the culture. But ethnography is not limited to the study of culture only. It covers the study of contemporary issues. For example, *Ethnography of Development among the Car Nicobarese* by Keya Pandey and Sashi Bhatia, 2006, describes development dynamics in the community based on ethnographic data. However, we have discussed tribal culture and ethnography together from the point of view of studying culture only.

You will also find that the issue of identity pervades through many categories made here. So the categorization is made for the convenience of understanding the emergence of different distinct fields in tribal studies.

Similarly 'indigeneity' in itself is very wide in scope to cover all aspects of culture. Traditional knowledge, faiths and beliefs, arts and crafts and customary laws, all are inclusive in the frame of indigeneity. Similarly, the cultural frame of analysis is also wide in its scope and includes all these aspects. Without defining conceptual perspectives, we have presented topical divisions in tribal studies. However, these divisions are not made as water-tight compartments.

Emergence of important fields of knowledge in tribal studies and examples of a few of the available works have been presented here. The list of books presented will motivate you to study further on the subject.

### **Ethnography and Culture**

Cultural and ethnographic studies cover a wide range of topical investigations. Civilizational studies, for example, are an important dimension of such studies. 'Tribal Cultures of Peninsular India as a dimension of Little Tradition in the Study of Indian Civilization: A Preliminary Statement' (1959) by Surajit Sinha is an example in this regard. In civilizational studies, village studies constitute an important dimension. You will find works on village studies which have enriched tribal studies in general. Mention may be made of the following:

*Tribal Villages in Arunachal Pradesh: Changing Human Interface* (2004),  
*Dynamics of Tribal Villages in Arunachal Pradesh: Emerging Realities* (2004) edited



by Tamo Mibang and M. C. Behera, and *The Tribal Village in Bihar: A study in unity and extension* (1966) by Sachidananda.

Many topical divisions present the culture of the tribes. These include monographs, works on cross-cultural studies, ethnographic works on society and social institutions, beliefs and practices and so on. A few general works on ethnography and tribal cultures is mentioned below:

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*The Binjhis* by Sushil Kerketta (1996); *The Maria Gonds of Bastar* by W. C. Grigson (1935); *Hill Kharia/Sabar* by V. S. Upadhyay; *Society and World View of the Birhor* (1984) by Ashim Kumar Adhikary; *Kora Tribal Community* by Rajesh Kumar Choudhary; *A Glimpse of Santali Tradition* by Parao Murmu; *Polyandry in India* (1987) edited by M. K. Raha and P. C. Coomar; *History and Culture of the Adis* (1993) by Tai Nyori; *The Naked Nagas* (1946) by C. F. Haimendorf; 'Ethnographic method and its Applications in Cultural and Social Anthropological Research' (2009) by D. K. Sahu and Ankita Arya; 'Between Ethnomethodology and Ethnography: Constraints and Strategies' (2009) by Bindu Ramachandran; *The Tribal Culture of India* (1985) by L. P. Vidyarthi and B. K. Rai; *Social Organization of the Minyongs* (1990) by R. N. Srivastava; *Dialogues with the Dead: The Discussion of Mortality among the Sora of Eastern India* (1993) by Piers Vitebsky; 'Communities, Conservation and the Challenges of Participation: An Ethnographic Detour of Conservation Programme and the Fate of Jhumias in Naga Villages' (2010) by Debojyoti Das; *Amazing Arunachal Pradesh* by M. C. Behera and K. K. Misra, 2013; *Marriage in Tribal Societies (Cultural Dynamics and Social Realities)* (2007), 2006 *Marriage and Culture, in two volumes* (2006) edited by Tamo Mibang and M. C. Behera.

### Tribal Literature

Literature in tribal studies reflects the creative imagination of the authors in the form of poems, essays, novels and so on. But this imagination is coloured by the contemporary social issues. Needless to say, the literatures available on tribes by tribal authors and others present the dynamics of society including such themes as gender issues, violence and insurgency, feminism, ecological concerns, exploitation and many others. Here, mention is made of two novels to understand how creative imagination incorporates the protests to exploitation in the society.

The first one is *Paraja*, a novel written by Gopinath Mohanty which was first published in 1945, before Independence. *Paraja* is a tale of woe of a tribal peasant family living in a remote village of the then Koraput district of Odisha. Sukru Jani, who belongs to the Paraja tribe is easily exploited by everyone in authority. Money lenders, forest guards, judges, letter writers, lawyers, land owners, policemen, all prey on him until at last he loses his land, his freedom, and his family. Sukru Jani's tragic tale begins when one day he is fined for cutting down forest trees—the same trees that he had always thought to be free gifts of nature—and he has to borrow money from the Sahukar to pay the fine. In order to pay off this small debt, he and his younger son become *gotis* to the Sahukar. However, the small debt is never redeemed. Their valuable land is mortgaged and is never returned even when debts have been repaid. They go to the court of law but lose the case. Sukru Jani and his sons begin to live elsewhere as *gotis*, and the daughters are left at home. It is at this point that the daughters begin to feel an emotional vacuum. Their dreams are lost in the quagmire of poverty and they begin to stray. Things get more complicated when the elder daughter, Jili, becomes the mistress of the same Sahukar who had snatched their land, cheated, exploited and tortured her

father and brothers. Sukru Jani and his sons appeal once more to the Sahukar to return their land, but when their humble submission is met with abuses, they lose their head and kill the Sahukar.

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The same overtone is clearly visible in Mahasweta Devi's novel *Chotti Munda and his Arrow* written in 1980. Devi presents the conflicts and compromises in the Munda community through the life of Chotti that ranges over the decades in which India travels from the colonial rule to the unrest of 1970s via independence of the country. Chotti Munda, the hero of the novel is believed by his community members to have supernatural powers; myth is woven around his arrow of having a spell. But Chotti Munda is more practical towards life. He protests against injustice to his people. He negotiates with agents of 'modernity' with a sense of strong commitment for the cause of his community and its members. He is hailed as a leader and thus the myth about his supernatural power becomes his community identity. Later, to protect and preserve the dignity of the community and protect the future of the youths, he accepts a crime which he had not committed.

In Arunachal Pradesh, Lummer Dai, Y. D. Thongchi and Mamang Dai write on their own culture as it encounters external forces of change. There is a humanitarian overtone in their writings and a critical description of the cultural change; somewhere a conflict between tradition and modernity is noticed in their writings. Lummer Dai's *Paharor Xile Xile* (In the Midst of Rocks of Hill), 1961; *Prithibir Hanhi* (The Smile of the Earth), 1963; *Mon Aru Mon* (Heart to Heart), 1968; *Kainyar Mulya* (Bride Price), 1982 and *Upur Mahal* (Higher Level) are novels written in Assamese. Y. D. Thongchi's *Saba kota Manuh*, *Mouna Ounth Mukhar Hriday* (Silent Lips, Talking Heart) situates culture in the changing context. Mamang Dai's *Legends of Pensam* (2006) is a search of her own cultural identity through her journey from the past to the present. J. Malsawma is a Mizo writer who writes in Mizo. The works such as *Zozia: Ethics and Moral Principles of Mizo People* (2003) and *Zonun: Collection of Essays on Mizo Culture* (1963) are presentations of the culture in the changing world. There are some works on tribal leaders and eminent persons. Mention may be made of *Life and Times of Birsā Bhagwan* by P. C. Orwan (General editor), 1964; *Jadonang: A Mystic Naga* (2009) by Gangmumei Kamei; and *Rani Gaidinliu* (2002) by Kusumlata Nayyar.

### **Tribal Customary Laws**

Studies on tribal customary laws in India can be traced back to the beginning of tribal studies in the country. The British administrators reported the customs, practices and culture of the tribes in their writings. Ethnographers also recorded the customs and practices while writing monographs. There are occasions when the government deputed anthropologists to document the customary practices for reference in courts. We are already aware of the works of S. C. Roy on the Mundas and J. K. Bose on Garo inheritance laws in this regard.

Studies on tribal customary laws cover a wide range of topics and issues. The themes cover documentation of customs and practices, examines constitutional provisions, various Acts and regulations, and their critiques from various perspectives. For example, studies that are carried out relate to the extent to which the constitutional provisions have been able to conserve tribal traditions. The development interventions conform to the functioning of traditional tribal institutions and preserve the tribal mode of life. The provisions of laws and regulations accommodate customs and practices, and so on. The study also examines the implementation of various Acts and assesses the impact on tribal communities.

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The topics and issues taken up for study are also varied in nature. Some of them are customary laws in social and political institutions, land tenure and inheritance, succession, adoptions, social and criminal offences, traditional system of administration of justice, process of arbitration, nature of witness and evidence, leadership pattern and its changing nature. The study also addresses such issues as critical analysis of uncodified customary practices vis-a-vis codified laws.

There are also laws to accommodate the changing trends taking place in the society. There are legal views on the status of the child of a couple where one of the spouses does not belong to the tribe or the endogamous group. The scholars study such types of laws with reference to customary practices.

Studies which form the subject matter of tribal and customary laws are based on various Acts and regulations. Some of them are: Chotanagpur Tenancy Act, 1908 and its amendments as in 1982, 1983; The Orissa Scheduled Areas Transfer of Immovable Property (By Scheduled Tribes) Regulations, 1956 and Rules 1959; The Agency Tracts Interest and Land Transfer Act, 1917 (covers the then Ganjam, Vizagapatnam and Godavari agency tracts); The Government of India (Excluded and Partially Excluded Area) Order, 1936; The North-East Frontier Tracts (Internal Administration) Regulation, 1943; The Bihar Scheduled Areas Laws Regulation, 1950. Two recent Acts on the matter are the Panchayats (Extension to the Scheduled Areas) Act (PESA), 1996 and the Scheduled Tribes and Other Traditional Forest Dwellers (Recognition of Forest Rights) Act, 2006.

You will come across a good number of works on tribal customs and practices documented during the study of tribal cultures. These are tribe specific or general in nature. These works are either authored or edited covering various tribes. Some of them are:

*Tribal Customary Laws of North-East India* (2011) by Shibani Roy and S. H. M. Rizvi; *Tribal Ethnography, Customary Law and Change* (1993) by K. S. Singh; *Life and Customary Laws of Tripura Tribe* (2009), K. N. Jena and B. D. Tripura; *Customary Laws of Tribes in Rajasthan* (2012) by Mukesh Bhargava; *Customary Law of the Austric-Speaking Tribes* (2002) by P. K. Bhowmick; *Garo Customary Laws and Practices* (2000) by Julius Marak; *Tribal Law in India* (2004) by G. S. Narwani; 'Laws relating to Land Transfer in Scheduled Areas of Andhra Pradesh' (2009) by Sri O.S.V.D. Prasad; 'Customary Rights in Law and Forest and the State' (1993) by L. K. Mahapatra; *The Customary Laws of the Munda and the Oraon* (2002) by Jai Prakash Gupta; *A Handbook of Dimasa Customary Practices* (2004) by L. K. Nunisa; *Customary Rights in Land and Forest of the Tribals of Chotanagpur* (1993) by M. C. Sarkar; *Customary Laws of Nyishi Tribe of Arunachal Pradesh* (2012) by N. N. Hina; and many others. Jagannath Shroff has compiled various Acts in a book entitled *Laws Preventing Land Alienation by Scheduled Tribes and Castes* (2013) which governed land tenure and land transfers in some agencies of Andhra Pradesh and Orissa during the colonial rule. He has also included laws on the subject after independence and the implication of such laws.

There are also works available on tribal leadership, working of tribal political institutions, status of women in customs and practices. Some of the works are:

*Democracy in NEFA* (1965) by Verrier Elwin; *Tribal Leadership in Bihar*, (1991) by S. P. Sinha (ed.), *Emerging Pattern of Tribal Leadership in Arunachal Pradesh* (2005) by Rejir Karlo; *Local Government in Arunachal Pradesh* (1997) by D. Pandey;

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*Customary Laws in North-East India: Impact on Women* (ed.) by Walter Fernandes, Melville Pereira and Vizalenu Khatso; *Kinship, Politics and Law in Naga Society* (1993) by N. K. Das; *Customary Law and Women: The Chakhesang Nagas* (2003) by Adino Vitso and many such types of works covering different tribal groups of the country.

### **Tribal Development and Policies**

In tribal studies, the issues of tribal development have emerged into an interesting area of enquiry. The issues relate to health, education, economy, livelihoods, occupation, migration and many others. The enquiry deals with development perspectives, policies, programmes, schemes, strategies and their implementation, impact and evaluation. The perspectives on tribal development keep changing. Consequently, development policies, programmes and strategies also change. Tribal development is investigated in response to these changes.

Most of the studies on tribal development examine the impact of development policies and programmes on the traditional way of life of the tribes. Issues such as exclusion, marginalization, displacement, deprivation, inequality, participation, empowerment, finance, administration and institutional support, and resource management are included in the study of tribal development. Generally, tribal development is often studied from cultural perspectives that provide a critique of general development policies and strategies.

You know that development is not a mere economic concept. It includes all aspects of life. So studies on tribal development cover a wide range of issues. Some of the works on tribal development in India are as under:

*Tribal Development: The Concept and the Frame* by B. D. Sharma, 1978; *Agricultural Patterns of Tribals* by M. S. Rao, 2010; *Tribal Development in India: Myth and Reality* (1994) by L. K. Mahapatra; *Tribal Development: Options* (2001) edited by P. K. Samal;

*Tribal Affairs in India* (2001) by B. D. Sharma; *Sustainable Development in Bonda Hills* edited by P. Mohapatra, K. K. Mohanti and P. C. Mohapatro; *Tribal Development in India* (2006) edited by Govinda Chandra Rath; *Tribal Economy in Transition* by M. K. Sukumaran Nair, 1987; *Institutional Framework for Tribal Development* by P. V. Rao, 1988; *Out of this Earth: East India Adivasis and the Aluminium Cartel* by Felix Padel and Samarendra Das, 2010; *Sacrificing People: Invasions of a Tribal Landscape* by Felix Padel, 2011; 'Habitat, Health and Nutritional Problems of Kondhs: A Major Scheduled Tribe Community in Orissa' by Gandham Bulliyya, 2003.

Research papers on issues of tribal development in the context of globalization are included in various volumes edited by M. C. Behera, Jumyir Basar and some other scholars. Some of them are:

*Resources, Tribes and Development* edited by M. C. Behera and Jumyir Basar, 2014; *Investing in Globalization: Policy, Participation and Performance in Odisha*, edited by M. C. Behera and R. C. Parida, 2013; *Interventions and Tribal Development: Challenges before Tribes in India in the Era of Globalization*, edited by M. C. Behera and Jumyir Basar, 2010; *Globalization and the Marginalized: Issues and Concerns for Development*, edited by M. C. Behera and Jumyir Basar, 2010; *Globalization and Development Dilemma: Reflections from North-East India*, by

M. C. Behera, 2004; *Agricultural Modernization in Eastern Himalayas* edited by M. C. Behera, 1998; *Trends in Agrarian Structure in the Hills of North-East India* edited by M. C. Behera and N. C. Roy, 1997; *Planning and Socio-Economic Development of the Tribals*, by M. C. Behera, 1994.

Gender issues have also been taken up in development studies. We can cite an example of a work entitled 'Gender issues in Tribal Development and Empowerment: A Focus on Women Displaced by Irrigation Projects of Southern Odisha' (2009) by Latha Ravindran and Babita Mahapatra. An edited volume entitled *Tribal Women: Yesterday, Today and Tomorrow* (2015) by S. N. Chaudhary has included papers on gender issues.

### **Applied and Action Research**

Applied and action research is an important area of research in the discipline of tribal studies. 'Development' in earlier years was considered as an economic phenomenon. But in later years the concept was considered from a holistic perspective encompassing all aspects of life. On the basis of the studies on the tribes, scholars realized that in tribal communities, economy is not a separate domain of activity. Like other activities, such as social, political and cultural, the economy is integrated and instituted in the social process. This holistic understanding of the concept of development is the contribution of tribal studies. Therefore, when tribal development was considered only in economic terms, some anthropologists and sociologists tried to implement development programmes to suit the holistic life of the tribes. Hence, they not only provided theoretical perspectives of tribal development but formulated strategies and put them into practice. Out of this concern of tribal development, there evolved a branch of applied and action research in anthropology.

L. P. Vidyarthi is regarded as the pioneer in applied and action research. He carried out field works mostly among the tribes of the then Bihar and developed new insights into applied anthropology. He developed the concept of 'Tribal Sub Plan' (TSP) which is now in vogue in planning strategies of tribal development. Vidyarthi had headed the 'Task force for the Development of the Backward Areas', appointed by the Planning Commission on the eve of the Fifth Five Year Plan. In his report, he forwarded the concept of TSP for tribal development.

You are already aware of Prabodh Kumar Bhowmick's work namely *Applied, Action Development Anthropology* published in 1990 in this regard. NGOs that are involved in development issues of the tribals also engage in applied and action research. There are a few more works on the subject. *Applied Anthropology and Development in India* by L. P. Vidyarthi (1980); *Anthropology of Development* by Jagannath Pathy, 1987; *Shifting Cultivators and Their Development* by B. D. Sharma, 2003; *Sparks from Bidisa, Vol-I: Tribal Development* edited by S. N. Rath and many others.

### **Tribes and Exclusion**

The concept of social exclusion has been employed to study the nature and extent of economic exclusion of social groups in market driven development processes. The concept was used for the first time by René Lenoir in 1974. This concept is also used to study the nature, process and extent of exclusion of the tribes socially, educationally and economically. The process of social exclusion is studied in terms of deprivation, marginalization and displacement. The following studies in the field of social exclusion of the tribes are noteworthy.

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*Issues on Ethnicity, Discrimination and Social Exclusion* (2010) by S. N. Tripathy; *Dimensions of Social Exclusion: Ethnographic Explorations* (2009) by K. M. Ziyauddin and Eswarappa Kasi; *Unbroken History of Broken Promises* by B. D. Sharma, 2010; 'Informal to Formal Education in Tribal Communities of Arunachal Pradesh and Issues of Exclusion' (2011) M. C. Behera and Jumyir Basar, 'Conceptualizing Social Exclusion in the Context of Tribal Communities of Arunachal Pradesh' (2010) by M. C. Behera and Jumyir Basar; 'Interventions and Exclusion: A Critique of Tribal Exclusion in Formal System of Education' (2010) by M. C. Behera and Jumyir Basar; *Exclusion, Discrimination and Stratification: Tribes in Contemporary India* (2013), edited by N. K. Das; *Tribal Marginalization in India: Social Exclusion and Protective Law* (2013) by Kavita Navlani Søreide; *Social Exclusion and Adverse Inclusion: Development and Deprivation of Adivasis in India* (2012) edited by Dev Nathan and Virginus Xaxa; *Navigating Social Exclusion and Inclusion in Contemporary India and beyond* (2013) by Uwe Skoda, and many others.

**Tribal Art and Craft**

Art and crafts are identity markers. A tribe has its own colour pattern, design, beliefs, taboos and so on relating to its tradition of art and crafts. You must have seen that a tribe is identified from its distinct weaving tradition.

In common language, art and craft constitutes material objects which are mostly utilitarian in nature. But in a broader sense, performing arts such as music, painting, song and dance, also come under tribal arts. Most of the art and craft of a tribe have myths around them; some of them have a soul consciousness and all of them have a purpose of use. Traditionally, these objects were not sold in the market, though there are examples of use of some of these objects in barter trade. In recent years, the artistic genius and craftsmanship of tribesperson create objects for the market.

The tradition of art and craft of a tribe along with its contemporary status is a well-researched subject. But presently, various socio-cultural organizations and government departments maintain websites of the tradition of tribal arts and crafts. Along with the corresponding literature, you will also get to see the visual display of art and crafts of various tribes. Few works by scholars and academicians have been mentioned here.

*Marginalized Identity: An Engagement with Art, Literature, Language and Ethnicity* edited by Jumyir Basar, M. C. Behera and Lisa Lomdak, 2012; 'Traditional Dhokra Art of Chhattisgarh' by Neetu Singh, 2012; 'Art of Body Decoration: Some Aspects of Dress and Ornaments among the Rongdani Rabha of East Garo Hills, Meghalaya' by Moromi Talukdar, 2003; 'Tribal Art, Artifacts and Art Objects: Need for a Demand Driven Marketing Strategy' (2009) by Sahoo. A. C.; *The Tribal Art of Middle India: A Personal Record* (1951), *The Art of North-East Frontier of India* (1959), and *Folk Paintings of India* (1967) by Verrier Elwin; *The Arts and Crafts of Nagaland*, Compiled by Naga Institute of Culture, Government of Nagaland, Kohima, (1968); *Nagaland* by Prakash Singh (1972); *Folk And Tribal Designs of India* (1974) by Bhavnani Enakshi; *Tribal Art and Crafts* by A. K. Das (1979); *Art of Manipur*, by Nilima Roy (1979); *Cane and Bamboo Crafts of Manipur* (1994) by Mutua Bahadur ; 'The Sauras and their Panoramic Paintings' (2005) by C. B. Patel; *Tribal Arts and Crafts of Madhya Pradesh (Living Traditions of India)* by Aashi Manohar and edited by Shampa Shah (2008); *Nomadic Embroideries: India's Tribal Textile Art* (2008) by Tina Skinner and Sam Hilu; *Tribal Architecture in North-East India* by Rene Kolkman

and Stuart Blackburn (2014); *Folk Art and Culture of Bodo-Kachari and Rabha Tribes of Assam* (2015) by Paresh Bhuyan; *The Black Cow's Footprint: Time, Space, and Music in the Lives of the Kotas of South India* (2005 and 2006) edited by Richard K. Wolf, Stephen Blum and Christopher Hasty; *Painted Myths of Creation: Art and Ritual of an Indian Tribe* (1984) by J. Jain; *Handloom and Handicrafts of the Adis* (1995) by H. Borgohain; *Handicrafts of Arunachal Pradesh* (1990) edited by P. C. Dutta and D. K. Duarah.

Given below are links to some websites where you may find the literature and visual display of tribal art and crafts:

- <http://www.folkways.si.edu/tribal-music-of-india-the-muria-and-maria-gonds-of-madhya-pradesh/world/album/smithsonian>
- [http://media.smithsonianfolkways.org/liner\\_notes/folkways/FW04028.pdf](http://media.smithsonianfolkways.org/liner_notes/folkways/FW04028.pdf)
- [http://chandrakantha.com/articles/indian\\_music/nritya/folk\\_dance.html](http://chandrakantha.com/articles/indian_music/nritya/folk_dance.html)
- <https://mamtavn.wordpress.com/2011/12/06/tribal-art-of-india/>
- <http://www.ishafoundation.org/blog/inside-isha/isha-yoga-center/gond-art-painting/>

### **Tribal Ecology**

Ecological studies generally focus on the interaction of human beings, animals and plants among themselves and with their natural surroundings. This operational frame of interaction is quite visible in tribal communities. Therefore, the tribes have been living in harmony with nature from time immemorial. But this harmony is disturbed due to modern forces of development and as a result we face a number of crises. For example, mega dam projects displace a number of people including the tribesmen. Such displacement adversely affects the socio-cultural and economic life of displaced persons. Before finalizing such mega projects, conducting environmental impact assessment along with the assessment of socio-economic impacts has become a pre-requisite in recent years. Projects get clearance on the basis of the nature and extent of impact on environment and socio-economic life.

In order to address many such emerging crises, scholars and academicians look for a solution in strategizing a harmonious relationship among humans, animals, plants and their natural surroundings. It is true that ecological tradition in tribal communities provides an interesting area of study. Therefore, a number of works are available on different perspectives pertaining to tribal ecology. These studies are either simple presentations of traditional ecological system or critiques of development philosophy in relation to ecological wisdom or any such related issue. A few works/studies on the subject are mentioned below:

*Ecology, Economy: Quest for a Socially Informed Connection* by Felix Padel, Ajay Dandekar and Jeemol Unni, 2013; *Tribal Ecosystem and Malnutrition in India* (1989) by A. N. Sharma and P. D. Tiwari; 'Ecology and Rice Cultivation among the Apatanis of Arunachal Pradesh' (1991) by Arun Kumar Singh; *Identity, Ecology, Social Organization, Economy, Linkages and Development Process: A Quantitative Profile* (1996) by K. S. Singh; *The Tribal Man in India: A Study in the Ecology of the Primitive Communities* (1974) by Paramanand Lal; *Conservation Ethos in Local Traditions: The West Bengal Heritage* (2001) by Debal Deb; 'Shifting Cultivation and Man-Nature Relationship: An Ecological Study with Reference to Nishing tribe of Arunachal Pradesh' (2004) by M. C. Behera; 'Sacred Groves' (1992) by Madhav Gadgil and M. D. Subash Chandra; 'Conserving the Sacred: Ecological and Policy Implications'

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(1998) by P. S. Ramakrishnan; 'Forest and Tribal Culture: An Overview of the Man-Plant-Animal Relationship' (1993) by S. N. Rath; *Community-based Natural Resource Management: Issues and Cases from South Asia* (2007) edited by A. P. Menon, P. Singh, E. Shah, S. Lélé, S. Paranjape and K. J. Roy; *Forest Management in Tribal Areas: Forest Policy and People's Participation* (1997) P. M. Mohapatra and P. C. Mohapatro; 'Indigenous Communities' Knowledge of Local Ecological Services' (2001) by Sanjay Kumar; *Indigenous Knowledge and Resource Management: Perspectives of a Tribe in North-East India* (2014) by Jumyir Basar.

**Tribal Folklores**

In tribal studies, folklores have occupied an important area of enquiry. Both outsiders and insiders study folklores for the purpose of documentation of vanishing tribal culture with a view to preserve them for posterity. Besides, the study also has academic importance and literary expressions. Folklores inform us a great deal about culture. Like kinship and cosmology, they present and explain tribal attitudes and actions, rituals and practices, fears and fantasies, and in general their world view. Folklores provide the rationality behind social reality. In recent years, studies on folklores have enriched our conceptual and methodological knowledge to understand and present various dimensions of social process.

We find tribal scholars and writers using folklores to examine the cultural identity in a changing situation. Shanchuila Ramung in the book entitled *Head Hunting Nagas: A Tangkhul's Journey into the Past* (2001) searches the identity of the community in today's world of fading customs and of the mundane replacing the mystic. The feasts and festivals, myths and ceremonies come alive in the vibrant portrayal of Tangkhul identity through ballads and folktales. S. Bhattacharjee and Rajesh Dev, in their edited book entitled *Ethnonarratives: Identity and Experiences in North-East India* (2006) have included ethno-narratives of various communities of North-East India with a wide range of themes to construct various identities such as political and historical. Mamang Dai in her books *Once upon a Moontime: From the Magical Story World of Arunachal Pradesh* (2005) and *The Sky Queen* (2009) has presented the identity of the Adis through folk tales.

Folklores help in reconstructing the historical past of the pre-literate people. Stuart Blackburn (2003/2004) in his paper entitled '*Memories of Migration: Notes on Legends and Beads in Arunachal Pradesh, India*' has used both verbal and material aspects of culture to trace the migration history of some tribes of Arunachal Pradesh. Similarly, Blackburn (2005) has studied the importance of oral texts in his paper entitled '*The Journey of the Soul: Notes on Funeral Rituals and Oral Texts in Arunachal Pradesh, India*' to explain people's philosophical perception on soul. More importantly Blackburn (2007) explained the concept of *cultural area* with reference to material culture and verbal culture of the tribal people in another paper entitled '*Oral Stories and Culture Areas: From North-East India to South-West China*'. Through folk stories, he established the importance of vertical borrowing down generations to explain the similarity in verbal culture and commonality in material culture.

Verrier Elwin had worked among a number of tribes of the country. A number of works by him on folklores on different tribes are available. Some of them are *Folk-songs of the Maikal Hills* (1944) (with Shamrao Hivale), *Folk-songs of Chhattisgarh* (1946), *Myths of the North-East Frontier of India, Volume 1* (1958), *When the World was Young: Folk-tales from India's Hills and Forests* (1961), *Tribal Myths of Orissa*



(1954), *Myths of Middle India* (1949), *A New Book of Tribal Fiction: North-East Frontier Agency* (1970), and *Folk-tales of Mahakosha* (1980). *Tribal Songs, Ballads and Oral Epics of Bastar* by Uma Ram and K. S. Ram, 2012; 'The Songs of the Hill Maria, Jhoria Muria and Bastar Muria Gond Tribes' by Walter Kaufman, 1941; *Folksongs of the Mishing* (1992) by B. Datta and T. R. Taid; *Mishing Folk Tales* (2013) by T. B. Taid; *Folk Tales of the Adis* (2003) by Obang Tayang; *Oral Literature of Arunachal Pradesh: Creation of Universe* (1999) by B. B. Pandey; *Tribe, Caste and Folk Culture* (1998) by Chitrasen Pasayat; *A History of Nagas and Nagaland: and Dynamics of Oral Tradition in Village Formation* (1996) by Visier Sanyu are some other works on folklores.

The Arunachal Institute of Tribal Studies promotes folklore studies by conducting seminars and motivating M. Phil and Ph. D scholars to work on folklores. Mention may be made of two edited volumes. The edited volume entitled *Folk Culture and Oral Literature from North-East India* by Tamo Mibang and Sarit K. Chaudhuri (2004) is a compilation of 22 papers on various aspects of tribal folklores. Another volume entitled *Indian Folk Tales of North-East India* by Tamo Mibang and P. T. Abraham (2002) is a documentation of 47 Adi folk tales.

Some scholars of Arunachal Institute of Tribal Studies have worked on folklores from different perspectives. The works are analytical and topical. Kime Mamung (2011), Tage Pugang (2008-09), Jombi Bagra (2009) and Pranab Jyoti Gogoi (2001-2002) have investigated the rationality behind social practices followed in tribal communities through oral traditions. In a similar vein, Nending Butung (2010-2011) has made an investigation of culture as it reflects in Apatani oral narratives. Tenzin Yeegha has studied the meaning of symbols as used in the dances of Tawang-Monpas (2008-09). Tunge Lollen (2006-07, 2006) has studied the symbolic expressions in Galo proverbs and marriage respectively.

### **Tribal Knowledge system**

The tribal knowledge system is very comprehensive. It includes material culture and non-material culture, arts and crafts, technology and belief; it presents the way of life in its totality. The tribal knowledge system manifests the culture, but the two differ the way they are perceived. In fact, the knowledge gets expressed through culture. Generally, tribal knowledge system refers to the informal knowledge system of a tribal community. Such knowledge is derived from informal sources and acquired through contact. The knowledge is mostly tribe specific and is orally transmitted down the generations. You may find works on traditional knowledge, culture and indigenous knowledge which presents the same phenomenon but with different topical perspectives. A few works on the topic are as under:

*Indigenous Knowledge and Intellectual Property Rights of Tribals: A Case Study* (2000) by A. M. Kurup; 'Traditional Knowledge, Innovation System and Democracy of Sustainable Agriculture: A Case Study of Adi Tribes of Eastern Himalayas of North East India' (2010) by R. Saravanan; *Traditional Knowledge System in India* (2009) by Amit Jha; *Indigenous Knowledge, Natural Resource Management and Development: The Konda Reddi Experience* (2005) by Kamal K. Misra; *Indigenous Knowledge: An Application* (2007) by T. R. Sahu; *Indigenous Knowledge on Forests: An Enquiry into Worlds of Kuttia Knondhs and Saoras of Orissa* (1995) by K. Seeland, G. B. Patnaik, K. K. Patnaik, H. C. Das, M. K. Jena, P. Pathi and S. C. Behera; 'Traditional Knowledge in Biodiversity: Past Trend and Future Perspective' (2000) by A. K. Ghosh; *Indigenous Knowledge: A Handbook of Sora Culture* (2011)

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by Piers Vitebsky; *Tribes of Panchmarhi Biosphere Reserve and their Indigenous Knowledge* (2006) edited by S. N. Chaudhary and R. P. Singh; *Tribes and their Indigenous Knowledge: Implications for Development* (2008) by S. N. Chaudhary; *Traditional Systems of Forest Conservation in North-East India: The Angami Tribe of Nagaland* (2001) by Alphonsus D' Souza; *Cultural Diversity, Indigenous Knowledge and Biodiversity Conservation* (2010) edited by N. K. Das; *Traditional Knowledge System and Technology in India*, edited by Basanta Kumar Mohanta and Vipin Kumar Singh, 2012; *Traditional Knowledge in Indian Society* edited by Amitabha Sarkar, A. V. Arakeri and Suresh Patil, 2012.

### Issue of Indigeneity

The term 'tribe' is a colonial construct which was used to designate some people in different countries by the European colonizers. But these people in some countries in Americas, Canada and Australia preferred to be designated as indigenous people in contrast to what the European settlers named them. The issue has become a global phenomenon and even in a country where the designation 'tribe' is used, a sense of feeling 'indigenous' pervades among the tribes.

There are studies conducted all over the world on these topics such as indigenous knowledge, indigenous literature, indigenous governance, indigenous health system and indigenous institutions. Seminars and workshops are held on indigenous issues including conceptual and theoretical perspectives. The UNO and other international organizations also support indigenous issues and the UNO has enacted various rights on the indigenous people. Needless to say, the issue of indigeneity has been an interesting area of investigation by scholars, writers, academics, intellectuals and activists. A few of the works available on the topic are as under:

*Indigenous and Tribal People: Gathering Mist and New Horizon* (1994) by B. K. Roy Burman; *Indigeneity in India* (2006) by B. G. Karlsson and T. B. Subba; *Globalization and Indigenous Peoples in Asia: Changing the Local-Global Interface* (2004) edited by Deb Nathan, Govind Kelkar and Pierre Walter; 'Tribes as Indigenous People of India' (1999) by Virginius Xaxa; 'The Idea of Indigenous People' (1998) by André Béteille; *'Indigenous' and 'tribal' peoples and the UN International Agencies* (1995) by B. K. Roy Burman.

### Tribal Religion

There was doubt about the religion of tribal people in the earlier tribal studies. Many researchers were of the opinion that tribal people do not have a religion. But with deeper insight into tribal faiths and practices, scholars of tribal studies later did not nourish any such doubt and misconception. Scholars of tribal studies recognize tribal religion and believe in its various forms like animism, animatism, totemism and shamanism across tribal cultures. All these forms come under the banner of *tribal or indigenous religion* where the tribal world view of nature and super-nature provides for the basis of faiths and beliefs, practices, and a state of transcendental consciousness.

In recent years, tribal people are getting converted to other religions. The issues of conversion and interpretation of traditional culture in the light of the philosophy of a new religion also come under the studies of tribal religion. In recent years, there are attempts being directed to conserve the traditional faiths and practices. Obviously, a revivalist trend is noticed among the tribes. Literature on revivalism in tribal communities forms a part of studies on tribal religion. *Bathouism, Saranaism, Donyi-Poloism* etc.

are revivalist literature on tribal religion. Similarly, folk Hinduism among the tribes is a case of syncretic tradition and the literature on the topic also comes under the study of tribal religion.

Therefore, one will find many works available on tribal religion. These works are mostly ethnographic depictions, though a few works have conceptual and theoretical perspectives. You will find some works on religious syncretism. A study of Tanginath or Gonasika—sacred place—shows the syncretic tradition of tribal and non-tribal faiths. However, many of these works are available in edited volumes. You can know about the tribal religion from the following works which have resulted from the study on various tribes.

*Hindu Method of Tribal Absorption* (1949) by N. K. Bose; *Religion and Society among the Coorgs of South India* (1952) by M. N. Srinivas; *The Religion of an Indian Tribe* (1955) by Verrier Elwin; *The Maler: The Nature-Man-Spirit Complex in a Hill Tribe* (1963) by L. P. Vidyarthi; *Hinduization of Tribal Deities in Orissa: The Shakti Typology* (1986) by Anna Charlotte Eschmann; *Tribal Priesthood and Shamanism in Chhattisgarh* (1988) by N. K. Das; *Hinduization among Western Indian Tribes* (1989) by R. S. Mann and K. Mann; *Rama-Katha in Tribal and Folk Traditions of India* (1993) edited by K. S. Singh and B. Datta; *Bhagat Movement: A Study of Cultural Transformation of the Bhils of Southern Rajasthan* (1997) by V. K. Vashishtha; *Conversion, Reconversion and the State: Recent Events in the Dangs* (1999) by G. Shah; *Tribal Religion: Change and Continuity* (2000) edited by M. C. Behera; *Culture, Religion and Philosophy: Critical Studies in Syncretism and Inter-Faith Harmony* (2003) by N. K. Das; 'Hinduism and Tribal Religion' (2003) by K. S. Singh; *The Debate on Conversion Initiated by the Sangh Parivar, 1998-1999* (2005) by S. Kim; *Christian Therapy: Medical Missionaries and the Adivasis of Western India* (2006) by D. Hardiman; *Hindu Shrines of Chotanagpur: Case Study of Tanginath* (1975) by K. N. Sahay; 'Religious Beliefs and Practices among the Koyas in Andhra Pradesh' (2009) by Reddi Sekhara; and 'Whose centre? Gonasika: A tribal Sacred Place and a Hindu Centre of Pilgrimage' (2012) by Cécile Guillaume-Pey.

A few works on North-East are as follows:

*Indigenous Faith and Practices of the Tribes of Arunachal Pradesh* (1998) edited by M. C. Behera and S. K. Chaudhuri; *Understanding Tribal Religion* (2004) edited by Tamo Mibang and Sarit K. Chaudhary; *Religious beliefs and Practices of the Mishing People of Assam* (1998) by Durgeswar Doley; 'Religion of the Adis' (1980) and 'Philosophy of Donyi Polo' (2004) by Oshong Ering; *Religious History of Arunachal Pradesh* (2008) edited by B. Tripathy and S. Dutta; *Tingkao Ragwang Chapriak: The Zeliangrong Primordial Religion* (2005) by Gang Mumei Kamei; 'Christianity and its Impact on the Nagas: An assessment of the Work of the American Baptist Mission' (1984) by S. K. Barpujari; *Christianity in North-East India* (1976) by Frederick S. Downs; *From Naga Animism to Christianity* by Veprari Epao; *Nyibo Agom: The Sacred Religious Literature of the Adi*, Two volumes (1983 and 1984) by T. Ete.

### **Tribal Movements**

Numerous uprisings of the tribals have taken place beginning with the one in Bihar in 1770s followed by many revolts in Andhra Pradesh, Andaman and Nicobar Islands, Odisha and in the North-East. The famous tribal movements of the 18<sup>th</sup> century are Revolt of Paharia Sardars in 1778, Halba rebellion in 1774-79 against the British, Revolt

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of the Tamars in 1789 and 1794-95 and uprising of the Koli tribes in Maharashtra in 1784-85. In the 19<sup>th</sup> century, tribal movements were mostly directed against the British rule itself or against the representatives of the British government. The famous movements against the leaders recognized by the British were Kond revolt against the leadership of Chief Bisoi (1850), the Santhal uprising in Dhanbad against the local monarch in 1869-70 and the Koya community's revolt against the landlords in 1862. The movements against the British were the Santhal rebellion in 1853 and 1855; the Bhil revolt in 1857-58; the Lusai people's raid into the British territory in Tripura in 1860 and revolt in 1892; the Synteng revolt in 1860-62, the Juang revolt in 1861; the Naga revolts in 1844 and 1879; the Koya revolt in 1880; the Sentinelese attack on British in 1883 and the Munda agitation 1874-1901. The 20<sup>th</sup> century also saw many revolts organized by the tribes who had revolted in the 18<sup>th</sup> and 19<sup>th</sup> centuries. Important among them are Koya revolt in 1922 and the Gond and the Kolam revolt in 1941. The Naga movement under the leadership of Rani Gaidinliu though was against the British, was also directed towards socio-religious reforms. Similarly, the Bhagat movement in 1913-14 and in 1920-21 had reformist zeal at its centre.

Scholars and academicians of different disciplines show interest in the study of tribal movements of the country. As a result, studies on tribal movements have emerged as an inter-disciplinary enquiry. These movements have been classified under different categories by different scholars. These can be as under:

- Movements seeking autonomy and movements with separatist tendencies
- Agricultural movements
- Movements on forest rights
- Socio-religious movements

Mostly, the movements are resistances against the oppression and discrimination, neglect and backwardness, denial or restriction of rights to resource use and apathy of the government towards the tribal communities. The resistances also are for identity assertion.

The Bodo or Karbi movement and Kamtapur movements are movements for autonomy. Unfortunately, incidences of violence also took place in these movements. The revolts against the British had questions of autonomy at the centre though there were issues of forest rights too. Movements with separatist tendencies in independent India are often called insurgencies.

Studies on tribal movements are historical studies. There are many works on the topic available as independent research papers or included in edited volumes. Some studies also concern the contemporary movements. A few works on tribal movements are mentioned below:

*Zeliangrong Heraka Movement and Socio-Cultural Awakening in Naga Society* (2005) by N. C. Zeliang; *Tribal Movement, Politics and Religion in India: Tribal Religion in India*, Vol-III (1998) edited by A. C. Mittal and J. B. Sharma; *Tribal Movements in Jharkhand (1857-2007)* edited by Asha Mishra and Chittaranjan Kumar Paty, 2010; *Struggles for Swaraj* by Mathew Areparampil, 2002; 'Tribal Movements: Resistance to Resurgence' (1998) by Pradeep Prabhu; *Adivasis in Colonial India-Survival, Resistance and Negotiation* edited by Biswamoy Pati, 2011; 'The Kamatapur Movement: Towards a Separate State in North Bengal' by I. Sarakar, 2006; *From Phizvo to Muivah: The Naga National Question* (2002) by A. Lanunungsang Ao; *Strangers*

*of the Mist: Tales of War and Peace from India's North-East* (1994) by Sanjoy Hazarika; *Naga Insurgency: The Last Thirty Years* (1988) by M. Horam; *The Night of the Guerrillas* (1978) by Nirmal Nibedom; *Tribal Movements in India: Visions of Dr. K. S. Singh* (2012) edited by Kamal K. Misra and G. Jayaprakashan; and *Tribal Movements in India*, two volumes (2006) edited by K. S. Singh.

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### Tribes and Insurgency

Resistance has been a characteristic feature of Indian tribes since the British rule. During the British period, the resistance was against the exploitation by the colonial ruler and its agencies. Such resistances were aiming for freedom and safeguarding rights on land and other resources. Further, there were socio-religious movements like the Bhagat movement. Such movements were also against exploitation but with a zeal for reformation within the society. All these resistances are termed as tribal movements. Post-independence the tribal communities have become part and parcel of the Indian nation and are governed by the provisions of the Constitution of India. Nevertheless, some members of one or some tribal communities are involved in separatist activities following the path of violence in order to achieve their goals. These activities are against the government and the spirit of democracy and Indian nationalism. Such activities are called tribal insurgencies in Independent India. In tribal movements, the issue of resistance concerns the entire tribe. But in case of tribal insurgency, some members of a tribe or across some tribes pick up an issue against the democratic government and resort to the path of violence to fulfill the demand. Often, they exploit the sentiment and the sense of community consciousness of the members of the tribe/tribes.

Many scholars, intellectuals, NGO activists and many others who are interested in tribal studies have been working on the issue of tribes and insurgency. Some of the works on the subject are as following:

*Terrorism and Separatism in North-East India* (2004) by Chandra Bhusan; *Insurgencies in India's North-East: Conflict, Cooperation and Change* (2007) by Subir Bhaumik; 'Tackling Tribal Insurgency in Central India: From Verrier Elwin to Vijay Kumar' (2013), by K. S. Subramanian; 'Ethnicity, Ideology and Religion: Separatist Movements in India's North-East' (2006) by Subir Bhaumik; *Naga Insurgency: The Last Thirty Years* (1988) by M. Horam; *Tribal Insurgency in Tripura: A Study in Exploration of Causes* (1990) by S. R. Bhattacharjee; 'The Naxalites and Naxalism' (1971) by M. Sen; 'Naxalite Armed Struggles and the Annihilation Campaign in Rural Areas' (1973) by Biplob Dasgupta; *Tribal Guerrillas: The Santhals of West Bengal and the Naxalite Movement* (1987) by Edward Duyker; '“People's war” and State Response: The Naxalite Movement in Telangana' (1995) by R. Ravikanti; *The Naxalite Movement in India* (1995) by Prakash Singh; *Maoist 'Spring Thunder': The Naxalite Movement 1967-1972* (2007) by Arun Mukherjee; 'Naxalism, Caste-Based Militias and Human Security: Lessons From Bihar' (2008) by R. Sahay; *Hello, Bastar: The Untold Story of India's Maoist Movement* (2011) by Rahul Pandita; *Days and Nights in the Heartland of Rebellion* (2012) by Gautam Navlakha.

### Tribal Identity

The issue of tribal identity provides a very interesting area of academic enquiry. The issue has been taken up by political scientists, folklorists and others who have interest in the topic. Identity issue provides an interdisciplinary approach to study. There are many works available on identity issues including cultural identity. You will find works on identity

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issues in language studies, folklore studies, and in literature as well. Even tribal insurgency is also studied from the identity point of view. A few works on the topic are as under:

*Nationality, Ethnicity and Cultural Identity in North-East India*, edited by B. Pakem, 1990; 'Territory, Identity and Mizoram' by Sivasish Biswas and Sravani Biswas, 2012; 'Globalization, Ethnic Identity and Karbi People', by Nityananda Pattanayak, 2012; 'Ethno-regionalism and Tribal Development: Problems and Challenges in Jharkhand' by Sajal Basu, 2006; *Ethno-history, Ethnic Identity and Contemporary Mishing Society* (1984) by J. S. Bhandari; *Cultural Identity of Tribes of North-East India* (2003) by J. L. Dawar; *Emerging Religious Identities of Arunachal Pradesh* (2005) by N. T. Rikam; 'Politics of Language, Religion and Identity: Tribes in India' (2005) by Virginius Xaxa; 'Tribal Identity Movements Based on Script and Language' (1982) by K. S. Singh; *From Fire Rain to Rebellion: Reasserting Identity through Narratives* (2011) edited and translated by P. Andersen, M. Carrin and S. Soren; *People of the Jangal: Reformulating Identities and Adaptations in Crisis* (2008) by M. Carrin and H. Tambs-Lyche; *Ethnic Identity, Ethnicity and Social Stratification in North East India* (1989) by N. K. Das.

### Tribal Language

Interest in the study of tribal languages has been a significant area of research for quite a long time. Tribal languages are studied, as you know, for the purpose of documentation, to prepare grammar books and to understand the culture. You will find socio-linguistic studies on tribes undertaken in many University departments in India. Moreover, studies on tribal languages also have a commitment of preservation and promotion. Few works on tribal languages and related issues are as the following:

*The Language of the Muria* by A. N. Mitchell, 1942; *Languages of North-East India* by Dipankar Moral, 2004; *Endangered Languages in India* edited by K. Sengupta, 2009; *Multilingualism in India* (1990) by D. P. Pattanayak, 1990; *Endangered Cultures and Languages in India: Empirical Observations* (2015) edited by Gautam Kumar Bera and K. Jose; 'Language Contact and Genetic Position of Milang (Eastern Himalaya)' (2011) by Mark W. Post and Yankee Modi; 'Language Diversity, Indigenous Knowledge and Biodiversity' (2010) by M. Sreenathan; *An Introduction to Galo Language* (1963) by K. Dasgupta; 'The Future of Tribal Oral Literature' (2008) by Anjali Padhi; 'The Other Maternal Uncles in Indian Languages' (2009) by Panchanan Mohanty.

### Conceptual and Theoretical Issues

The strength of a discipline lies in its growing theoretical foundations, conceptual perspectives and the extent of application of scientific methods of enquiry. In all these aspects, tribal studies have had a rich tradition right from anthropological interest on tribes and their cultures. One may find works that attempt at conceptualizing a tribe as a category. There are works on analytical concepts like 'tribe-caste continuum', 'nature-man-spirit-complex', 'syncretism', 'foraging mode of thought', 'giving environment', 'culture areas', 'cultural relativism' and many more to understand and explain tribal cultures. Theoretical perspectives from other disciplines are also applied to understand and explain the social process of tribal communities. On the basis of evolutionary perspective, tribal communities were considered as a stage of social evolution. A few works on Indian tribes concerning theoretical and conceptual perspectives are mentioned here.

*The Maler: The Nature-Man-Spirit Complex in a Hill Tribe* by L. P. Vidyarthi (1963); ‘Transformation of Tribes in India: Terms of Discourse’ (1999) by Virginius Xaxa; ‘“Tribe” and “Caste” in India’ 1961, by F. G. Bailey; ‘The Definition of Tribe’ (1960), ‘The Concept of Tribe with Special Reference to India’ (1986) and ‘Construction of Tribe’ (1995) by André Béteille; ‘Tribes in Transition’ (1969) by A. R. Desai, *The Scheduled Tribes* (1963) by G. S. Ghurey; ‘What is a Tribe: Conflicting Definitions’ (1968) by T. B. Naik; ‘Tribe into Cast: A Colonial Paradigm’ (1997) and ‘Concept of Tribe: A Note’ (2003) by K. S. Singh; *Foraging Mode of Thought and Forager Sulung’s Social Self: A Critical Insight into the Concept of Foraging Mode of Thought* (2009) by M. C. Behera; ‘The Giving Environment: Another Perspective on the Economic System of Gatherer-Hunters’ (1990) by Nurit Bird-David; ‘Tribe in India: A Discourse of Temporal and Contextual Limitations’ (2010) by M. C. Behera; ‘Tribe-Caste and Tribe-Peasant Continuum in Central India’ (1965) by Surajit Sinha; *Civil Society and Democratization in India: Institutions, Ideologies and Interests* (2013) by Sarbeswar Sahoo; ‘Between the Visible and the Invisible: Gender Relations in a Tribe in India’ by Arima Mishra, 2010; ‘Embeddedness of Violence in Inequality: Understanding Violence against Women in Patriarchal Tribal Culture with Arunachal Pradesh as Case Study’ by M. C. Behera and Jumyir Basar, 2008; ‘Contemporary Status of Tribal Women: A Critique of “Lenski’s Status Inconsistency”’ by M. C. Behera, 2015.

### Tribal Communities and Social Change

Tribal communities are frequently in the process of transition consequent upon their exposure to such forces as education, cultural contact, conversion and apparently, development interventions. Few more works have been mentioned to emphasize on the topic of changes in tribal communities.

*Peripheral Encounter, Santhals, Missionaries and their Changing Worlds* (2008) by M. Carrin and H. Tambs-Lyche; *Modernization and Elites in Arunachal Pradesh* (1975) by S. M. Dubey, *Traditional Rationality and Change: Essays in Sociology of Economic Development and Social Change* (1972) by M. S. A. Rao; *The Tribals and their Changing Environment* (2000) by Tomo Riba; *Continuity and Change in Tribal Society* (1993) edited by Mrinal Miri; *Tribal Elites and Social Transformation* (1993) by Kamal K. Misra.

## 1.3 APPROACHES TO STUDY THE TRIBES

Before Independence, the British government in India had its own interest in studying tribes. But after Independence, the Government of India gave much attention to the development of tribes. It was a challenge for the academicians too. Therefore, different approaches have been advocated for studying the tribes keeping the above objectives of tribal development and welfare in mind. The approaches have been discussed in this section.

### Interdisciplinary approach

Presently, interest in disciplines like economics, political science, sociology, biology, law, psychology, etc. has been growing to study the tribes. An economist applies either the economic approach or anthropological approach to study the developmental aspects of the tribes. Scholars talk about development through culture. A botanist applies his approach

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### Check Your Progress

5. What does the literature available on tribes present?
6. What are the issues of tribal development in tribal studies?
7. How are folklores significant in tribal studies?
8. Why are tribal languages studied?

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to study ethno-medicine. Hence, the approach is interdisciplinary. History also has been using oral tradition to reconstruct the history of non-literate society, especially of the tribes. Tribal studies are emerging as the interdisciplinary approach to knowledge on the tribes from a changing and comparative perspective.

### 1.3.1 Anthropological Approach

This approach was adopted by anthropologists to study the tribes. The approach has passed through different stages. The first one is an administrative account by administrative scholars. The East India Company appointed various administrators in tribal areas to collect ethnographic details about the tribes and this knowledge was used for administration of the country. Owing to the pioneering efforts of these administrators, a bulk of ethnographic data was produced which aided the colonial administrators.

The second one is the isolationist approach. Anthropologists have been widely criticized for this approach for conspiring to isolate the tribes in a zoo for the progress of their discipline. The temporary isolation of the tribal groups recommended by Elwin also faced a number of criticisms. In his book on Baigas (1939), Elwin not only discussed the malady and devastating effects of 'over-hasty and unregulated process of civilization', but also suggested remedies. The first step in this direction, according to him, was the establishment of some sort of a National Park where the tribesmen could live their life with utmost happiness and freedom. Due to this, anthropologists were labelled as 'isolationists' and 'non-changers' by the social workers. In his later works, Elwin clarified the misconception surrounding his work and emphasized the need for careful planning.

The third one is the integrationist approach. By and large anthropologists believed in the complete integration of tribes into the mainstream of Indian life.

In the anthropological approach, the tribes were initially studied as 'outsiders'. But later, anthropologists participated in the tribal way of life. They visited the tribals in their natural habitat and conducted fieldwork among them. They stayed with the people and learned their language. They collected information of their customs and beliefs. With time, from the top down approach the anthropologists adopted a bottom-up view of the society. Some anthropologists became so involved with the locals while conducting fieldwork that they became their spokespersons. The fieldworkers too got so involved with the tribals and their issues that they became their leaders and drew the attention of the general public to the tribal matters.

There is a fourth approach to study the tribes. This approach, focused in 1960s, aimed at quick documentation of tribal cultures before they disappeared in the rapidly changing world. This approach was named as Urgent Anthropology. The main motive was sheer academic interest, but not any ideological commitment. However, work on traditional knowledge system in recent years has fulfilled the objective of the Urgent Anthropological perspective.

### Evolutionary Approach

This is an anthropological approach to study the evolution of the societies in the historical context. In the previous unit, we got to know that some anthropologists placed tribe as a stage on the scheme of evolution of the society. According to them, society evolves from being simple to complex, from being primitive to a civilized state. This assumption is used to understand tribes as a stage of development in the evolution of human society.



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Classical anthropologists, especially the colonial anthropologists, believed that the study of tribes can obtain greater benefit when understood in evolutionary perspective i.e. principle of succession. Following this approach, the tribal society was taken as if it is at a particular stage of cultural evolution. The tribal group was understood to be in an arrested stage of development. Here, Morgan's definition of tribe draws our attention. He described tribe as a completely organized system having within its boundary all resources that are necessary for maintaining a particular mode of collective existence. This approach of understanding tribes has emphasized the principle of succession, i.e. one type of culture preceding and succeeding the other type of culture.

### 1.3.2 Historical Approach

The evolutionary approach is not applicable in the case of India. Instead, the historical approach is applicable in India. The historical approach believes that a tribe does not represent a stage in cultural evolution. According to this, a tribe cannot be placed in an evolutionary sequence following the principle of succession. In case of India, the tribes have been living in India since time immemorial along with the corresponding civilizations and other castes. Archaeological findings in Daojali-Hading prove that even tribal communities of the Garo Hills knew the cultivation of crops as early as the Neolithic period along with, what we call today, the 'non-tribal' communities. During that time, 'tribes' and 'non-tribes' were at the same stage.

Therefore, in India, tribes and non-tribes do not reflect differential stages of cultural evolution but have to be viewed from the *point of interaction*. Scholars who have studied the tribes from the historical point of view are N. K. Bose, S. C. Dube and F. G. Bailey. They took recourse to this approach since the evolutionary approach was grounded in the colonial approach. In places like Australia and Africa, there are major distinctions between the local community and civilization. In both these cases, civilization was a Western import but in case of India, civilization has been there right from the beginning and tribes have been in constant interaction with it.

### 1.3.3 Folklores

Folklore is regarded as the prehistory of a society. The folklore researches, which were at the level of sporadic collection of tribal songs taken to be included in the monograph, received a systematic treatment with Verrier Elwin to begin with, under the influence of Franz Boas and E. B. Tylor. With the passage of time few anthropologists unearthed social elements hidden in folklore. Now-a-days, anthropologists and historians are attempting to collect information on folk songs, folk beliefs, folk medicines and folk proverbs under the topic folklore to explore the folk-culture of an area.

In recent years, oral history has been a growing branch of knowledge based on folklore. Among the Indian anthropologists, S. C. Roy made a strong plea for the study of folklore by anthropologists. Roy believed that folklore throws light on the early intellectual evolution of human society. He emphasized upon the need to collect and preserve folklore traditions, since they are the treasures of past handed down from generation to generation. Roy held that Indian students are in the most advantageous position to collect and study folklore, although folklore traditions have already disappeared due to various reasons. According to him, in the study of folklore of the Indian tribe, a systematic collection of these folklore materials can be done on the basis of districts, taluks and smaller territorial arrangements. He held that the study of folklore should include folk songs, folk-rites, folk-magic, folk-riddles and folk-recreation. Roy was of

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the idea that in order to know about the origin of any item of folklore, the researcher will have to make a deep analysis and distributional study of such folklore items by plotting it out on a map, determining its focal centre and tracing its diffusion to marginal areas. The search for folklore customs was referred to by Roy as tracing *the genealogy of folklore*.

Another Indian anthropologist, L. P. Vidyarthi too contributed a lot to the folklore approach to the tribal studies. Vidyarthi collected rich materials on folklore and folkloric traditions. In his book on Maler (1963), he also attempted to collect and analyse the folklore of the Maler dealing with their habitat, family, economics, festival, fairs and religion. He edited a book titled, *Folklore Researches in India* (1973). This book is a collection of essays on Indian folklore written by eminent anthropologists on the basis of fieldwork.

### 1.3.4 Emic and Etic Approaches

The neologisms 'emic' and 'etic', which were derived from an analogy of the terms 'phonemic' and 'phonetic', were coined by the linguistic anthropologist Kenneth Pike (1954). He suggests that there are two perspectives that can be employed in the study of a society's cultural system. In both cases, it is possible to take the point of view of either the insider or the outsider.

The emic perspective focuses on the intrinsic cultural distinctions that are meaningful to the members of a given society. The native members of a culture are the sole judges of the validity of an emic description.

The etic perspective relies upon the extrinsic concepts and categories that have meaning for scientific observers. Scientists (outsiders to the culture) are the sole judges of the validity of an etic account.

Besides Pike, the scholar most closely associated with the concepts of 'emic' and 'etic' is the cultural anthropologist Marvin Harris, who has made the distinction between the emic and etic perspectives an integral part of his paradigm of cultural materialism.

Emic constructs are accounts, descriptions, and analyses expressed in terms of the conceptual schemes and categories that are regarded as meaningful and appropriate by the members of the culture under study. An emic construct is correctly termed 'emic' if and only if it is in accord with the perceptions and understanding deemed appropriate by the insider's culture. The validation of emic knowledge, thus, becomes a matter of consensus of native informants. They must agree that the construct matches the shared perceptions that are characteristic of their culture.

Etic constructs are accounts, descriptions, and analyses expressed in terms of the conceptual schemes and categories that are regarded as meaningful and appropriate by the community of scientific observers (scholars who are outsiders to the culture). The validation of etic knowledge, thus, becomes a matter of logical and empirical analysis. It is to be verified whether the construct meets the standards of falsifiability, comprehensiveness, and logical consistency or not. The empirical analysis will ensure whether or not the concept has been falsified and/or replicated.

Finally, most cultural anthropologists agree that the goal of anthropological research must be the acquisition of both emic and etic knowledge. Emic knowledge is essential for an intuitive and empathic understanding of a culture, and it is essential for conducting effective ethnographic fieldwork. Furthermore, emic knowledge is often a valuable source of inspiration for etic hypotheses. Etic knowledge, on the other hand, is essential for

cross-cultural comparison because such comparison necessarily demands standard units and categories.

In India, we have scholars who have studied Indian culture. A Hindu studying Hindu culture can also be considered to have an insider's perception. G. S. Ghurye, D. N. Majumdar, and many others have studied Indian societies and their perspectives are apparently those of insiders. L. P. Vidyarthi, K. N. Sahay, Makhan Jha and Baidya Nath Saraswati and M. C. Behera have studied the sacred complexes of Indian tradition. They are insiders to the culture they have studied. There are many such examples.

Similarly, in different Universities, tribal scholars study their respective communities for their Ph. D dissertations. Tamo Mibang has studied his Minyong (Adi) community for his Ph. D dissertation at Dibrugarh University. In Rajiv Gandhi University, Tomo Riba and Jumyir Basar have worked on their own Galo community, Tana Showren, N. N. Hina and N. T. Rikam in their own Nyishi community, Ashan Riddi in his Tagin community, Pura Tado in his Apatani community, Gindu Borang and Otem Pertin in their own Padam community for their respective Ph. D degrees.

### 1.3.5 Human Rights Approach

Tribal communities are no more self-reliant; they are integrated to the national development policy and development ideology. These communities have been exposed to market forces. Their resources are used for mega development projects which they exclusively use as their common property resources. Many rules and regulations are applicable to them that curtail rights they used to enjoy within their cultural frame. Because of mega projects, the tribal people are displaced, or denied access to their common property resources. Any protest is brutally suppressed by the state machinery. Many tribal people lose their lives, as happened in Kalinga Nagar in Odisha in 2006. Many tribals also lose their lives in police encounters as suspected insurgents or at the time of bombing operations.

Development interventions grossly intervene in their traditional way of lives. Moreover, they cause deprivation, exclusion and marginalization of tribal people. Therefore, many NGO activists and academicians consider the situation of displacement, exclusion, poverty to which tribal people are pushed to in the process of development as a violation of human rights.

The preservation of tribal culture experiences contradiction. On one hand there is a cry for preservation of tribal culture. On the other hand there are forces unleashed that would make the preservation efforts futile. For example, in recent years, language is linked to the job market. While tribal people are concerned about the protection and preservation of their language, they educate their children in English language keeping in view the demand of the job market. These are two opposite forces, and the demand for job market is very powerful. The situation of contradiction is not favourable for preserving a tribal language. That is why scholars in recent years study the tribes and development interface from the human rights perspective.

### 1.3.6 Policy Approaches to the Tribes

Tribes in India have been living with dignity along with the non-tribal communities since time immemorial. It is the British government that viewed the tribes from their own perspective and tried to bring them to their administrative fold. Since then the interest of the state has been directed towards the tribes and as a result the search for policy measures became a priority among scholars and administrators for a long time. There

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are three distinct approaches that mark the state's policy approach towards the tribes. They are:

- Isolation
- Assimilation
- Integration

### 1. Isolation

The isolationist approach is a colonial mindset of divide and rule. In fact, it existed in the colonial mind much before Verrier Elwin wrote his book on the Baigas. Inner Line Permit Regulation of 1873, which was extended to the territories of Nagaland, Manipur, Mizoram and Arunachal Pradesh, is nothing but a strategy of the British administration to keep the tribals isolated.

In 1930s, the idea of isolation came up in academics being pioneered by missionary turned anthropologist, Verrier Elwin. In 1936, he wrote a detailed account of the primitive tribe called 'Baigas' of Bastar district of Chhattisgarh. In his work, Elwin came with the idea of isolation. He found that unless the tribal life and culture is preserved and protected from extinction, things would go out of hand. This idea was not purely Elwin's idea. On the other hand, it was a product of the existing intellectual climate of Indian anthropologists.

Hutton in 1931 talked of the loss of tribal political and cultural autonomy mainly in the North-East. He opined that this loss was a result of acculturation. Hutton argued that unless we check such changes taking place, it would be difficult to maintain their identity. His idea came close to Elwin's idea of isolation. Indian scholars like S. C. Roy and D. N. Majumdar strongly believed that problems among the tribals were due to the overexposure to the industrial culture. All the writings of 1930s had the same view of tribal isolation.

Elwin came up with the idea of creating National Parks or protected areas in which the Baigas and their neighbouring communities could lead a life of their own without much difficulty. Elwin's idea was accepted by the colonial government, which found expression in the Government of India Act of 1935. It decided to create protected and excluded areas for the tribal dominated areas of Bastar of Chhattisgarh and outsiders were not allowed on the assumption that it might lead to exploitative consequences. Elwin felt that this was a temporary isolation and was required for the greater good of the tribe. The British administration realized that administering certain tribal areas caused much more problem in comparison to the general areas and therefore they should be kept away. Whenever the British saw the emergence of any tribal uprising, they suppressed it by declaring that area as protected area. Within these protected areas, attempts to convert the people to Christianity continued.

Anthropologists like G. S. Ghurye criticized the policy of isolation. He found that the policy of isolation was promoted to ensure adequate revenue generation within the protected land area. Another criticism against this policy was levelled by S. C. Dube. According to him, it was a deliberate attempt by the colonial government to create a cleavage between the tribals and non-tribals. Even Gandhi criticized the British policy of isolation on the grounds that they are spreading separatist tendencies. The policy of isolation was also criticized vehemently by the famous social worker A. V. Thakkar. He believed that the policy of isolation supported the academic interests of anthropologists. He said that this policy helped them in maintaining the distinction between the tribals and

non-tribals and thus, they could academically romanticize the tribes. In fact, Thakkar gave his own approach, which came to be popularly known as the social workers approach or the policy of assimilation.

## 2. Assimilation

Thakkar said that the policy of isolation favoured the Britishers and a category of scholars who were none other than the anthropologists. He was of the opinion that the isolation was contradictory to the ongoing and spontaneous process of acculturation. He strongly believed that the tribals were devoid of entrepreneurial skills. They have superstitious beliefs and they are not at all forward looking. This was responsible for their backwardness, low status and exploitation. He said that the work of social workers should be to point out the superstitious beliefs and practices and their evil effects on tribal life. He was of the opinion that the social workers should make the people aware about the positive sides of mainstream and caste society. They should act as facilitators of change generating the forces of acculturation leading to assimilation.

Elwin responded critically to Thakkar's idea of assimilation. He questioned that how can a social worker believe that there is nothing good in a tribal society. He also pointed out that the tribal people with their social differences could not be regarded as belonging to the lower social order. Therefore, Elwin was of the opinion that assimilation is not a spontaneous process. He said that it was unsound on the part of social workers to attempt either by force to convert the tribes or impose on them the elements of great tradition. He said that the social worker's approach treated the tribal social system not as a meaningful system but as a system of oddities. According to them, only after these oddities are dropped, that the meaning will emerge. In 1952, even the first Prime Minister of India, Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru criticized the approach of assimilation. He said that assimilation would lead to second role imitation of wider culture and by converting them they would lose their identity. Through this we will be destroying the fabric of cultural life. He questioned if the civilized society is developed and better off in comparison to them. He said, 'I don't have an answer to this but I certainly know that tribal life having its own characteristics is happier in many ways than of our own and every attempt should be made to preserve the best of tribal life.' And this marked the beginning of the policy of integration.

## 3. Integration

This approach is the middle path. It falls between the other two policies i.e. isolation and assimilation. This approach argues that some institutions of tribal society should be preserved. The institutions that are to be isolated are the administrative institutions and no interference from the government should be tolerated. Institutions that can be assimilated are the ones that do not affect tribal sentiments.

The pioneers of the integration approach were Nehru and Elwin together. Elwin raised a fundamental question in his article entitled 'Do We Really Want to Keep them in Zoo'. In this article he countered the charges, which were levelled against him by the social workers. He explained that the policy of isolation came up in response to the general breakdown of tribal social fabric. It was the manner in which the tribals were responding to industrialization. In his work 'A Philosophy of NEFA', Nehru in the preface gave his opinion of integration. Elwin in the book gave the following points as an essence for the policy of integration.

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- Tribal people should be approached with a tribal mindset.
- Tribal cultures with special reference to traditional practices and customs must have continuity and change.
- The economic rights of tribals must be protected and they should be allowed to continue with their traditional practices.
- The tribal culture should be preserved, integrated and developed.
- Finally, tribals must be united and integrated with the Indian mainstream.

Pandit Nehru, in the Preface, identified five important principles which characterized the essence of the policy of integration:

- (a) People should develop along the lines of their own genius and we should avoid imposing anything on them. We should try to encourage in every way their own traditional arts and culture.
- (b) Tribal rights in land and forests should be respected.
- (c) We should try to train and build up a team of their own people to do the work of administration and development. Some technical personnel from outside will, no doubt, be needed, especially in the beginning. But we should avoid introducing too many outsiders in the tribal territory.
- (d) We should not over-administer these areas or overwhelm them with a multiplicity of schemes. We should rather work through, and not in rivalry to, their own social and cultural institutions.
- (e) We should judge results, not by statistics or the amount of money spent, but by the quality of human character that is evolved.

These five principles are popularly called the *tribal panchsheel*. Elwin in his book demonstrated how challenging the task before the anthropologist is. Integration involves creating a sense of desire among the tribals to get united with the Indian mainstream. This is a very problematic area because the Indian mainstream has not been defined properly. There are religious, linguistic, ethnic, political and regional factors which hinder such integration. These are all the primordial elements which come in the way of integration. It was observed by some anthropologists that integration is taking place or can take place at different levels—at the level of materialism and idealism. According to K. S. Singh, in the Indian context, integration takes place more in the material aspect than in the ideational one.

Among the scholars who criticized the policy of integration was G. S. Ghurye. He opposed the policy of integration and said that it was a Western model and was not applicable in the Indian context.

However, in spite of the criticism levelled against integration, it remains the essence of state policy towards the tribes since independence.

### Check Your Progress

9. Why have the anthropologists been criticized for the isolationist approach to study tribes?
10. What is the evolutionary approach in tribal studies?
11. Who gave a systematic treatment to folklore studies?
12. Name the pioneers of the integration approach.

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## 1.4 SUMMARY

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- Tribal studies as a discipline is of recent origin when different universities started offering Post-graduation courses, M. Phil courses, Ph.D programmes or Post-graduation diploma programmes in tribal studies. But the interest in the study of tribes dates back to the colonial period.
- During the 18th century, the British government felt the need to have an ethnographic account on different tribes of India with a view to rule them easily.

- A number of foreign anthropologists visited India to record the customs and traditions of the Indian tribes. British anthropologist W. H. R. Rivers came to India in 1904 and studied the Toda tribe of South India, and their findings were published in 1906.
- Among the Indian scholars, S. C. Roy is regarded as 'The Father of Indian Ethnography'. He was a lawyer by profession. Another anthropologist who contributed immensely to tribal studies in India was D. N. Majumdar. He conducted fieldwork among the Ho tribes of Bihar, which later was published as a book in 1937.
- Renowned anthropologist L. P. Vidyarthi studied the tribal village named Ghanhra under the auspices of Census Operation in 1961.
- Tribal research in India owes its foundation to the establishment of the Asiatic Society of Bengal (1774). Sir William Jones, the founder member, piloted a number of researches and publications on subjects concerning the tribes.
- The British government appointed a large number of scholarly-oriented British administrators in tribal areas to enquire about their habits, religion and other cultural aspects to facilitate easy rule.
- During the constructive phase, different anthropologists studied and analysed their doctoral data critically and brought out a certain amount of theoretical sophistication in tribal researches in India.
- After Independence, the tribal studies in India witnessed an analytical and action-oriented approach. As a result the tribal communities began to be studied with an interdisciplinary approach.
- The Bhasha Research and Publication Centre was established in 1996 as a voluntary organization for the study, conservation, and promotion of tribal languages, literature, history, culture, arts, and crafts.
- The colonial ruler divided the Indian society into tribes and castes; the analogy to group the people as tribes was drawn from the Australian and African experiences. Risley used this analogy to define tribes in the 1901 Census.
- Studies on tribes have not been limited to research engagements only; the nature of study has been diverse topically including research works, creative world view, and aesthetics.
- Cultural and Ethnographic studies cover a wide range of topical investigations. Civilizational studies, for example, is an important dimension of such studies.
- Studies on tribal customary laws in India can be traced back to the beginning of tribal studies in the country. The British administrators reported the customs and practices of the cultures of the tribes in their writings.
- In tribal studies, the issues of tribal development have emerged into an interesting area of enquiry. The issues relate to health, education, economy, livelihoods, occupation, migration and many others.
- Applied and action research is an important area of research in the discipline of tribal studies.
- Art and crafts are identity markers. A tribe has its own colour pattern, design, beliefs, taboos and so on relating to its tradition of art and craft.

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- Ecological studies generally focus on the interaction of human beings, animals and plants among themselves and with their natural surroundings.
- Folklores inform us a great deal about culture. Like kinship and cosmology, they present and explain tribal attitudes and actions, rituals and practices, fears and fantasies, and in general their world view.
- The tribal knowledge system is very comprehensive. It includes material culture and non-material culture, arts and crafts, technology and belief; it presents the way of life in its totality.
- There was doubt about the religion of tribal people in the earlier works of tribal studies. Many were of the opinion that tribal people do not have a religion.
- Numerous uprisings of the tribals have taken place beginning with the one in Bihar in 1770s followed by many revolts in Andhra Pradesh, Andaman and Nicobar Islands, Odisha and the North-East.
- Interest in the study of tribal languages has been a significant area of research for quite a long time. Tribal languages are studied, as you know, for the purpose of documentation, to prepare grammar books and to understand the culture.
- Before Independence, the British government in India had its own interest in studying the tribes. But after Independence, the Government of India gave much attention to the development of tribes.
- Anthropologists have been widely criticized for the isolationist approach for conspiring to isolate the tribes in a zoo for the progress of their discipline.
- The evolutionary approach is an anthropological approach to study the evolution of the societies in the historical context.
- The evolutionary approach is not applicable in the case of India. Instead, the historical approach is applicable in India. The historical approach believes that a tribe does not represent a stage in cultural evolution.
- In recent years, oral history has been a growing branch of knowledge based on folklore. Among the Indian anthropologists, S. C. Roy made a strong plea for the study of folklore by anthropologists.
- The neologisms 'emic' and 'etic', which were derived from an analogy of the terms 'phonemic' and 'phonetic', were coined by the linguistic anthropologist Kenneth Pike (1954).
- The integration approach is the middle path. It falls between the other two policies i.e. isolation and assimilation. This approach argues that some institutions of tribal society should be preserved.

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## 1.5 KEY TERMS

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- **Assimilation:** It is the social process of absorbing one cultural group into harmony with another.
- **Matriliney:** It is the practice of tracing descent through the mother's line—contrasted with patriliney.
- **Tribal knowledge system:** It refers to the informal knowledge system of a tribal community.



- **Emic:** It relates to, or involves analysis of cultural phenomena from the perspective of one who participates in the culture being studied.
- **Etic:** It relates to, or involves analysis of cultural phenomena from the outsider's perspective.

**NOTES**


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## 1.6 ANSWERS TO 'CHECK YOUR PROGRESS'

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1. British anthropologist W. H. R. Rivers came to India in 1904 and studied the Toda tribe of South India, which was published in 1906.
2. D. N. Majumdar was the first Indian to study the impact of non-tribals on the way of life of Indian tribes.
3. S. C. Roy is known as the 'Father of Indian Ethnology'.
4. The Bhasha Research and Publication Centre was established in 1996 as a voluntary organization for the study, conservation, and promotion of tribal languages, literature, history, culture, arts, and crafts.
5. The literatures available on tribes by tribal authors and others present the dynamics of society including such themes as gender issues, violence and insurgency, feminism, ecological concerns, exploitation and many others.
6. In tribal studies, the issues of tribal development have emerged into an interesting area of enquiry. The issues relate to health, education, economy, livelihoods, occupation, migration and many others.
7. Folklores inform us a great deal about culture. Like kinship and cosmology, they present and explain tribal attitudes and actions, rituals and practices, fears and fantasies, and in general their world view.
8. Interest in the study of tribal languages has been a significant area of research for quite a long time. Tribal languages are studied, as you know, for the purpose of documentation, to prepare grammar books and to understand the culture.
9. Anthropologists have been widely criticized for the isolationist approach for conspiring to isolate the tribes in a zoo for the progress of their discipline.
10. The evolutionary approach is an anthropological approach to study the evolution of the societies in the historical context.
11. Verrier Elwin gave a systematic treatment to folklore studies.
12. The pioneers of the integration approach were Nehru and Elwin together.

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## 1.7 QUESTIONS AND EXERCISES

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**Short-Answer Questions**

1. How did tribal studies in India evolve?
2. State S. C. Roy's contribution to tribal studies.
3. Was it academic interest of the British government for which tribal studies in India was promoted? Why?
4. What is the analytical phase in tribal studies?

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5. What was the contribution of the Bhasha Research and Publication Centre to tribal studies?
6. State the relationship between ethnography and culture.
7. 'Art and craft are identity markers.' Explain briefly.
8. How does the tribal knowledge system manifest culture?
9. Why have tribal movements evolved as an important field of study in tribal studies?
10. 'The issue of tribal identity provides a very interesting area of academic enquiry.' Discuss.
11. What are the different stages of the anthropological approach to study tribes?
12. Do you think the evolutionary approach is the right approach to study Indian tribes? Why or why not?
13. Mention two grounds of criticism labelled against the policy of isolation.

### Long-Answer Questions

1. Assess the establishment of tribal studies in India.
2. Discuss in detail the stages in tribal studies.
3. Evaluate the present trends in tribal studies.
4. Describe the characteristics and features of the Indian tribes.
5. Critically analyse the emerging fields of knowledge in tribal studies.
6. Discuss the significance of folklores and art and crafts in tribal studies.
7. Analyse the differences between tribal movement and tribal insurgency.
8. Explain the anthropological approach to study the tribes.
9. Describe the emic and etic approach to tribal studies
10. Assess the policy approaches to the tribes in detail.

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## 1.8 FURTHER READING

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# UNIT-II FIELDWORK TRADITION

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## INTRIBAL STUDIES

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### NOTES

#### Structure

- 2.0 Introduction
- 2.1 Unit Objectives
- 2.2 Historical Background and Significance of Fieldwork
  - 2.2.1 Fieldwork Tradition in India
  - 2.2.2 Significance of Fieldwork
  - 2.2.3 Ethics of Fieldwork
- 2.3 Comparative Method In Tribal Studies
  - 2.3.1 Evolutionary Perspective on Comparison
  - 2.3.2 Ideographic and Nomothetic Approaches to Cultural Studies
  - 2.3.3 Etic and Emic Perspectives
- 2.4 Summary
- 2.5 Key Terms
- 2.6 Answers to 'Check Your Progress'
- 2.7 Questions And Exercises
- 2.8 Further Reading

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## 2.0 INTRODUCTION

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The tradition of fieldwork goes hand-in-hand with research work. Generally, research is defined as a scientific investigation of phenomena which includes collection, presentation, analysis and interpretation of data that reflects an individual's perception and speculation of reality.

A research can be a library research or a field research or a laboratory research. The last one is an experimental research and is related to physical and natural sciences. In library research, answers to research problems are found from secondary sources. It is the tradition of finding a solution to a problem using 'others' information'. In field research, the fieldwork is the heart and soul of the research and the research is conducted in the natural setting. The threefold classification of research is based on the access to data. In fact, **fieldwork is a method of data collection.**

Social science researches can be either library research or field research. The research can be a combination of both library and field researches. Accordingly, social researchers mainly employ two methods of data collection, viz., fieldwork and documentary research in the library. The process of collecting data by living with the people, having a first-hand experience of their lifestyle is termed as fieldwork. Fieldwork method generates a lot of data about the lifestyle of people and the meaning they attribute to their actions. It also teaches the distinction between 'what people think', 'what people say', 'what people do', and 'what people say they ought to have done'. Field data is not 'others' data'; it is the researcher's own data generated for his own purpose. It is, therefore, the primary source of data and hence original. In this unit, you will learn about the fieldwork tradition in tribal studies.

## NOTES

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## 2.1 UNIT OBJECTIVES

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After going through this unit, you will be able to:

- Understand the fieldwork tradition as a method of data collection
- Trace the origin of fieldwork tradition in studying the tribes
- Explain the nature and course of fieldwork tradition in India
- Describe the significance of fieldwork
- Discuss the meaning of ethics and its importance in fieldwork tradition
- Evaluate the comparative method and its significance in tribal studies
- Assess the emic-etic debate around studying a culture

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## 2.2 HISTORICAL BACKGROUND AND SIGNIFICANCE OF FIELDWORK

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The tradition of fieldwork in tribal studies is as old as the interest in studying the tribal communities. In this section, we shall discuss the tradition of fieldwork while carrying out researches on tribal studies.

Fieldwork is central to researches in tribal studies. It is the crowning jewel of anthropology. In studying the tribal communities of the Trobriand Islands of New Guinea, Malinowski is credited as being the most important figure in the development of the modern fieldwork tradition. Not less were the contributions of Franz Boas, Radcliff Brown, Evans-Pritchard, Lewis Henry Morgan, Ruth Benedict and others to this tradition of studying the tribal cultures.

### Tradition of Fieldwork outside India

The tradition of fieldwork is heavily credited to the American and British anthropologists. Bronislaw Malinowski, a Polish-British anthropologist, is a pioneer of the tradition of field research in tribal studies. He studied the Trobriand Islanders of Papua New Guinea during the last part of the first decade and the first part of the second decade of 20<sup>th</sup> century. He emphasized on participant observation and the use of tribal language during field studies. His student Sir Raymond Firth worked among the Tikopia of Polynesia. Phyllis Mary Kaberry, another student of Malinowski, had studied the Australian aboriginals.

In the early 20<sup>th</sup> century the fieldwork tradition among the sociologists of Chicago University was known as 'case study method'.

E. E. Evans-Pritchard, another British anthropologist, studied the Zande and Nuer community in Sudan, and other East African groups as well. In America, Franz Boas (1920), a German-American anthropologist studied the Inuit or Eskimo of Baffin Island and Kwakiutl of British Columbia. He trained generations of American students in the field study method. Famous among them are Ruth Benedict and Margaret Mead. You will study about them later in the same unit.

By now you must have known that the fieldwork tradition gathered momentum in the early part of the 20<sup>th</sup> century to study tribal communities. Prior to Malinowski, E. B. Tylor and other writers produced ethnographic information collected from secondary sources.

## 2.2.1 Fieldwork Tradition in India

The fieldwork tradition to study the tribes in India has been followed by two groups of scholars. The first group includes those who are outsiders to India, especially the colonial anthropologists and administrators. The second group includes the Indian scholars who have studied their own culture. In other words, the field study in India has etic and emic dimensions. We shall discuss the field tradition in India, its origin, nature and scope in the following sections.

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#### Outsiders' Involvement in Fieldwork in India

During the 18<sup>th</sup> century, the British government felt the need of having an ethnographic account on different tribes of India with a view to rule them easily. They were not anthropologists by training and profession but their accounts provided ample description on the tribal history of India. A number of foreign anthropologists visited India during that period to record the customs and traditions of Indian tribes. British anthropologist W. H. Rivers visited India and conducted a field study among the Toda tribe in the Nilgiri Hills of South India for about six months in 1901-02. He published a monograph entitled *The Todas* in 1906. Scholars maintain that his fieldwork among the Todas set the trend of anthropologists visiting the cultures they are interested in to conduct a field study. Malinowski later declared Rivers to be his 'patron saint of fieldwork'. Another anthropologist, Radcliffe-Brown, came to India to study the Onge tribe of Andaman Islands in 1906 and 1908. He published a monograph on Onge in 1922 under the title, *The Andaman Islanders*.

We also have material available on the tribals which were actually administrative reports of British administrators. On the tribes of East India, we have accounts of E. T. Dalton, H. H. Risley and L. S. S. O'Malley. Russel had written on the tribes of Middle India and E. Thurston on the tribes of South India. On the tribes of West India, we have the accounts of W. Crooke. In fact, their accounts were not tribe specific; rather these were reports covering both tribes and castes. Most of the publications available by then were in the form of Handbooks, Census Reports, District Gazetteers and a few articles. Only two full length works were available on the people of Chota Nagpur and on the Saurias of the Rajmahal Hills before the publications of S. C. Roy. F. B. Bradley-Birt, a British Officer, wrote a book entitled *Chota Nagpore: A Little Known Province of the Empire* in 1903 where he provided a full length account of the land and people of the region. Four years later, in 1907, R. B. Bainbridge, another British officer, published *The Saurias of the Rajmahal Hills*.

In North-East India, the colonial administrators have produced few important works on tribes based on fieldwork. Mention may be made of W. W. Hunter's *A Statistical Account of Assam* (1879), R. Brown's *Statistical Account of Manipur* (1873) and B. C. Allen's *Gazetteer of Naga Hills and Manipur* (1905). These works were field based accounts. However, there were some ethnographic works by some administrators. These are T. C. Hudson's *The Meitheis* (1908) and *The Naga Tribes of Manipur* (1911), W. C. Smith's *The Ao Naga Tribe of Assam* (1925), J. H. Hutton's *The Angami Nagas* (1921), J. P. Mills' *The Rengma Nagas* (1937) and Alexander Mackenzie's *Memorandum on the North-East Frontier of Bengal* (1869) which later developed into a book entitled *The North-East Frontier of India* and was published in 1884. Some other works during this period are W. Robinson's *Notes on the Dophlas and the Peculiarities of their Language* (1851), T. T. Cooper's *The Mishmee Hills* (1873), E. T. Dalton's *Descriptive Ethnology of Bengal* (1872), G. W. Dun's *Preliminary Notes*

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on *Daphlas* (1897) and C. V. Haimendorf's *Ethnographic Notes on the Tribes of the Subansiri Region* (1946) and *Notes on Tribal Justice among the Apatanis* (1946). C. V. Haimendorf was an anthropologist who was appointed by the government for preparing ethnographic account of the Apatanis. Later, he kept visiting the Apatanis and published *The Hidden Land* (1953), *The Apatanis and their Neighbours* (A primitive civilization of the Eastern Himalayas) (1962) and *A Himalayan Tribe from Cattle to Cash* (1980). Ursula Graham Bower, also published a book entitled *Himalayan Barbary* (1955) based on fieldwork.

Even today, scholars take interest in field studies in India. They study both tribal and non-tribal cultures. Lidia Guzy from Ireland, Nel Vandekerckhove from Amsterdam, Robin Oakley from Canada, Bengt G. Karlsson from Sweden, Vanessa Cholez from France, Stuart Blackburn from United Kingdom, Nicolas Laine and Philippe Ramirez from France, Skoda Uwe from Denmark, Stephen Morey from La Trobe University, Australia, Emile Parent from Canada, to mention a few, have selected tribal areas for their field study.

### **Indian Scholars in the Field**

The Indian tradition of fieldwork began with the publication of 'The Mundas, Their Country, Their Character and Their Poetry' in 1908 by S. C. Roy. It was not an administrative account, but an ethnographical account based on Roy's field experience. The history of tribal studies in India took a turning point with the publication of this article.

### **Period of S. C. Roy**

The beginning of field tradition in India is attributed to Sarat Chandra Roy. He is regarded as 'The Father of Indian Ethnography'. Roy was a lawyer by profession. He settled in Ranchi to establish his practice as a pleader. He started his career in 1898. He came in contact with the tribal people of Chota Nagpur. The region of present Jharkhand, Chhattisgarh and around was known as Chota Nagpur. Gradually, Roy developed an interest in the life and culture of the tribal people of this region. His interest in tribal ethnography developed in the course of his visit to the interior areas of the region because of his professional requirement as a lawyer. He became acquainted with the problems of the tribal people and came to know that they were oppressed and exploited owing to their ignorance of administrative and judicial matters. His great compassion for tribal people initiated him to plead in favour of the tribals against the exploitation of their landlords. He took deep interest in their customary laws in view of his profession as a lawyer and learnt their languages.

The simple beginning of the Indian tradition of fieldwork with the publication of an article by S. C. Roy in 1908 made a benchmark in 1920. In that year S. C. Roy published a detailed monograph entitled *The Mundas and their Country*. This is the first field based full length ethnographical account on the Mundas, a major tribe in the then Chota Nagpur, by an Indian ethnographer. This was highly acclaimed, acknowledged by the High Court of Patna and Calcutta (Kolkata), as authoritative for conducting legal cases for proper justice to the tribals.

S. C. Roy's ethnographic works were based on in-depth field studies through the participant observation method. He was very much accepted by the tribals as a man of their own society, who shared their joys, hopes and sorrows of life with them. Rapport establishment is an important quality of an investigator in anthropology and tribal studies.

S. C. Roy had that quality because of his compassion for the tribal people, his efforts to bring them legal justice against exploitation, and his ability to communicate with them in their own languages. It is not surprising when he spent much of his time and energy to conduct field study in the thickly forested areas of Birhor settlements, scattered and secluded, to write on the Birhors. Fieldwork tradition to S. C. Roy was not a method of producing ethnography; it was a road map for good governance, both on the administration and development fronts.

Field tradition is not competitive with the other methods of data collection. Rather, the method of fieldwork could be used to complement the other methods of data collection. It is not a surprise to find Roy combining historical methods and ethnography in his first monograph on the Mundas. In describing the history of the Mundas, he dealt with the tribal history of Ranchi to trace the origin and history of the Munda tribe from different sources including folklore, linguistics and prehistoric evidences. He has provided a historical background on the advent of Christian Missionaries, institution of Zamindars and their exploitation and the Birsa movement against the British.

The use of other sources is also evident in his book *The Kharias* (1937), published in two volumes, which he co-authored with his son Ramesh Chandra Roy, a trained anthropologist. With the help of his son, he incorporated the anthropometric data available on the Kharias and got the data analysed with the help of P. C. Mahalanobis, a renowned statistician.

Evidently, the field work tradition does not display exclusiveness in writing ethnographical accounts based only on field data. Therefore, Roy's ethnographical works are forerunners of interdisciplinary studies of our time. In other words, the history of field tradition in India by the Indian nationals marks the history of interdisciplinary perspectives in the pursuit of knowledge.

Field tradition is vast in its scope. It is not limited only to ethnographic studies. Scholars of pre-history and archaeology also conduct fieldworks. Roy himself presented a paper in 1915 entitled 'A Note on Some Remains of the Ancient Asurs in the Ranchi District' based on field study. He explored about 45 sites and collected over hundred stone tools from different pre-historic sites of Ranchi. In the cited work, Roy had collected copper ornaments from a number of sites as evidences to prove the chalcolithic culture in Ranchi. The following year he also published another paper entitled 'Relics of the Copper Age Found in Chota Nagpur' on the basis of field data.

S. C. Roy was a strong advocate of anthropological training to administrative and judicial officers, forest and excise officers who were posted in tribal areas. He believed that such trainings would not only improve the quality of judicial and executive work, but would also help the cause of science through observation and investigation of tribal customs that might be recorded during the fieldwork. He visualized the training of fieldworkers as a means of capacity building of these workers to serve the tribal people better. No doubt, the fieldwork tradition includes the essence of understanding and working better particularly for the tribal people.

During this period, another scholar named J. K. Bose was engaged in fieldwork among the tribals of North-East India. His tenure of fieldwork was not long, but the contribution he made is outstanding. His fieldwork spanned a few years in early 1930s and a year in 1940-41. However, his works were published in the 1980s. The first one, entitled *Glimpses of Tribal Life in North-East India* is a collection of six papers, along with few papers of other scholars in the appendix section, which was published in 1980.

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The collected papers are the result of fieldwork conducted by Bose in early thirties when he was a Research Fellow at the American Museum of Natural History. In about two years, he covered an extensive area and collected large quantities of field data on the social organization of Garo, Khasi, Chiru, Kuki and Nagas of North-East India.

In 1940-41, being appointed by the government of Bengal, he made a careful and systematic study of the Garo inheritance law conducting field study. Bose was already a trained anthropologist and a law graduate before he worked among the tribes of North-East India and particularly on the Garo laws of inheritance. His study became the official manual for deciding cases of land ownership and inheritance among the Garos.

### Post Roy Period

During the post Roy period, we have scholars who were in contact with S. C. Roy or were trained or influenced by him. The works of these scholars have been labelled as 'Continuity of Roy's Tradition'. Also, there were scholars who were not trained by Roy, but contributed immensely to the field tradition in the country. Their fieldwork was not limited to tribal studies; rather they extended the field study method to study the caste societies. Therefore, a new trend was set in the field tradition. Nirmal Kumar Bose can be regarded as the forerunner of this trend because his fieldwork not only encompassed the tribes but extended to study the Indian civilization. The field method which was popular in ethnographic studies has crossed the disciplinary boundary. Its use has been comprehensive and it also encompasses development studies.

### Continuity of Roy's tradition

After Roy, Nirmal Kumar Bose, S. S. Sarkar and D. N. Majumdar continued the field tradition having been inspired by Roy. These three scholars including A. Aiyappan and K. P. Chattopadhyay received primary training of fieldwork from Roy. D. N. Majumdar of Lucknow University undertook the monographic study of the Ho tribe of Seraikela under the guidance of Roy. The report from the field study appeared as a book in 1937. He was the first Indian anthropologist to study and write about the impact of non-tribal culture on the lives of Indian tribes. S. S. Sarkar of Calcutta University undertook an ethnological survey of the Maler. Sarkar's work, mostly on physical anthropology includes field study based papers on Jarwa and Onge tribes as well as Negritoid traces on the Indian mainland.

A. Aiyappan, a musicologist and also a Professor of Anthropology for a short period, has produced field study based ethnographic works such as *Nayada in Kerala* and *Social Revolution in a Kerala Village* (1965). Nirmal Kumar Bose began his field study among the Juangs of Odisha, but later he extended its scope to other fields and societies. His field interest encompassed art and architecture, the Indian society and culture. He played an important role in 'building an Indian tradition in Anthropology' including tribal studies.

### New Trend

A new trend in field tradition emerged when scholars studied not only the tribes but also other communities and dimensions of the Indian civilization. One of the fieldworkers in the phase of new trend is M. N. Srinivas. He employed fieldwork methods in his research. Particularly, he followed ethnographic research based on participant observation. But his fieldwork was tied to the notion of locally bound areas. He did not conduct field studies with the notion of studying 'the others' like the anthropologists. Except his work



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on the Coorgs, his other works were on the non-tribal caste societies. It is not a surprise that his papers on dominant caste and joint family disputes were largely inspired from his direct participation in the rural life of South India. His *The Remembered Village* (1976), considered a classic in fieldwork tradition is a study based on the 11 months he spent in the village (Rampura, a fictitious name) in 1948 and on subsequent visits until 1964. His book entitled *Religion and Society among the Coorgs of South India* (1952) is an outcome of his ethnographic research among the Coorg (Anglicized name of the Kodava) tribal people. On the basis of field studies, scholars have been able to formulate new concepts and a theoretical framework. He conducted field study among the Coorgs of Karnataka for a year and has coined the concept Sanskritization. Sociologist Andre Beteille's study of the Sripuram village (also a fictitious name) in Tanjore in South India provided a theoretical frame of understanding the caste system of South India. The point is that field tradition was not only limited to the study of tribes in the post Roy period. It has a vast canvass and tribal studies constitutes the major portion. Moreover, those who are trained in field studies among the tribals do better in other area.

In 1956, Nabendu Datta-Majumder produced a field study based monograph on the Santhals entitled *The Santhal: A Study in Culture Change*. Prabodh Kumar Bhowmick produced his Ph. D thesis on the topic *Lodhas of West Bengal* in 1961 which was later published as a book in 1963. After that he focused on applied and action anthropology for the welfare of the tribals, especially Lodhas, in situ. On the basis of field experience of scholars and activists involved in action based approach for the development of the tribals, he compiled a volume entitled *Applied and Action Anthropology* in 1990.

In the later part of 1950s and thereafter, L. P. Vidyarthi conducted field studies not only among the tribals, but extended it to study the Indian civilization. He began his field study in Gaya and submitted a field report in 1950 to the Patna University. He published his field study based book entitled *The Sacred Complex in Hindu Gaya* in 1961. His work along with Makhan Jha and Baidyanath Saraswati is entitled as *The Sacred Complex of Kashi: A Microcosm of Indian Civilization* in 1979. In 1961, he published an article entitled 'Sacred Complex in a Hilly tribal Village' on the basis of field study. He conducted field studies among the Malers who lived in Rajmahal Hills and published a monograph entitled *The Maler: The Nature-Man-Spirit Complex in a Hill Tribe* (1963). On the basis of his field work among the tribes he coined the concept of 'Nature-Man-Spirit Complex', and in Gaya he conceptualized 'Sacred Complex' as a frame of analysis which could be expended to study the scared space in tribal villages also.

### Contemporary Tradition

Field study today is not limited among the academic scholars only. NGOs and non-academic institutions take interest in field methods to study the different aspects of tribal life in the changing context. Few individuals also have taken up field data to present tribal problems.

B. D. Sharma, an I.A.S officer has a long experience of working in the Bastar tribal region. The field data collected by him as an administrator in the course of his official work and later as an amateur scholar has been used by him to understand the development dynamics. He has used the field data as a critique of various government policies. *Besieged, Tribal Affairs in India, Against Imperialism, Forced Marriages in Bailadila*, and *Shifting Cultivation* are some of his critiques based on field data. As

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an NGO activist, he has reported his field experience of atrocities on tribes in Kalinganagar of Odisha.

Recently, various NGOs have used field data for action and applied researches. In fact requirement of field data spreads beyond ethnography to participatory learning action, development studies, environmental conservation studies through Indigenous Knowledge System (IKS) and many others.

Post-Independence tribal research institutes/departments in states like Arunachal Pradesh, Assam, Odisha, former Bihar, former Madhya Pradesh, Himachal Pradesh, and Rajasthan have been set up. These institutes have been undertaking ethnographic studies and collecting field data on development projects. Some of the ethnographic works produced by the Department of Research in Arunachal Pradesh are as follows:

| Authors                    | Name of Monographs  |
|----------------------------|---|
| B. K. Shukla (1959)        | <i>The Dafla of the Subansiri Region</i> (The designation Dafla is no more in use. People call themselves Nyishi) |
| Sachin Roy (1960)          | <i>Aspects of Padam Minyong Culture</i>   |
| Raghuvir Sinha (1962)      | <i>The Akas</i>   |
| L. R. N. Srivastava (1962) | <i>The Gallongs</i> (The people call themselves Galos)  |
| N. Sarkar (1974)           | <i>Dances of Arunachal Pradesh</i>  |
| Ram Kumar Deuri (1982)     | <i>The Sulungs</i> (Sulungs are now called Puroiks)   |
| L. R. N. Srivastava (1990) | <i>Social Organization of the Minyongs</i>  |

University departments, centres and institutes, in recent years are engaged in field studies in general and on tribal affairs in particular. Land Record Department of Guwahati High Court has recorded tribal customary laws by conducting field study. National Institute of Rural Development and its regional centres conduct field studies both in tribal and non-tribal areas to evaluate rural development schemes.

In some University departments, the field tradition is a requirement of the University degree of students, and career concern of teachers. Some teachers of the University, especially from the Anthropology departments, have studied the tribals in the course of their academic pursuits. Jagannath Dash of Utkal University has worked among the tribes of Shimilpal, A. K. Kapoor of Delhi University among the Sahariyas of Rajasthan and Jaunsar-Bawar of Uttarakhand, V. S. Upadhyaya and V. S. Sahaya who belong to the Ranchi tradition worked among the tribes of Andaman and Nicobar and Ashim Adhikari among the Birhors. The anthropologists of various centres of Anthropological Survey of India have worked among the tribes of their respective areas. S. N. Chaudhary, Professor of Rajiv Gandhi Chair in Contemporary Studies, Barkatullah University, Bhopal, is engaged in field based tribal studies.

It is to be noted that studying more than one tribe has been a trend in contemporary field tradition. Jagannath Dash has worked among the Ho (1981), Bathudi Santhal (1981), Paraja (1982), Dongria Kondh (1985) and many more. V. S. Sahay has worked among the tribes of Nicobar Islands and Khasa in Himalayas. Besides that, he has worked among the tribal communities of Jharkhand, West Bengal and Chhattisgarh. M. C. Behera has worked among the Khamptis (1986-88, 1988-90, 2001, 2007), Adis (Minyong: 1992, 1994; Padam 2003-2004), Apatani (1992-94), Galo (1998-99), Mishmi—both Miju

and Digaru (1988-89, 2002), Nyishi (1997) Sulung—now called Puroik (2002-2003), Monpa (2005) and Bugun (2008) in Arunachal Pradesh. Besides he has studied the Paraja of Odisha (2002, 2010) and the Birhor of Jharkhand. Individual scholars working among a number of tribes is possible because of project works they undertake, selection of tribes for Ph. D work and the field study conducted by students during field training.

Presently, scholars belonging to their own tribe conduct field study as a requirement of their Ph. D work or project work they undertake. In Delhi University, most of the Ph. D and M. Phil scholars select their own tribe for field study. Avitoli Zhimo and Kanato Chophy of Delhi University have conducted fieldwork in their respective Naga communities for Ph. D degree. Similar trend is followed in other Universities as well.

Therefore, the contemporary trend in field study is a growing academic engagement of insiders studying their respective tribes. More and more tribal youths go for higher studies and pursue Ph. D and M. Phil courses. Besides these scholars, there are other scholars who study their own tribes for the project work undertaken by them. Malli Gandhi, himself a de-notified tribe has studied not only his own tribe but many other de-notified tribes like Dasaris, Sugalis, Woddars, Yerukulas and Yandis.

### **Elwin's Fieldwork**

While S. C. Roy was working among the tribes of Chota Nagpur, another scholar was actively involved in fieldwork among the tribes of the present Madhya Pradesh, Chhattisgarh and Odisha. He was Verrier Elwin, who came to India in 1927 as a Christian Missionary, but became a self-educated anthropologist. On the basis of his fieldwork, he came out with numerous books on various tribal groups of Central India, but he is best known for his work with the Baigas and Gonds. Later, he shifted his field interest to North-East India. He published *The Baiga* in 1939. His famous books based on fieldwork and some on participant observations in 1940s are *The Agaria* (1942), *The Aborigines* (1944), *The Muria and their Ghotul* (1947), *Bondo Highlander* (1950) and *Maria Murder and Suicide* (1950).

Elwin was a British citizen, but later he took up Indian citizenship. On the basis of fieldwork, he became an authority on Indian lifestyle. His publication on intimate sexual life of Gonds is based on what he calls participant observation. He married Kosi, a Gond girl whom he made the subject of his anthropological studies.

Elwin has his independent tradition of fieldwork. After coming to India he worked with Shamrao Hivale, an Indian from Pune. Their fieldworks on tribes and subsequent publications are some of the earliest field based studies in the country. Elwin's fieldwork is contemporary to that of S. C. Roy for a period of around two decades. But he continued his work after the death of Roy.

### **2.2.2 Significance of Fieldwork**

Fieldwork is a method of data collection in a 'natural' world in 'natural' environments. Naturally, it involves collecting data outside an experimental or laboratory setting.

Largely, anthropologists employed field study methods to study tribal communities. As a method it has its own place in the research process. The fieldworker collects original or unconventional data using such methods as face-to-face interviews, surveys, or direct observation. Fieldwork enhances enumerator's personal experiences, improves his learning process, and increases his understanding and knowledge. It broadens awareness and establishes links between ideas and practical realities, for the field is not

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limited to any disciplinary branch of knowledge. Fieldwork widens the frontiers of knowledge and it is not a surprise that scholars from other disciplines are increasingly using this method in their researches. It is only field experience that broadened the outlook of S. C. Roy beyond socio-cultural study of tribes. Sociologists like Pierre Bourdieu, William Foote Whyte, Erving Goffman, Harriet Martineau and economists like Wassily Leontief, Alan Blinder, Lawrence Klein and Jack Johnston have employed field methods in their respective disciplines. Henry Mintzberg, who is a pioneer in crystallizing management studies, has used and advocated the use of field study in management. Even Alan Lomax and John Peel have conducted field study in the discipline of music. Participatory Rural Appraisal (PRA) methods and techniques in rural development studies have emerged essentially as a refinement of traditional methods. In fact, field tradition pervades through Art, Photography, Forestry, Botany, Geology, Geography, Physics, Education, Ecology, History, Agriculture, Zoology and Political Science.

Tribal communities are pre-literate; these communities do not have written records of their life and culture. Moreover, there are no adequate literatures available on each and every community from the studies conducted on them. A large number of communities have not been studied properly. In recent years many tribal communities have been exposed to different forces of change. In these communities has emerged a syncretic cultural tradition along with an interactive process of adaptation and adjustment. No doubt, the perspectives of tribes on their ways of life are changing. Field methods provide an opportunity to study the response of people to the changes from their perspectives.

The field method is not a mere visit to the tribal settlements. It is a systematic and planned approach to understand the life and culture of people in a better way from their perspective through interaction over a long period of time. The planning also includes learning the language of the community that the fieldworker has studied. Therefore, it is not a surprise that Malinowski advises the fieldworkers to spend around a year in the field. The fieldworker lives with the community of people, in their natural habitat, collecting information about all social and cultural aspects, so that in the end he has a fair idea of typical annual activities. During the early years of field tradition Jean-Paul Dumont spent two years in Tamil Nadu. But practically his contact with Pramalai Kallar, the community he studied, was for eight months. Similarly, Rivers studied the Todas for about six months. Nevertheless, the depth and quality of ethnographies produced was superb. Thus, the time spent in carrying out fieldwork is in fact dependent upon the nature and scope of problem the researcher has chosen to investigate.

The significance of fieldwork lies in its principle of learning the vernacular language of the tribes. This requires the fieldworker to understand the systems of meaning on which the tribal culture operates. Tribal people too like other human beings live in a culturally constructed world of meanings. They interpret everything they live in with reference to culture and this interpretation takes different meanings in different cultures. Therefore, before embarking upon the field, the fieldworker is expected to learn the language. If the facility for a particular language is not available, the fieldworker is required to learn it by living with the people, engaging an interpreter in the beginning, and then gradually using it himself. A fieldwork conducted in vernacular is more reliable and authentic than carried out through an interpreter.

The fieldwork tradition does not believe in disciplinary rigidity. The fieldworker learns from the shortcomings and improves upon the nature of investigation. It is well

known that male anthropologists working in sexually segregated societies have often been shut out from participating in or observing female activities. Franz Boas was well informed about this problem and thus, encouraged women to take up a career in anthropology, carrying out fieldwork on those aspects that mainly concern women.

### Advantages of fieldwork

Fieldwork is an important method in research. The following are the advantages of field study:

- A field provides scope for verification of information. The information from one informant can be verified through cross checking other informants. Moreover, as the enumerator lives in the field, he can clarify his doubts later if any doubt arises or ambiguity/inconsistency is noticed. The degree of reliability and accuracy thereby increases.
- Field study is progressively revealing. The data and work of a first enumerator on a tribe provides a base to subsequent enumerators who study the same tribe. Later enumerators may substantiate, modify or contradict earlier findings, and add to the existing stock of knowledge on the tribe by exploring new areas. It is not a surprise to find that earlier concepts of 'egalitarian', 'isolation', etc. have been challenged by later fieldworkers on tribes.

Many misconceptions are gradually removed through subsequent studies. Today, tribal communities are not considered lacking religion or political organizations. One of the stereotypes regarding the tribes is that they do not have a sense of history. But a contemporary fieldworker among the tribes will not believe in such a stereotype. In fact, in recent years history of tribal communities and other pre-literate communities is reconstructed drawing on oral sources. Paul Thompson's *Voice of the Past: Oral History* is a methodological classic on the use of oral sources to reconstruct history of pre-literate people.

- Society is dynamic. It changes over time and space. Field study helps understand the nature and trend of social dynamics in tribal communities over years in the absence of written records.
- Field study is an effective method of scrutinizing the impact of development programmes on tribal communities. Assessment of the impact drawing on statistics from official sources is often misleading. These statistics do not reflect the impact on the cultural life of people. The provision of a swing machine under the self-employment programme may provide employment to a tribal lady. But her engagement in swing machine limits her time to attend to other activities like collecting firewood, cooking food, participation in social functions and collection of vegetables. Official data do not present a picture of her net gain from her employment in the swing machine business at the cost of gainful traditional activities in the tribal village.

The intensity of problems of the tribal people is linked to the forces of development and exposure to the outside world. This intensity of problem cannot be captured without field study. The case of Jarwa is worth mentioning here. Survival, a London based worldwide organization supporting tribal peoples, gives an account of the plight of the Jarwa people due to their encounter with development forces. It reports,

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Outsiders are invading the reserve of the isolated Jarwa tribe in the Andaman Islands, India... Despite a Supreme Court Order to islands' administration to close the highway which runs through the reserve, it remains open, bringing disease and dependency... The Jarwa are one of four 'Negrito' tribes who are believed to have travelled to the Andaman Islands from Africa up to 60,000 years ago... The Jarwa are hunter gatherers, and number around 270 people. They use bows and arrows to hunt pigs and monitor lizards, and catch fish and turtles. Now, hundreds of Indian settlers and Burmese poachers are hunting along the road and the coast, depriving the Jarwa of vital game. The problem has become so acute that in some areas the once abundant wild pigs and fish are now scarce... The main highway which runs through the Jarwa reserve, known as the Andaman Trunk Road, is also bringing exploitation of the Jarwa. There are numerous reports of poachers and other outsiders sexually exploiting Jarwa women, and outsiders are introducing alcohol, tobacco, and alien food items on which the Jarwa are starting to depend. Those entering Jarwa land also bring outside diseases to which the Jarwa have no immunity.

No doubt, statistical data on number of schools, number of enrolments, number of hospitals and people treated, length of road in tribal areas will not give the picture of tribal human resource evolved in true sense of the term.

- Tribal culture is a holistic worldview evolved over years in the course of their interaction with nature. A tribal person cannot perceive the holistic knowledge system in terms of specialized academic disciplines. Usually, specialized methodological renderings do not help appreciating the holistic tribal perspectives even in a changing context. Field study contains the potentiality of providing a holistic understanding of a phenomenon, as we have discussed, the field does not limit its scope to any disciplinary rigid frame.
- Field study provides first-hand information. The enumerators get wider scope to collect right information in consistent with objectives of the research. The scope is limited in secondary sources of information.
- Fieldwork is self-educative. University students obtain knowledge through texts on the topic. Often, it raises new research questions for further investigation. The horizon of knowledge expands. Gap between 'armchair' knowledge and 'field reality' reveals and narrows down. Field tradition provides an opportunity to appreciate diversity.
- Tribal culture is not a monolithic whole. It varies across the tribes and between the settlements of the same tribe. The enumerator being an outsider encounters a different culture. That diversity as a reality is understood and appreciated by the fieldworkers.

### Limitations of fieldwork

There are some limitations in the field study method. But these limitations are scope to improve the efficacy of the method. The limitation of male enumerator to interview female respondents on some matter is the scope to employ female enumerators as anthropologists. The limitations discussed below are challenges to overcome for an effective field study method.

- It may not be possible for the solitary enumerator to observe everything that goes on in the community. Certain events may take place in certain part of the village when the enumerator is busy interviewing someone else. It is also possible that certain events may not take place during the time of fieldwork, or they may not form a part of the annual ritual cycle.

- The people of ethnographic investigation are treated as **other**. When their moorings are different from those of fieldworkers, they constitute the **other** both in an empirical and a methodological sense.
- Even when the subjects of study are one's own people, the investigator does not assume that he knows them fully well; rather he still considers them as 'others', about whom he will only come to know during the course of his study. As the insider researcher has an outlook different from his own people because of formal education he may interpret information differently or be selective in presenting information.
- There is a difference between the knowledge the investigator acquires by being a natural member of the society and the one he acquires by consciously undertaking its study. When the researcher undertakes a study of his society, he excitedly discovers many aspects of his society that he did not know beforehand.

When a field worker undertakes the task of fieldwork, he is taking on an overwhelming amount of obstacles, called cultural barriers. He must overcome the barriers in order to record accurate information regarding a specific civilization. He must overcome many obstacles such as language, race and culture in order to start a study on a specific culture. There are many advantages in conducting a fieldwork that makes for a very rewarding experience once the 'culture barrier' has been overcome. One advantage is that one gains a lot more from a culture when you are 'immersed' in the particular culture. You can study about a culture in books or watch a movie about an area but it is absolutely nothing like actually being there. You can talk to people living in that culture, attend their religious ceremonies, and see basically how they live on a day to day basis.

Fieldwork is not an easy venture. Fieldwork conducted in modern societies differs from the one that is conducted in tribal societies. In modern societies and institutions, permission to carry out fieldwork is required from the people who are considered to be 'the gatekeepers'. These gatekeepers control the flow of information. In tribal societies, there may not be 'gatekeepers' guarding information and if there are, they do not exercise the kind of surveillance on the fieldworker as is exercised in modern institutions. This gives an opportunity to unscrupulous enumerators to exploit the tribal knowledge system.

### 2.2.3 Ethics of Fieldwork

Ethics is concerned with **wrong** or **right** with reference to a standard. The standard may vary from discipline to discipline and over time and space. Hence, ethics are contextual. Research ethics involve the question of right or wrong in the process of research. Ethics in the fieldwork tradition conform to the research ethics in general.

An enumerator while conducting fieldwork experiences some problems. As a researcher, the enumerator also faces a set of related problems, for example, while planning the fieldwork and writing the research report. The researcher may face the following problems:

- Should the researcher inform the people about the nature of his study?
- If he should share the information, then how much of it should be revealed/shared?

The researcher may also face other problems such as:

- Should he publish his findings notwithstanding the furore it may cause among the 'subjects' of study?

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- Should he deliberately suppress those pieces of information and practices that people find embarrassing?

Each and every researcher may have his own way of addressing the problems. He may have to compromise between polarities. Sometimes, the researcher may ignore the interest of the informants or he may sacrifice the degree of accuracy to avoid a problem. But can the researcher do that?

The researcher may find himself in an advantageous position to ignore the interest of the informants once the fieldwork is complete. Then the balance of power shifts from the informants to the fieldworker/researcher. He may choose to use this knowledge in any desired manner. However, in reality, the fieldworker is caught in a dilemma. He may not reveal the information that might harm the people in the long run. Or, he may receive information from an informant with the explicit instruction of not using it ever in his writings. Therefore, the fieldworker does not have the kind of power that is generally assumed to exist because he is not supposed to use the information for any purpose that might harm the integrity, identity, and image of the people. If a fieldworker 'harms' the people in any way, he also jeopardizes the chance of future fieldworkers in that community.

Sometimes the fieldworker/researcher experiences the dilemma of using or not using the data at the time of analysis. Under such a situation he may choose to overcome this problem by not revealing the name of the community where he conducted his fieldwork or by using pseudonyms for the people who provided the sensitive and controversial information.

But a research is objective in nature and aims at finding the truth. It is but natural to think of a standard way of addressing these problems while looking at the interests of all who involve in the process of research. Normally, the parties involved in a fieldwork-based research are the researcher/enumerator, informants, community, sponsors of research, public and the readers. Each party has its own interest, short term or long term, to be guarded with. This is where ethical considerations get importance in research.

Ethics in research in general and in fieldwork in particular usually refers to well based standards of right and wrong that prescribe what the researcher ought to do. It includes rights, obligations, benefits to society and informants, fairness, or specific virtues. The standards may be **reasonable obligations to refrain** from any act that may harm the long term or short term interest of informants or community or the quality of research. It enjoins virtues of honesty, compassion, and loyalty. Precisely, the ethical standards relating to rights may be the right to life, the right to freedom from injury, and the right to privacy.

The following are some ethical principles which the researcher/fieldworker should be fully aware of and adhere to during fieldwork and thereafter.

1. **Honesty:** The enumerator should record the data honestly in field notes without any fabrication. He should be honest to the purpose of collecting data and his dealings with the informants.
2. **Responsibility:** The enumerator/fieldworker should consider the effects of his work, including the consequences of misuse. He should strive to promote social good and prevent social harms that may come along with his work. Therefore, he should be responsible to secure safety both for the individuals and groups among whom they conduct their fieldwork, and for their colleagues and for the wider society. The responsibility of the fieldworker demands that he should secure the actual permission and interest of all those who involve in the fieldwork process.



He should avoid discrimination against colleagues or members of the team on the basis of sex, race, ethnicity, or other factors. Responsibility demands that the enumerator should be familiar with, and respect, the culture of the people among whom he conducts fieldwork.

Responsibility demands that the enumerator should ensure human subjects protection. The enumerator should avoid taking interest in the lives of individuals or communities he studies. The welfare of the informants should be the highest priority; their dignity, privacy, and autonomy should be respected.

3. **Accountability:** The fieldworker should be accountable to his work in every field. He should be accountable to the accuracy of data, maintaining confidentiality, protecting privacy, timely completion of fieldwork and legality. The fieldworker should know and obey the relevant laws and policies on the subject/topic on which data are collected. The fieldworker should be accountable to the funding agency, and to general public and any damage caused in the process of data collection.
4. **Integrity:** The fieldworker should keep promises and agreements made with the informants and other participants. The fieldworker should act with sincerity and strive for consistency in thought and action.
5. **Objectivity:** The objectivity of research depends on the nature and reliability of data. Therefore, the fieldworker should avoid bias in methods of data collection. The fieldworker should conduct pilot survey before standardizing questionnaires. The fieldworker should ensure that the data collected conform to the research objectives.
6. **Trust:** The academic research as a whole is built on a foundation of trust. The fieldworker should be aware of this principle at the time of collection of data. He should ensure that the community has trust in his words and that the research results would reflect an honest presentation of the society and its people and culture.
7. **Carefulness:** The fieldworker should be careful to avoid errors and negligence while recording or reporting data.
8. **Confidentiality:** This refers to the participant's confidentiality—both individual and information. The fieldworker should ensure that the identity of the informant would be kept confidential and the personal information would not be shared with anyone. Sometimes it may so happen that the informant may share some information with the enumerator out of curiosity which would reflect on his personal dignity, if disclosed. The enumerator should practice restraint to keep it a secret. Otherwise, it will be a breach of trust.
9. **Respect for intellectual property:** The fieldworker should be aware of the local customs, norms and regulations. The fieldworker should give due respect and credit to the indigenous knowledge holder and indigenous rights. He is required to honour patents, copyrights, and other forms of intellectual property. He should not use community knowledge without proper prior permission.

Protection of Plant Variety and Farmers' Right (PPVFR) Act (2001), Biological Diversity Act (2002) and Indian Patent Act (1970 as amended in 2005), Protection for Handicrafts under Indian Intellectual Property Laws which includes Protection under Geographical Indications of Goods

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(Registration and Protection Act [1999]), Combined Interpretation of Design Act (2000) and Copyright Act (1957) are some of the major legal instruments which the fieldworker should be aware of. These Acts would provide legal shields for tribal communities to protect their biodiversity and traditional knowledge (TK).

10. **Prior Informed Consent:** Prior Informed Consent (PIC) was incorporated in Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD) Act, 1992. It is one of the important tools through which community opinion and willingness to share their TK knowledge with enumerators is obtained. PIC aims at protecting traditional knowledge (TK) which includes traditional cultural expression (TCE) and folklore and technology transfer.

An agreement format in language known to the informant is signed before the collection of data. This is essential if the informant has to share knowledge on traditional tribal medicine system or other form of knowledge which could be used to earn benefit. Prior Informed Consent (PIC) requires that the informant should be fully informed about the knowledge he would share and the prospective risk or benefit involved. The informant should give his consent willingly; he should not be forced to give consent. The informant also has the right to decline to sign the agreement or may withdraw at any time.

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## 2.3 COMPARATIVE METHOD IN TRIBAL STUDIES

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Comparative method is based on comparison and is the oldest method in social science. It is as old in tribal studies as is the study on tribes. The method has a 'common-sense understanding' in our day to day life and analytical perspective in social science research. You know that comparison is a phenomenon in our day to day life. We compare 'our dresses', 'marks secured in Field Tradition paper', 'the cost of mobile set' and so on. At another level, we also compare 'our religion' with another one or 'our culture with other cultures'. While comparing cultures, we give labels like 'more developed culture', 'less developed culture', or 'primitive culture'. These levels give us an idea of societies with different stages of cultural development, meaning some cultures are considered 'more developed' while some are 'less developed', and still others are considered 'undeveloped' or 'primitive'. In such remarks we find, consciously or unconsciously, an ordering of cultures from 'primitive' to 'more developed cultures'; each successive stage is superior to the preceding one.

### 2.3.1 Evolutionary Perspective on Comparison

The comparison involving ordering of elements or societies is known as evolutionary comparative approach, for the lowest order, it is argued, will evolve into the highest order in the course of time. That is what at least the European scholars thought when they encountered the non-European societies. They argued that the primitive cultures like tribal cultures would evolve over time to reach the standard of European societies.

This evolutionary perspective and comparative method of studies dominated the thinking of earlier social science theorists. Positivists like Auguste Comte called it a reliable and scientific method of enquiry. He felt that the comparative study of societies as a whole was a major subject for sociological analysis. Spencer also held that the

### Check Your Progress

1. Who is credited as being the most important figure in the development of modern fieldwork tradition?
2. 'The fieldwork tradition to study the tribes in India has been followed by two groups of scholars.' Who are the two groups of scholars?
3. Who is regarded as 'The Father of Indian Ethnography'?
4. What does fieldwork involve?
5. Why are ethics said to be contextual?

researcher must compare 'societies of different kinds and societies at different stages'. Durkheim, too, considered societies to be important units of sociological analysis. In his book, *The Rules of Sociological Methods*, he said, 'one cannot explain a social fact of any complexity except by following its complete development through all social species.' Durkheim's plan for comparative studies of societies was ambitious. The comparison that he made in his study of totemism (among the Australian Aborigines) dealt by and large with societies of a single type. In his study on suicide he compared different types of European societies and in *The Division of Labour in Society* (1933), he compared forms of solidarity among all human societies. Thus according to him, comparison can include facts borrowed either from a single and unique society, from several societies of same species, or from several distinct social species.

Among Durkheim's successors, Radcliffe-Brown took the lead in promoting the view that detailed empirical studies of particular societies must be combined with extensive and systematic comparison. He argued his case in the *Preface* he contributed to an influential collection of papers on African political systems. His argument was that the systematic comparison of **segmentary** and **centralized** political systems in sub-Saharan Africa was the first and essential step towards a better understanding of all political systems, simple and complex.

Even Max Weber has given importance to the comparative method, which treats societies as its unit of analysis and enquires into those factors, which accounts for similarities and differences between them, as they exist in different places and time. Echoing Durkheim, Evans-Pritchard in 33<sup>rd</sup> L. T. Hobhouse Memorial Trust Lecture, 1963 commented that, 'in the widest sense there is no other method. Comparison is, of course, one of the essential procedures of all science and one of the elementary processes of human thought'. In a similar tone, R. Lowie (1950) remarked, 'At the same time a phenomenon is understood only in relation to others: "He little knows of England who only England knows".'

The pioneers of the comparative method in social anthropology were all influenced to a greater or lesser extent by the theory of evolution. Indeed, it was the search for the stages of evolution that largely shaped the comparative method of Morgan and Spencer. This imposed certain limits on the extent to which they did in fact assign equal value to all societies and cultures. It was tacitly accepted that Western societies had reached the highest stage of evolution and that all other societies stood at graduated distances below them. Comparative method was extensively, if not always consciously, used by Western sociologists in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries to reinforce their belief in the superiority of their own society and culture.

Hundred years ago, the practitioners of the comparative method in sociology and social anthropology were all Europeans and Americans. This is no longer the case. Not only are many different societies being studied throughout the world, but they are being studied by a variety of persons from many different angles. There are more facts available and more ways of looking at facts. Today, the comparative method has come to terms not only with diverse facts but also with diverse perceptions of the same facts viewed from different angles. It is no more a mere evolutionary understanding of cultural reality.

### **Comparison beyond Evolutionary Perspective**

**Cross-cultural studies:** The first breakthrough came with the critique of the earlier evolutionary comparative perspective by Franz Boas. Earlier, the evolutionary theorists

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used the comparative method to explain the similarity of cultural traits and thus the evolution of societies. These theorists, known as ‘arm-chair scholars’, used secondary data to break up cultural wholes into traits and compared them to evolve theories of evolution and diffusion.

Franz Boas, an American anthropologist, criticized evolutionary comparative method and emphasized on studying culture in the historical context. In other words, he emphasized on the use of historical data for comparative study of ‘cultural relativism’ rather than evolutionary theorization through comparison of cultural traits. Thus, the comparative method emerged as *cross-cultural studies*. Precisely, it explains ‘why things are the way they are’. Scholars studied universal categories such as kinship, marriage, religion, political system in each culture to compare with other cultures and to understand the similarities and differences. Levi-Strauss used this cross-cultural comparison as the basis of conceptualizing structuralism in anthropology.

Cross-cultural comparison uses field data or secondary ethnographic data or both to study relationships or lack of relationships between cultures all over the world. The works of Edward Burnett Tylor and Lewis Henry Morgan could be considered as two earlier cross-cultural studies using secondary sources of data. Following Franz Boas, his students Ruth Benedict and Margaret Mead conducted cross-cultural studies using field data directly collected by them and relying upon other scholars. Benedict in her book entitled *Patterns of Culture* (1934) has compared the cultures of Kwakiutl of the Pacific North-West (based on field data of Franz Boas), the Pueblo of New Mexico (own field data) and the Dobu of New Guinea (based upon field data of Margaret Mead and Reo Fortunes). Mead in her work *Sex and Temperament in Three Primitive Societies* (1935) has made a cross-cultural comparison of sexuality from infancy to adulthood on the basis of her fieldwork conducted among three New Guinea tribes namely, Arapesh, Mundugumor and Tchambuli (now called Chambri).

Later, the cross-cultural studies standardized by George Peter Murdock (1940) was considered the modern version of comparative cross-cultural studies, which he prefers to call cross-cultural survey. He has compiled the *Ethnographic Atlas* using statistical techniques which has given a new dimension to his method. He employed *synchronic* and *diachronic* analytical frame in cross-cultural studies.

A *synchronic* study concerns itself to the study of a culture at a point of time. You can study a tribal culture or culture across tribal communities at a particular moment of time. You can also make a synchronic study of a culture with reference to a past period of time. In contrast, a diachronic study concerns itself to the study of a culture over a period of time. It concerns the process of evolution and change in the culture. In other words, a diachronic study is roughly historical in nature.

Let us take a concrete example. The study of, say the family system of the Nyishi tribe of Arunachal Pradesh as it exists in 2015 or the family system as it exists in Nyishi, Adi, Monpa, Khampti tribes simultaneously in 2015 is a synchronic study. Similarly, the family system of the Nyishi tribe as it existed in 1947 and as it exists in 2015 are both synchronic studies. But if you study the evolution and change of the family system in Nyishi tribe from 1947 to 2015, it will be a diachronic study. You study how the family system changed over the period from 1947 to 2015. This process of change is not present in your study of the marriage system at two particular points of time, namely in 1949 and 2015. Only the study referred to two points of time, but not the process during the period between two points of time.

Therefore, cross-cultural studies can be conducted with reference to time, same culture at one point of time or two points of time or over a period of time. The same temporal factor can also be employed to study across cultures. Secondly, the cross-cultural comparison can also be made over space. The same tribe living in two different environments can also be compared at a particular point of time. The tribe living in a new environment can be compared with its culture of the original place. Such a comparison involves both time and space. We can give an example of both a synchronic and diachronic study of the Garos living in two different environments from the study of J. K. Bose.

J. K. Bose in his book entitled *Culture Change among the Garos* (completed in 1977 based on field work conducted in 1930s and published in 1985) has studied the Garos who had migrated to the plains of Mymensingh in present Bangladesh adjacent to Garo Hills around 1891 and adopted plough cultivation. The cultural change of the Garos is analysed around a shift from the earlier shifting cultivation practice to the plough cultivation in a different ecological setting and in relation to their interaction with the Hindu Bengalis. In the process they had developed a competitive spirit and a new social situation as compared to their counterparts living in hills. He has studied the change by situating the culture of migrant Garos with that of the non-migrant ones in the hills when the former returned to their own ecological settings due to political reasons.

Bose has given us an account of the change, both in material and non-material aspects of culture. Precisely, he has discussed the change with reference to food and drink, dresses and ornaments, social organizations and institutions like inheritance, marriage, dormitory, agricultural practices, and religion. For example, he has informed us about the emerging practice of son's inheritance to plough land, absence of dormitory, evolution of economic individualism in place of community based economy, system of hiring cattle for ploughing, decline in the *katchi* (phratry, probably it was of the nature of moiety earlier) and *machong* (in nature of a lineage or extended family) system, change in cropping pattern from multi-cropping practice in jhum fields to mono-cropping in plough fields, change of the concept of residence after marriage, conversion to Christianity and other religious sects and many more among migrated plough cultivators.

### 2.3.2 Ideographic and Nomothetic Approaches to Cultural Studies

By 1960s the main aim of comparative method had shifted from attempts of universal generalizations to presentation of culture specific accounts. Because of the shifting emphasis on perspectives, we can categorize cross-cultural studies as **elemental** or **ideographic** and **generalizing** or **nomothetic studies**.

Idiographic (from the Greek term for one's own or oneself) studies concern with the detailed understanding of particular circumstances. An idiographic study accounts for the facts in a single case. It seeks to arrive at general rules from the study of individual cases. Hence, it uses the **inductive method** of reasoning. In tribal studies, ideographic approach would be employed to study a group, a clan, a village community for example, which is seen as an entity. The group should be an individual entity with distinct characteristics which set it apart from other groups of the category.

In contrast, a nomothetic (from the Greek term for law giving) study concerns with particular understanding with reference to many cases. Anomothetic study accounts for the facts in many cases. Julian Steward chose a handful of cases when he developed his theory of cultural change (1955). When an individual case is studied to verify the general rule it is also a nomothetic study. It uses the **deductive method** of reasoning.

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The group is not studied as an individual entity, but with reference to general rules that could be applied to the study.

Thus, idiographic studies describe a single event, person, group or situation. In our example of clan as a group, the idiographic study will be interested in, say, the role of clan in the Adi tribe in labour organization. Whereas, the nomothetic study will try to understand the role of the Adi clan in labour organization with reference to the general law of labour organization by a clan in a tribe. It seeks to understand generality in specific cases. No doubt this generality is arrived at by studying many such cases earlier.

### Characteristics

The following are some of the characteristics of comparative methods:

- It is a scientific method in which comparative data is collected with a specific purpose and analysed and specific conclusions are derived from its result. For the scholars of tribal studies comparative approach is one among many analytical tools available in their kit. He has to justify why a particular method is used, for what purpose and how best the method can be used.
- No hypothesis is formulated in the comparative method to mould the study in a particular direction.
- The units to be compared are as simple as is possible. These should be simple, symmetrical, similar, and small. The success of this method, therefore, depends on the units of comparison that could be comparable. You cannot compare the kinship relation of the Khampti tribe with the Igu dance of the Mishmis. Further, the smaller the units, the better the results. In big units, there is every possibility of external factors influencing it and thus, creating difficulty in arriving at an objective conclusion. The more certain the comparable units are, the more objective will be the conclusions.
- The method makes systematic comparison between cultural wholes of cultures of the world in different ways. You can compare, say relationships, in a single culture at a given period of time or at different periods, or you may compare relationships in a few contemporaneous cultures. You can also compare several cultures, which are widely different but share some identical features. In other words, you can employ synchronic and diachronic methods of study.
- It aims at answering questions about causes of cultural variations or similarities and complex problems across the cultures of the world.
- It recognizes the uniqueness of each culture compared.
- In this method both types of primary and secondary ethnographic data are used.

The researcher adopting comparative method for his study should possess deep observation power. All the facts will not emerge before him. He will have to possess deep insight into the cause and effect of different factors. He should be acquainted with all the aspects of the subject matter. The researcher should possess the critical power for discrimination. He should not leave any aspect untouched and unattended. He should also be able to interpret the facts in a logical way. The researcher uses figures and facts for explaining conclusions. These conclusions drawn from a comparative method must be reported in a convincing manner. It should be scientifically justified. This requires an objective reporting. The researcher should not be biased and try his best to present his findings in a logical and convincing manner.

The comparative method as a tool of investigation, designed consciously to discover the general features of all societies (or cultures) without losing sight of the distinctive features of each, has been a particular obsession of scholars of tribal studies across disciplines.

### 2.3.3 Etic and Emic Perspectives

The studies on tribes began as a study of the 'other' by European scholars during the colonial period till the middle of the 20<sup>th</sup> century. Unit 2 has already dealt with the emic and etic approaches to study the tribes. Here, we learn more about them. Scholars who study a culture other than their own are outside scholars, called **etics**. As a matter of fact, the discipline of social anthropology began with the study of the 'other' by the etics. The colonial anthropologists and administrators studied the culture of the people whom they considered as 'savage', 'primitive' and 'barbarous'. The sense of racial superiority of the European anthropologists is evident in their studies of artefacts, social institutions, religion and culture of 'others'. M. N. Srinivas informs us that in their studies they have 'invariably reinforced the Western assumption that the Western world stood at the apex while the other races occupied lower rungs of the ladder'.

During that time, none was present among the 'others' to study his own culture. Gradually, scholars from the 'other', i.e. tribes, became capable of writing about their own culture. They questioned the authenticity and bias-free presentation of etic views on culture of the 'others'. These writers who wrote about their own culture are called the insiders or **emics**. With a sense of racial superiority, the colonial anthropologists considered emic views as insider's 'preconceptions' and 'private prejudices'. Consequently, the debate on etic and emic views emerged.

In India, with the field research of M. N. Srinivas, the tradition of studying one's own culture became significant. But presently, the outsider studies a culture and the insider also engages in studying his own culture. The issue of the insider, i.e. emic perspective is not as clear as is an outsider's. It is because a member born to a culture can be a 'cultural outsider'. The term *dikku* of the Santhals, earlier used to designate non-Santhalees, is extended to include the Santhal elites as well. The community consider these elites as 'outside the culture'.

Understanding an insider as a cultural outsider is not specific to a particular culture. This is associated with the social process to which every culture and most of its members are exposed to. For example, the tribes of Arunachal Pradesh have been exposed to external forces of change especially through government interventions. Some members of a particular community have more exposure to the formal system of education or to religious conversion or both. This makes the person's perception different from the perception of a member of the culture who is not exposed to such forces and lives a traditional way of life in the village. Hence, a little caution is needed while considering this exposed person as 'an insider' to the culture. There are examples of how the formal system of education changes the outlook and thus the perception of people. M. N. Srinivas's candid expression in this regard is noteworthy. He confesses:

It is only in the village that I realized how far I (and my family) had travelled away from tradition.

A person in a cultural space lives for a relatively short span of time but the culture is a process of accumulated experience through ages. Further, the researcher could be a social categorization even in tribal communities as among the Gonds, Bhills and Khamptis

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or across gender as male and female. Being a woman there are certain expected roles in a patriarchal setup which limits the insider status of the researcher.

The outsider perspective is not free from bias either. The work of Malinowski, considered to be the founder of fieldwork tradition, is also found having male bias and his personal bias towards the people of the Trobriand islanders, his subject of study. Annette Weiner (1976) in a re-study of the same people found that Malinowski's account happens to be the account of the life of the Trobriand males. His account does not reflect the contribution of female members of Trobriand Islands. The publication of his field diary entitled *A Diary in the Strict Sense of the Term* (1967) reveals his personal bias towards the people he studied in spite of his apparent empathy in his works. This puts a question on the objectivity of etic study. However, the emic-etic issue has academic significance. The debate cannot be ignored altogether.

Even **emic** and **etic** terms are used by some scholars in the social sciences and the behavioural sciences to refer to two different kinds of data concerning human behaviour.

- An 'emic' account of behaviour is a description of behaviour or a belief in terms meaningful (consciously or unconsciously) to the actor; that is, an emic account is culture-specific, an insider's view.
- An 'etic' account is a description of a behaviour or belief by an observer, in terms that can be applied to other cultures; that is, an etic account is culturally neutral, it is an account of a scholar who does not belong to the culture he studies.

Scientists interested in the local construction of meaning, and local rules for behaviour, will rely on emic accounts; scientists interested in facilitating comparative research and making universal claims will rely on etic accounts. The terms were first introduced by linguist Kenneth Pike, who argued that the tools developed for describing linguistic behaviours could be adapted to the description of any human social behaviour. The terms **emic** and **etic** are derived from the linguistic terms phonemic and phonetic respectively.

The terms were also championed by anthropologists Ward Goodenough and Marvin Harris with slightly different definitions. Goodenough was primarily interested in understanding the culturally specific meaning of specific beliefs and practices; Harris was primarily interested in explaining human behaviour.

Harris is known for his support of the emic and etic idea. Harris advanced the idea that etic accounts were inherently better, as outsiders observing a culture would not be blinded by the biases that members of that culture carried. This was strongly influenced by Karl Marx's **theory of false consciousness**.

M. N. Srinivas has addressed the problems in the study of one's own society in several of his publications. Srinivas disagrees with the statement that social anthropologists do not study their society well. Ideally, one should begin with the study of a culture different from one's own. Whether it is one's own or a different society much depends upon the 'frame of mind' that the fieldworker adopts. One should look at one's own society as a stranger would, Srinivas notes, keeping aside one's preconceptions and the already-acquired understanding. Srinivas believed that the native anthropologist has a distinct advantage over the outsider-anthropologist: he has a mastery over the language. Because of this, he does not need to engage a research assistant.



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The detached observer's (outsider's) view is one window on the world. The view of the local scene through the eyes of a native participant in that scene is a different window. Either view by itself is restricted in scope and leads to a kind of distortion—the first, since it ignores the concept of relevance, or purpose, or meaning, and the second because it distorts or moulds vision or experience so that one interprets what one sees, or hears, or understands, only through the rose-coloured glasses of one's own experiential structure.

Social scientists differ in their treatment and explanation of cultural reality primarily over the reasons or causes for general cultural, universal and specific cultural variations. However, there are other differences in theoretical schools that must be considered before directly investigating fundamental causal issues. These involve different approaches to how meaning is inferred from cultural data and whether culture can be grouped into wider categories for the purpose of generalization.

Researchers must record not only their direct observations of cultural phenomena but must also consider the meaning that informants explicitly or implicitly assign to objects and events in a cultural context. This strategy is called the **emic approach**. It may also so happen that the emic depiction may use concepts and clarifications from cross-cultural generalizations rather than from culture specific meaning system. This type of analysis is termed the **etic approach**. Thus, an outsider can be emic in approach and an insider can be etic in approach.

To some extent emic and etic approaches are complementary. The anthropologist starts with certain cross-cultural analytical principles to help identify a research issue and organize and interpret the data but also considers his observations within the informants' categorization and meaning system to provide an additional empirical dimension. After fieldwork the research proceeds to process the data in an etic framework of general analytical categories and theory. However, some anthropologists maintain that it is not legitimate to apply any cross-cultural terms and that the etic approach is invalid.

Differences between emic and etic approaches are closely related to issues of generalization. Anthropologists like Franz Boas argue that etic or cross-culturally valid terms and categories are not possible. They also maintain that cultures and their component traits and institutions cannot be subjected to comparative conclusions or generalizations. Each culture represents a particular configuration of elements and must be understood only in terms of its uniqueness. Boas first articulated this approach to culture and established an ethnological school, which is sometimes called **historical particularism** because it is critical of generalization. In contrast to particularism, many anthropological theories emphasize the need to draw general conclusions or laws on the basis of comparing individual cases. In other words, they suggest ideographic studies.

Researchers must decide whether their study will be approached from an etic or an emic perspective, and they must establish the way in which they will define or consider culture in the context of their research. The emic approach, as it applies to cross-cultural research, focuses on studying a construct from within a specific culture, and understanding that construct as the people from within that culture understand it. The etic approach, on the other hand, involves developing an understanding of a construct by comparing it across cultures using predetermined characteristics. Researchers have recognized the importance of both of these approaches.

## NOTES

From a measurement standpoint, criteria in an emic approach are relative to the characteristics of the particular culture being studied. Hence, differences or variability in one culture may not have the same significance as they would have in another one. The etic approach is more suited for broader analyses, usually involving two or more cultures. The main assumption in etic research is that there is a shared frame of reference across culturally diverse samples. This frame of reference can be applied to all the samples in the same way, ultimately allowing for more generalization. Since cross-cultural organizational research often involves comparative studies between two or more cultures, much of the research is conducted with an etic perspective. From a measurement standpoint, criteria in an etic approach are considered absolute or universal, with less attention being given to the internal characteristics of a particular culture. However, if etic frames of analysis are used to make cross-cultural comparisons, researchers risk not capturing all of the culture-specific (emic) aspects of the construct relative to a particular culture in the study. On the other hand, if an emic strategy is used, a more precise and thorough description of the elements within one culture is obtained, but the ability to make cross-cultural comparisons becomes more difficult.

When researchers fail to consider the emic aspects of the different cultures involved in their studies, and when they assume that the concepts being tested exist across all cultures, they are applying **imposed** or **pseudo etic** approach. This problem has been recognized as being fairly common in cross-cultural research. A best-practice suggestion for dealing with this problem is to use a combined emic-etic approach, or a **derived etic** approach. Rather than identifying emic dimensions from one culture and simply applying those dimensions to the other culture(s) in the study, a derived etic approach requires researchers to first attain emic knowledge (usually through observation, and/or participation) about all the cultures in the study. This allows them to put aside their culture biases, and to become familiar with the relevant cultural differences in each setting. When this is done, it may then be possible to make cross-cultural links between the emic aspects of each culture. While some emic dimensions will emerge in all cultures, some dimensions may emerge in only one of the cultures. Only where there are observed commonalities can cross-cultural comparisons be appropriately made. The comparisons here are considered derived etics since they are derived by first conducting emic research in each of the cultures, and not just one.

Conceptualizing as an insider is a problematic issue in contemporary field studies among the tribes. But the issue of the debate is not to define an insider or examine the bias of an outsider. As Appadurai (1988) maintains, the issue should be on the focus on authenticity of research.

### Check Your Progress

6. What is the evolutionary comparative approach?
7. Name the theory by which the pioneers of the comparative method in social anthropology were influenced.
8. What is the emic approach to fieldwork?
9. Why is emic perspective culture specific?

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## 2.4 SUMMARY

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In this unit, you have learnt that,

- The tradition of fieldwork in tribal studies is as old as the interest in studying the tribal communities.
- Fieldwork is central to researches in tribal studies. It is the crowning jewel of anthropology. In studying the tribal communities of the Trobriand Islands of New Guinea, Malinowski is credited as being the most important figure in the development of the modern fieldwork tradition.

- The tradition of fieldwork is heavily credited to the American and British anthropologists. Bronislaw Malinowski, a Polish-British anthropologist, is a pioneer of the tradition of field research in tribal studies.
- The fieldwork tradition to study the tribes in India has been followed by two groups of scholars. The first group includes those who are outsiders to India, especially the colonial anthropologists and administrators. The second group includes the Indian scholars who have studied their own culture.
- The Indian tradition of fieldwork began with the publication of 'The Mundas, Their Country, Their Character and Their Poetry', in 1908 by S. C. Roy.
- The beginning of field tradition in India is attributed to Sarat Chandra Roy. He is regarded as 'The Father of Indian Ethnography'.
- Field tradition is vast in its scope. It is not limited to ethnographic studies. Scholars of pre-history and archaeology also conduct fieldworks.
- S. C. Roy was a strong advocate of anthropological training to administrative and judicial officers, forest and excise officers who were posted in tribal areas. He believed that such trainings would not only improve the quality of judicial and executive work, but would also help the cause of science through observation and investigation of tribal customs that might be recorded during the fieldwork.
- During the post Roy period, we have scholars who were in contact with S. C. Roy or were trained or influenced by him. The works of these scholars have been labelled as 'Continuity of Roy's Tradition'.
- A new trend in field tradition emerged when scholars studied not only the tribes but also other communities and dimensions of the Indian civilization. One of the fieldworkers in the phase of new trend is M. N. Srinivas.
- Field study today is not limited among the academic scholars only. NGOs and non-academic institutions take interest in field methods to study the different aspects of tribal life in the changing context.
- The contemporary trend in field study is a growing academic engagement of insiders studying their respective tribes.
- While S. C. Roy was working among the tribes of Chota Nagpur, another scholar was actively involved in fieldwork among the tribes of the present Madhya Pradesh, Chhattisgarh and Odisha. He was Verrier Elwin.
- Fieldwork is a method of data collection in a 'natural' world in 'natural' environments. Naturally, it involves collecting data outside an experimental or laboratory setting.
- Fieldwork enhances enumerator's personal experiences, improves his learning process, and increases his understanding and knowledge. It broadens awareness and establishes links between ideas and practical realities, for the field is not limited to any disciplinary branch of knowledge.
- The significance of fieldwork lies in its principle of learning the vernacular language. This requires the fieldworker to understand the systems of meaning on which the tribal culture operates.
- A field provides scope for verification of information. The information from one informant can be verified through cross checking other informants.

## NOTES

## NOTES

- Field study is an effective method of scrutinizing the impact of development programmes on tribal communities.
- There is a difference between the knowledge the investigator acquires by being a natural member of the society and the one he acquires by consciously undertaking its study.
- Ethics is concerned with wrong or right with reference to a standard. The standard may vary from discipline to discipline and over time and space. Hence, ethics is contextual. Research ethics involves the question of right or wrong in the process of research.
- Ethics in research in general and in fieldwork in particular usually refers to well based standards of right and wrong that prescribe what the researcher ought to do. It includes rights, obligations, benefits to society and informants, fairness, or specific virtues.
- Prior Informed Consent (PIC) requires that the informant should be fully informed about the knowledge he would share and the prospective risk or benefit involved.
- Comparative method is based on comparison and is the oldest method in social science. It is as old in tribal studies as is the study on tribes. The method has a 'common-sense understanding' in our day to day life and analytical perspective in social science research.
- The comparison involving ordering of elements or societies is known as evolutionary comparative approach, for the lowest order, it is argued, will evolve into highest order in course of time.
- Among Durkheim's successors, Radcliffe-Brown took the lead in promoting the view that detailed empirical studies of particular societies must be combined with extensive and systematic comparison.
- Franz Boas, an American anthropologist, criticized evolutionary comparative method and emphasized on studying culture in the historical context. In other words, he emphasized on the use of historical data for comparative study of 'cultural relativism' rather than evolutionary theorization through comparison of cultural traits.
- By 1960s the main aim of comparative method had shifted from attempts of universal generalizations to presentation of culture specific accounts. Because of the shifting emphasis on perspectives, we can categorize cross-cultural studies as elemental or idiographic and generalizing or nomothetic studies.
- The studies on tribes began as a study of the 'other' by European scholars during the colonial period till the middle of the 20th century. Scholars who study a culture other than their own are outside scholars, called etics.
- Researchers must record not only their direct observations of cultural phenomena but must also consider the meaning that informants explicitly or implicitly assign to objects and events in a cultural context. This strategy is called the emic approach.

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## 2.5 KEY TERMS

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- **Fieldwork:** It is a method of data collection in a 'natural' world in 'natural' environments. Naturally, it involves collecting data outside an experimental or laboratory setting.

- **Research ethics:** It involves the question of right or wrong in the process of research.
- **Evolutionary comparative approach:** The comparison involving ordering of elements or societies is known as evolutionary comparative approach, for the lowest order, it is argued, will evolve into highest order in course of time.
- **Totemism:** It is a belief in which either each human, or each group of humans (e.g. a clan or tribe) is thought to have a spiritual connection or a kinship with another physical being, such as an animal or plant, often called a 'spirit-being' or 'totem'.
- **Emic and etic:** Emic and etic, in anthropology, folkloristics, and the social and behavioural sciences, refer to two kinds of field research done and viewpoints obtained; from within the social group (from the perspective of the subject) and from outside (from the perspective of the observer).

## NOTES

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## 2.6 ANSWERS TO 'CHECK YOUR PROGRESS'

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1. In studying the tribal communities of the Trobriand Islands of New Guinea, Malinowski is credited as being the most important figure in the development of the modern fieldwork tradition.
2. The fieldwork tradition to study the tribes in India has been followed by two groups of scholars. The first group includes those who are outsiders to India, especially the colonial anthropologists and administrators. The second group includes the Indian scholars who have studied their own culture.
3. Sarat Chandra Roy is regarded as 'The Father of Indian Ethnography'.
4. Fieldwork is a method of data collection in a 'natural' world in 'natural' environments. Naturally, it involves collecting data outside an experimental or laboratory setting.
5. Ethics is concerned with wrong or right with reference to a standard. The standard may vary from discipline to discipline and over time and space. Hence, ethics is contextual.
6. The comparison involving ordering of elements or societies is known as evolutionary comparative approach, for the lowest order, it is argued, will evolve into the highest order in course of time.
7. The pioneers of the comparative method in social anthropology were all influenced to a greater or lesser extent by the theory of evolution.
8. Researchers must record not only their direct observations of cultural phenomena but must also consider the meaning that informants explicitly or implicitly assign to objects and events in a cultural context. This strategy is called the emic approach.
9. Emic perspective is culture specific because the native scholar studies his own culture.

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## 2.7 QUESTIONS AND EXERCISES

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### NOTES

#### Short-Answer Questions

1. When did the tradition of fieldwork on the tribal communities gather momentum?
2. Briefly describe the tradition of fieldwork outside India.
3. State the contribution of S. C. Roy in the tradition of fieldwork.
4. 'S. C. Roy was a strong advocate of anthropological training to administrative and judicial officers.' Give reasons.
5. Write a short note on continuity of Roy's tradition.
6. What are the contributions made by Verrier Elwin in the study of tribes?
7. Is it necessary to learn the language of the people who are to be studied? How does one treat the people/culture of an ethnographic enquiry?
8. List the limitations of fieldwork.
9. What is the synchronic and diachronic analytical frame in cross-cultural studies?
10. Why did the debate on etic and emic views emerge?
11. Does fieldwork tradition suggest that it is always the outsider who should study a culture? Give reasons to your answer.

#### Long-Answer Questions

1. Discuss in detail the fieldwork tradition in India.
2. Evaluate the contribution made by the Indian scholars in fieldwork.
3. Describe the contemporary tradition of field study in India.
4. Critically analyse the significance of fieldwork.
5. Explain the advantages and limitations of the fieldwork method.
6. Assess the ethical principles which the researcher/fieldworker should be fully aware of and adhere to during fieldwork and thereafter.
7. Evaluate the evolutionary perspective on comparison.
8. Discuss the ideographic and nomothetic approaches to cultural studies.
9. Discuss the emic-etic debate in studying a culture.

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## 2.8 FURTHER READING

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- Beteille, A. 1975. *Six Essays in Comparative Sociology*. New Delhi: Oxford University Press.
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# UNIT-III COLLECTION OF DATA

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## Structure

- 3.0 Introduction
- 3.1 Unit Objectives
- 3.2 Research and Data
  - 3.2.1 Planning Data Collection
- 3.3 Some Concepts Used in Research
  - 3.3.1 Methods And Methodology
  - 3.3.2 Tools and Techniques
  - 3.3.3 Objectivity in Research
- 3.4 Methods and Techniques of Collection of Data: Survey and Sampling
  - 3.4.1 Census and Sampling Methods
  - 3.4.2 Sample and Sampling Methods
  - 3.4.3 Types of Sampling and Sampling Errors
- 3.5 Quantitative and Qualitative Methods of Research
  - 3.5.1 Sources of Data
- 3.6 Summary
- 3.7 Key Terms
- 3.8 Answers to 'Check Your Progress'
- 3.9 Questions and Exercises
- 3.10 Further Reading

## NOTES

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### 3.0 INTRODUCTION

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There are five questions that relate to the topic 'collection of data'. The answers to these questions form the subject matter of discussion taken up in this unit.

What is data? In simple terms, we can say that data is quantitative and qualitative information. What is the need of collecting data? The answer to this question lies in the role data plays in research work. It speaks of the purpose of data collection. How to collect data? The answer to this question entails the methods and techniques of data collection. Lastly, you can ask, from where does one obtain data? In these questions, the reply is concerned with the sources of data.

Primary significance of collection of data is the purpose it intends to serve. Then follow other aspects of data collection. Data is collected because they help in addressing a research problem. Therefore, Simpson and Kafka (1952) have said, 'Data have no standing themselves; they have a basis for existence only where there is a problem.' In this unit, we shall discuss some aspects of collection of data for research.

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## 3.1 UNIT OBJECTIVES

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### NOTES

After going through this unit, you will be able to:

- Describe the nature and significance of research and the importance of data in research
- Define concepts like method, methodology, tool and technique, census and sampling as used in research
- Explain the types of sampling
- Distinguish between primary and secondary sources, written and unwritten sources and published and unpublished sources of data
- Distinguish between qualitative and quantitative methods of research
- Assess the various field methods of collecting data for conducting a research

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## 3.2 RESEARCH AND DATA

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In the previous unit, we have learnt that research and data are inseparable. Data helps in understanding, analysing, interpreting and solving a research problem. A research can be a social science research or a physical science research. As the discipline of tribal studies belongs to the branch of social science, we shall try to understand research from the point of view of social science. Tribal studies like any other research study attempts at addressing and solving research problems. With the identification or conceptualization of a problem, the research process starts. Understanding the meaning of research will help us to know the need and type of data.

Research, as you know, is a human activity based on intellectual investigation and aimed at discovering, interpreting, and revising human knowledge on different aspects of the world. P. V. Young defined **social research** 'as the systematic method of discovering new facts or verifying old facts, their sequences, inter-relationships, causal explanations and the natural laws which govern them.' In social research we study the behaviour of human beings as members of society and their feelings, responses and attitudes under different circumstances.

Social science research is carried out with the aim of discovering new facts and verification of the old ones. The academic purpose of social research is the acquisition of knowledge. The goal of every research is the discovery of new facts, new relationships and new laws governing the phenomena. Besides this, the objectives of research also includes the constant verification of the old concepts and generalizations. For all these, researchers need qualitative or quantitative data.

Scholars of tribal studies visit the tribal areas and conduct research on the tribal people, their customs, attitudes, behavioural pattern and habits in their natural settings using various qualitative and quantitative research methods. Using the field data, they try to address various research problems. For example, they try to establish a causal connection between various human activities. They try to establish the laws that govern the various complex human activities. Or simply they describe the culture of the tribe to understand it as it is.



### 3.2.1 Planning Data Collection

Data is the heart and soul in the process of research work. Does any kind of data help in research work? Let us discuss.

A researcher sets his research objectives. Any kind of data cannot help research objectives set with a particular purpose. Data on political institutions cannot explain the objectives formulated to study the marriage system. Hence, data that conform to and are consistent with the objectives formulated is the required data for the purpose of research on marriage system. Hence, data must be appropriate, focused, authentic and reliable to conform to the objectives. Data must be relevant to the topic of research investigation. One must be very cautious while selecting the category of data. The categories relate to the sources, methods and nature of data.

Generally, data can be classified in the following ways:

- Quantitative and qualitative data
- Sample and census data
- Primary and secondary data

**Quantitative and qualitative data:** On the basis of nature, data can be quantitative and qualitative. Quantitative data are those which are quantifiable. In other words, they can be expressed in quantitative (numerical) terms. Data on number of houses or number of clans in a particular tribal village and age-group wise distribution of population of a tribe are examples of quantitative data.

Qualitative data, on the other hand, are not quantifiable. They refer to attributes—qualities, characteristics, etc. The colour of festival dresses, faith in supernatural power, bravery, dream and its interpretation, the quality of a girl that makes her an ideal wife, honesty, and many such attributes are examples of qualitative data.

**Sample and census data:** They refer to data collected either from a sample or a universe. Sample is a part of the universe or population. Universe or population refers to all units under study. Sample and census data also refer to methods of collection. Data collected through the sampling method are sample data. Similarly, data collected through the study of the universe, known as census survey, are called census data. Details on sample and universe are discussed later in the same unit.

**Primary and secondary data:** Data collected from primary sources are called primary data. On the other hand, data collected from the secondary sources are called secondary data.

While collecting data, one must be cautious about the selection of methods and sources, and be aware of the nature and scope of data to be collected. Like the nature and quantity of data, methods and sources are very important in the process of collection of data. Therefore, planning data collection and executing the plan are very important.

The researcher or investigator is required to consider the following preliminaries while planning data collection:

- Objective, nature and scope of data
- Source of data
- Choice of methods of data collection
- Area to be covered, i.e. sample, sample unit and sample frame
- Resources available—finance and human

## NOTES

**NOTES**

- Time factor
- Desirable degree of accuracy—extensive or intensive enquiry

After planning data collection, the investigator must think of how to put the plan into action, i.e. how to execute the plan. This is also a stage before the real collection work begins. The stage comprises the following steps:

- Organization of human resources in carrying out collection, editing, coding, presentation, analysis and interpretation of data
- Allotment of supervisory duty to ensure fairness in work
- Training of members of research staff including enumerators
- Preparation of questionnaires and schedules including pilot survey
- Sending the enumerators to field
- Engagement in editing, coding, analysis and interpretation of data

The planning and execution of investigation is outlined through team research. However, an individual scholar has also to plan his data collection keeping the preliminaries outlined in view. The scholar may execute the collection by himself or hire some human resource.

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### **3.3 SOME CONCEPTS USED IN RESEARCH**

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On seeing a piece of writing one can know if it is a journalistic writing or research writing. Through presentation one can distinguish between various writings. This is because each type of writing has its own way of presentation. The way of presentation differs, to a great extent, because of the differences in the concepts, vocabulary, etc. used. In research tradition too there are some concepts. Use of these concepts distinguishes research writings from other types of writing. The concepts are used as a frame or tool of analysis and explanation. They sometimes provide theoretical perspectives, a philosophical approach to research. Here, we shall discuss some general concepts used in research.

#### **3.3.1 Methods and Methodology**

Method and methodology are sometimes used as synonyms, when they are actually not. Methodology is the study of methods and deals with the philosophical assumptions underlying the research process, while a method is an approach to data collection under those philosophical assumptions. However, the word ‘method’ is used liberally to denote a number of things which we shall discuss in the following paragraphs.

**Methodology = Method + Rationale that support the method’s validity**

Methodology refers to more than a simple set of methods; rather it refers to the rationale and the philosophical assumptions that underlie a particular study. Methodology is defined as ‘the analysis of the principles of methods, rules, and postulates employed by a discipline’ or ‘the development of methods, to be applied within a discipline’ or ‘a particular procedure or set of procedures’. Precisely, methodology is a body of practices, procedures and rules used in research investigation.

**Check Your Progress**

1. Define research.
  2. How can data be classified?

Methodology includes the following concepts as they relate to a particular discipline or field of inquiry:

- Collection of theories, concepts or ideas
- Comparative study of different approaches
- Critique of the individual methods

The term ‘method’ has a wide range of use. It is used to distinguish between the nature of research such as quantitative and qualitative research. Often, it refers to a broader approach of data collection. In this sense, we use the field study method and case study method. The field study method refers to an approach to collect data from primary sources and includes various methods like case study method, interview method, observation method and so on. Within the field study method, case study is also a method which refers to a technique of data collection. But the case study as a method includes interview, observation and so on. These are techniques of case study method. Separately, each technique is called a method, such as the interview method or the observation method. In the interview method, the way one collects data, say face-to-discussion, is known as technique. No doubt, the term ‘method’ has a wide range of use. We also use the term statistical methods or methods of analysis. Therein, we refer to statistical tools of data analysis.

Therefore, a method is the combination of several techniques plus something more i.e. it refers to the entire set of rules and procedures for collection and analysis of data. For example: qualitative method, historical method and comparative method are methods. Precisely, methods are the way one applies to the theoretical perspective(s) to explain the facts or the data collected. On the other hand, methodology is a broad philosophical framework or theoretical perspective which guides the research using the methods.

Most sciences have their own specific methods, which are supported by methodologies (i.e., rationale that support the method’s validity). The social sciences are methodologically diverse, using both qualitative methods and quantitative methods, including case studies, survey research, statistical analysis, and model building among others. Interview is a method, face-to-face interaction or telephonic interaction is the technique. But in case of observation, it is the method and the technique at the same time.

When we speak of methodology, it generally denotes a combination of: (i) ‘technology’ of data collection, namely *tools* and *methods* of research such as the questionnaire, schedule, interview guide, case study, life history, survey and participant observation methods and content analysis; (ii) analytical tools such as statistical tests and methods; and (iii) philosophy, theory and epistemology of social science guiding the conduct of research in the definition and understanding of the problem and logic of inquiry. —

Partha Nath Mukherji, *Methodology in Social Research*

### 3.3.2 Tools and Techniques

**Technique** is defined as an apparatus or device, either verbal or physical, used to elicit information. It refers to the way one uses a tool to collect data. **Tool** is the simplest element, an instrument, in research. Examples include questionnaire and interview schedules, tape recorder, field notes, etc. Combination of several tools leads to the construction of a technique, like an interview.

## NOTES

**NOTES**

Technique is a way through which one collects data, for example, interview and observation. Tools are the instruments with which data are recorded. Telephonic interview is a technique, but here telephone is the tool that facilitated the talk and hence the telephone is a tool. The instrument used to record the talk is also a tool.

The terms methodology, method, technique and tools are relative. In one situation, interview is a method and in another, it is a technique. Further, these four terms are also inter-dependent. Any one of the four terms has no meaning without the other three. For example, the use of tools for collection of data requires an adequate knowledge of the techniques of data collection. Without knowing the methods, the techniques cannot be properly applied to collect data. Similarly, one cannot select the methods without knowing the philosophy behind it. Conversely, the philosophical basis has emerged on the basis of the data generated and explained. Therefore, all these four terms are very much interdependent in the field of research.

**3.3.3 Objectivity in Research**

Objectivity in research ordinarily means *value-neutrality*. In other words, the research shall be free from value judgment, it shall not focus on what *should/ought to be*; rather it shall focus on *what is*. Further, it shall be verifiable, predictable and applicable to similar situations. We can apply the research findings for generalizations.

Objectivity is contrasted with subjectivity in research. Subjectivity is value loaded and normative in nature. A simple distinction between the two is as follows:

**Distinction between objective and subjective researches**

Objective and subjective researches are two ways of finding truth. A simple distinction between the two is as follows:

- In objective research we focus on what the phenomenon is. For example, we may say, on the basis of research findings, that the literacy percentage among the tribes in a state is less than 50 per cent. But in subjective research, we focus on what the phenomenon should be. For example, we may say that the literacy percentage of the tribes in India should increase. The first one is a *statement of fact* while the second one is a *value-loaded statement*. In the second, we do not know what the phenomenon (literacy) exactly is, but approximate what it should be and not its magnitude.
- Objective research is usually a quantitative research, but the subjective research is qualitative in nature. Quantitative researches have numerical expressions while qualitative ones include words, pictures and visual materials, audio materials and so on.
- Usually researches in social sciences, especially in tribal studies, are qualitative researches. This does not mean that quantitative researches do not fit into social science researches. Data on tribal demography or consumption pattern of a section of people can be quantitatively represented.

**Is qualitative research scientific?**

It is a common belief that qualitative researches lack objectivity as they cannot be quantified and hence cannot be scientific studies.

Let us discuss the essence of science as a method. Keith F. Punch (1998) writes that science as a method has two parts. The first part concerns the vital role of *real-*

*world data*. In other words, science accepts the authority of empirical data and its ideas have to be tested against data. The second part is the role of *theory*, particularly theory which explains. The aim, therefore, is to explain the data, not just to collect the data and not just to use the data to describe things.

A good way to understand what theory is about is to pick something that begs to be explained and look at competing explanations for it.

Bernard, H. R. (2002), p.77

## NOTES

Science as a method gives us an idea that it is scientific to collect data about the world, to build theories, to explain the data, and to test those theories against further data. When we understand science as a method in the above sense, it is not necessary that science involves numerical data only. It puts emphasis on data which help in theory building and theory testing with further data. Both *qualitative* and *quantitative* data may also do so. In other words, qualitative researches can use the essence of science as a method and can have *objectivity* in presentation, analysis and interpretation.

The topics of objectivity in research in social sciences, choice between quantitative and qualitative methods are very complex and debatable issues. For a beginner's understanding, we can say that both qualitative and quantitative researches have differences and similarities. The similarities are the general logic of enquiry, the basics of designs and the empirical procedures which make the researches objective and produces valid knowledge.

Hence, we can say that qualitative researches (researches using qualitative methods) can also be scientific researches and thus objective researches. Science in terms of producing valid knowledge refers to a set of principles or a methodology that informs us how to produce valid knowledge.

### Characteristics of scientific research

You know that the qualitative research is scientific because it follows scientific procedures. What are scientific procedures? Here we have listed certain postulates/characteristics which the scientific research follows:

- Relies on empirical evidence
- Utilizes relevant concepts
- Is committed to only objective considerations
- Presupposes *ethical* neutrality, i.e., they aim at nothing but making only adequate and correct statements about population objects
- Result into probabilistic predictions
- Aims at formulating most general *axioms* or what can be termed as scientific theories

Thus, 'the scientific method encourages a rigorous, impersonal mode of procedure dictated by the demands of logic and objective procedure'. Accordingly, scientific method implies an objective, logical and systematic method. In other words, scientific method is a method free from personal bias or prejudice, to ascertain demonstrable qualities of a phenomenon capable of being verified, wherein the researcher is guided by the rules of logical reasoning, and the investigation proceeds in an orderly manner, and that implies internal consistency.

**NOTES****Is tribal study research scientific?**

Researches on tribes are usually qualitative studies. But the logic of enquiry, selection of a methodology, use of empirical procedures and sometimes building of theory are core to such studies. The researcher designs the research work with four main ideas: the strategy; the conceptual framework; the question of why, who and what will be studied; and the tools to be used for collecting and analysing empirical materials. The research recognizes an objective reality in the tribal way of life and in their belief system.

In other words, researches on tribes try to produce a valid knowledge of tribal culture. But such an exercise is possible only through the scientific approach to research.

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### **3.4 METHODS AND TECHNIQUES OF COLLECTION OF DATA: SURVEY AND SAMPLING**

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Collection of data is not a haphazard process. It is systematic and hence emphasizes on the rules and procedures. These are known as the techniques of data collection. Here, we shall introduce some important but common techniques applied for the collection of data.

#### **3.4.1 Census and Sampling Methods**

Research requires information i.e. data. We find that there are two main sources of data—primary and secondary sources. Primary data is collected from the field. For the purpose of collecting primary data, surveys are conducted. While conducting a survey, there are two important considerations. The first one relates to the selection of items from which data is to be collected. The second one relates to the methods applied in collecting data from selected items. The issue of selecting items from which data is to be collected is a choice between census and sample survey. In other words, we can use the census or sampling method in selecting items for the purpose of survey. The second one relates to the use of methods or method for collecting data from the selected items.

#### **Census and Sample Survey**

Suppose a researcher selects a research problem related to female literacy in a tribal community for study. In order to collect information, the researcher has to interview all the female population of the community or a few of them depending on his research objectives, time factor and financial implications. Conducting an interview of all the female members is known as census survey while a few of them is known as sample survey.

Let us discuss what a census is and what a sample is. In order to understand the concept of census you should be aware of the meaning of *universe* or *population*. The universe is the totality of observation or items which are of interest to the researcher. The observation or items may be persons, households, firms, shops, farms and so on under study. When a researcher studies a students' achievement in tribal areas, his observation is the students in the community. If his interest is on the study of female workers in the tea industry of Assam, then the observation or item of study shall be the female working population in all the tea estates of Assam.

#### **Check Your Progress**

3. What is methodology?
4. What does objectivity in research mean?
5. What are the four main ideas with which a researcher designs the research work?

In the first example, all the students of tribal areas constitute the universe of the study. The universe is also referred to as **population** which constitutes all observations considered under study. Hence, population has a meaning different from the one we use in general sense. In the second example, all the female workers in the tea industry of Assam constitute the population or universe under study.

**The universe is relative:** This means that the universe or population under study varies from study to study. When the researcher studies the students' achievement of tribal areas, only the students of tribal areas of the country constitute the population. If the researcher studies the tribal students' achievement in tribal studies, then all the students studying tribal studies constitute the population. It is clear that in the second case the population i.e. only the tribal students studying tribal studies as a subject is a part of the total tribal students of first research problem under study. What may constitute a population in one study may be a part or sub-set of another study. Hence, the population varies from study to study and so is the relative concept.

**The universe may be either finite or infinite:** In a finite universe the number of items is determinable. For example, the number of students in Rajiv Gandhi University or in India gives the idea of finite universe. In infinite universe, for example, stars in the sky, the number of items is not determinable.

The information collected about each item of the universe is called a **census survey**. It is a complete enumeration method. A **census**, therefore, is the process of obtaining information about every member/unit of a population. In case of a census, each and every individual of the population is significant and counted. The term is mostly used in connection with national 'population and housing censuses'. In India census is undertaken in every 10 years to study the demography and other aspects of the country. Last census was undertaken in 2011. Census data are also commonly used for research and planning purposes. You will find that the Department of Agriculture also conducts Agricultural Census.

### 3.4.2 Sample and Sampling Methods

A sample is a part or subset of the universe selected for the purpose of collecting information. In some surveys it may not be required to investigate each and every unit/item of the population. For example, one does not taste each grain of rice in the cooking pot to ascertain if the rice is cooked. One does not taste each drop of sea water to know its characteristic. One drop is representative enough as evidence for the salinity of sea water.

Census surveys are costly and time consuming. As has been said, census surveys may not be necessary to reach valid conclusions. Instead, we study a sample, which is a part of the population, to draw conclusions about the entire population. Of course, the sample should be representative of the characteristics sought to be investigated in the population. A **sample** is, thus, a portion of people drawn from a larger population. A sample should be representative of the population. Thus, a sample is a part of the population which is studied in order to make inferences about the whole population.

Most of the surveys, however, are sample surveys. In tribal studies, it is not necessary to draw information from each and every individual of the society to investigate the cultural life of a tribe. Folk tales, legends and myths need not be collected from each and every individual of the tribe to understand the tribal way of life. In the changing situation when tribes have been exposed to development processes, sample surveys

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provide the insight that census survey could provide. Therefore, sample surveys are preferred because of a number of reasons. These are as follows:

- Ordinarily, a sample can provide reliable and useful information at a lower cost.
- We obtain information in a short span of time that can serve the purpose of data collection.
- In sample surveys, non-sampling errors can be controlled in a better way than in census surveys. This is because careful training and supervision form a part of the sampling method of data collection. While in a census survey, training and supervision exist more as routine work, because of the volume of work it involves. Hence, a sample often provides more accurate information. Moreover, the investigator gets an opportunity to conduct intensive enquiries on fewer items than on larger items usually carried out in a census survey. It is easy to manage fewer items efficiently than bulk items of a population.
- In some cases sample survey is the only method of conducting a study. To test the quality of gold in a necklace, the goldsmith conducts only a sample test.
- Though sample method of data collection is more popular, one must be cautious in selecting the sample. Unless the sample is representative of the population, the inference to be drawn from the sample about the entire population will be misleading.

**Sampling**

There often arises a confusion between the terms ‘sample’ and ‘sampling’. Sample is simply a part of population, while sampling is the procedure of selecting the sample and knowing about the population on the basis of the sample. Here, sampling is considered as a method of knowing the characteristics of the universe by examining a small part of it. Sampling involves three elements:

- (i) Selection of the sample
- (ii) Collection of information
- (iii) Interpreting the population

However, these three elements interdependently or together form the idea about sampling.

**Sampling Unit and Sampling Frame**

Sampling unit refers to individual items to be studied within the sampling frame. Sampling frame is the list of sampling units of the population from which random sampling is to be drawn. For example, while studying tribal female literacy in Arunachal Pradesh, the female population to be studied need to be clearly defined. It is because even a girl child aged one year comes under the female category, but she is not eligible for the study of female literacy. All the female population to be studied for the purpose constitute the population. Each of its constituent, that is the individual female member within the population, is known as the sampling unit. Then a list of the female population is prepared from which sampling can be drawn. This list is known as the sampling frame.

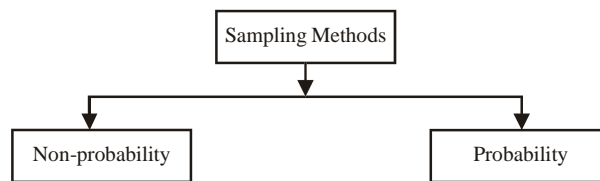
The frame may not necessarily be a list. It may also be maps showing the boundaries of area units. Thus, a frame may be broadly classified into two types: the first one is **list frame** consisting of sampling units and the second one is **area frame** or **map frame** consisting of geographical areas.



### 3.4.3 Types of Sampling and Sampling Errors

There are two important methods of sampling, they are:

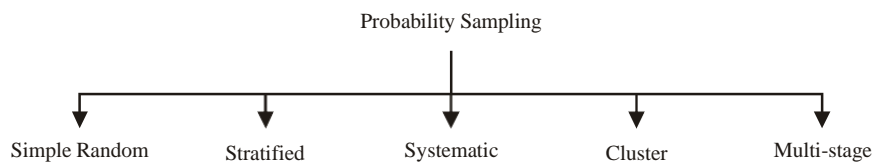
- Non-probability
- Probability



#### 1. Probability Sampling

Probability sampling is one in which every unit of the population has an equal probability of being selected for the sample. In other words, every item in the population has a known chance of being included in the sample. It offers a high degree of representativeness. However, this method is expensive, time consuming and relatively complicated. Non-probability sampling makes no claim for representativeness, as every unit does not get the chance of being selected. It is the researcher who decides which sample units should be chosen.

Probability sampling can be mainly simple random, stratified, systematic, cluster or multi-stage sampling. Sometimes a distinction is made between cluster and multi-stage sampling also.



- (i) **Simple Random Sampling:** This refers to the sampling procedure in which each and every item of the population has an equal chance of being selected in the sample. The researcher cannot influence the selection of a particular item. It purely depends on the chance factor.

In simple random sampling, the sample units are selected by means of a number of methods, like lottery method or table or random number method. To understand the food habits of people in a tribal village, it may not be necessary to study all the households. Out of, say 50 households in the village only 10 can be studied. First, the households will be numbered from 1 to 50. Then chits for each number will be prepared and kept in a container. After reshuffling the chits, 10 chits can be drawn. The households against these 10 different numbers drawn will be the sample households for investigation.

There is no personal bias of the researcher in the simple random sampling procedure. If the size of sample increases, it becomes increasingly representative of the population.

However, it has also some limitations. It requires complete listing of the items of the population. This often becomes difficult. In case of large area coverage of population, the sample drawn by simple random sampling procedure is likely to be widely dispersed. Small size samples may not be

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representative. For example, out of two male and two female members, it may so happen that two male members can be drawn by lottery method. Thus, simple random sampling may be technically unbiased, its representativeness is not always guaranteed. Nevertheless this method is widely used for scientific investigation.

- (ii) **Stratified Random Sampling:** Stratified random sampling is also simply called stratified sampling. It is a probability sampling procedure wherein the entire population is divided into different sub-groups or strata on the basis of some non-overlapping attributes and from each stratum items are selected randomly. The division of the population into a homogenous strata is based on one or more criteria, for example, sex, age, educational level and so on. For example, Arunachal Pradesh can be geographically stratified on the basis of heights/elevation into high altitude regions, middle altitude regions and low altitude and plains regions. Tribal villages from each stratum can be selected for study. The Khampti (a tribe in Arunachal Pradesh) society can be stratified into royal families (*Phanchau*), commoners' families (*Paklung*), and families who do not belong to these two groups (*Phan-e-on*). It should be noted that sub-groups or strata must be non-overlapping. This procedure is used when the researcher wants to highlight a specific stratum or compare some characteristics among the strata.

Stratified sampling may be proportionate or disproportionate. In case of former, the sample in each stratum should be proportionate to the population size. For example, there are 100 families of *Phanchau* group, 1500 families in *Paklung* group and 1200 families in *Phan-e-on* group. The researcher wants to investigate 10 per cent of the families. Hence, the researcher can select 10 families from *Phanchau* group, 150 from *Paklung* group and 120 from *Phan-e-on* group. In case of disproportionate stratified sampling the researcher may select 50 families from each group.

**Advantages:** Stratified sampling has some advantages. They are:

- It is more representative than a simple random sampling.
- It is simple and convenient to apply.
- The variability within the subgroups is compared.

**Disadvantages:** There are limitations also in this method of sample selection, they are:

- It may require more administrative planning than a simple random sampling method.
- It is difficult to ensure homogenous items in each stratum.

- (iii) **Systematic Random Sampling:** Systematic random sampling is a probability sampling procedure wherein the random sampling method is applied to a systematic process of data collection. The systematic process provides an interval and units are collected after the given interval. The first unit is selected at random and other units at the given interval. Usually, this method is applied when the population is homogeneous. There are six steps in this procedure. These are: (a) defining the population, (b) determining the sample size, (c) listing the population assigning numbers to each unit/case, (d) calculating the interval, (e) selecting the first unit, and (f) selecting the sample.

Let the population consist of 20 tribal households in a tribal village. Let the sample size be five. The next step is to list the households assigning serial numbers from 1 to 20 like 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8, 9, 10, 11, 12, 13, 14, 15, 16, 17, 18, 19 and 20. Since the number of units in the population is 20 and sample size is five, the interval shall be calculated as  $20 \div 5 = 4$ . Let the first unit selected from the list of 1 to 20 be the household numbered 3. Then every fourth unit beginning from unit 3 will be selected units in the sample. Therefore, other units will be the households against serial numbers 7, 11, 15, 19.

**Advantages:** The sample is representative of the population as the researcher's personal bias is not present in the process of selection. The sample units are evenly distributed as compared to simple random sampling.

**Disadvantages:** The systematic sampling also requires a complete list of the units in the populations. It is difficult to always obtain a complete list of the population when the size is large. This method does not allow capturing cultural traits.

- (iv) **Cluster Sampling:** Cluster sampling implies dividing the population into clusters and drawing random samples either from all clusters or selected clusters. Initial clusters are called primary sampling units; clusters within the primary clusters are called secondary sampling units, and clusters within the secondary clusters are called multi-stage clusters. Suppose you have a population that is dispersed across a wide geographic region like the tribes of Arunachal Pradesh. This method allows you to divide this population into clusters (usually districts, circles, agro-climatic zones, or other boundaries) and then randomly sample everyone in those clusters. For example, you could randomly select five of Arunachal Pradesh's 16 districts, but you would have to make sure that almost every person in those five districts participated in your study.

Cluster sample and stratified sample apparently seem to be same. But they are different. According to stratified sampling principle, the population is divided into strata on the basis of some meaningful attribute. For example, the population can be divided on the basis of social hierarchy as is the example of the Khampti tribe. Each stratum is different from the other so that the member of one stratum cannot be a member of the other stratum. But individual members of the stratum are the same, each one belongs to the same social group. In *Phanchau* stratum, there will be only *Phanchau* members. In case of cluster sampling, the population is divided into clusters. Suppose the Khampti population is divided on the basis of circles. One circle (cluster) is same as the other, for each one is a circle. But the members of the sample are same as the members in the population and thus diverse. This means in every cluster there may be members of three social groups namely, *Phanchau*, *Paklung* and *Phan-e-on*. Thus, strata look different from each other, but their individual members are all the same in the sense of the group attribute. Clusters, on the other hand, belong to the same group, say district, or circle, etc. and look the same. But their members are diverse as the population, as a whole.

- (v) **Multistage Sampling:** Multistage sampling is a complex form of cluster sampling. Constructing the clusters is the first stage. Deciding what elements within the cluster to use, is the second stage. The technique is used frequently when a complete list of all members of the population does not exist. For

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example, after selecting five districts you could systematically sample within your clusters (the districts), and this is called multi-stage sampling. This method generally refers to any mixing of sampling methods. Finally, multi-phase sampling is defined as a type of sampling similar to multi-stage sampling i.e., primary selection, secondary selection, and so on. However, in a multi-phase sampling procedure, each sample is adequately studied before another sample is drawn from it. Consequently, while in multi-stage sampling only the final sample is studied, in multi-phase sampling, all samples are researched.

Let us take an example. To study the income of Arunachal people, we divide the state into five clusters, say five districts. From these five districts, by applying either simple random sampling or systematic sampling, we draw samples from our study. We can also take blocks of the state as clusters in place of districts. From the total blocks ten blocks could be the clusters from where we can draw samples.

But in multi-stage sampling, clusters are further divided and sub-divided at different stages. For example, we can randomly select five districts, from each district we can select two blocks, from each block we can select three circles and from each circle we can select ten villages. From each village we can also select households. This type of division of the population at different levels—district to blocks to circles to villages to households—is called multi-stage sampling. But in cluster sampling the population is directly divided into clusters like districts or blocks.

### Sampling Error

When undertaking any sample survey, one may experience what is known as sampling error in statistics. Sampling errors arise because we do not estimate all items of the population. We only estimate a part of it, i.e. of the sample. Moreover, the sample may be the true representative of the population along a characteristic. Sample error is the difference between the results derived from the sample and the 'true' value of its population. There are no sampling errors in a census survey because the calculations are based on the entire population. The sampling error:

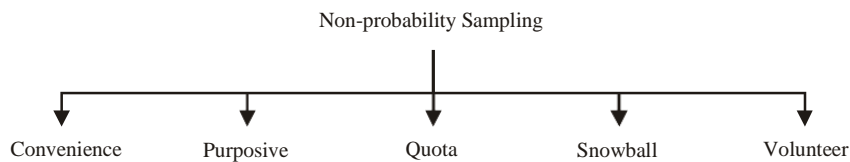
- Generally decreases as the sample size increases (but not proportionally)
- Depends on the size of the population under study
- Depends on the variability of the characteristic of interest in the population
- Can be accounted for and reduced by an appropriate sample plan
- Can be measured and controlled in probability sample surveys

Sampling errors may be of two types: **biased errors** and **unbiased errors**. Biased error arises from the faulty process of selection of samples, faulty methods of collection and faulty methods of analysis of data. When a respondent is absent, the researcher is tempted to interview any one available. This is likely to make the sample unrepresentative. As a result errors occur. Unbiased errors occur when the sample does not truly represent the population.

### 2. Non-probability Sampling

As the name suggests, there is absence of the probability factor in non-probability sampling. Non-probability sampling methods are procedures in which the rules of probability theory are not applied in the selection of a sample. In other words, every item

in the universe does not have the chance of being included in the sample. Hence, non-probability sampling procedures do not claim representativeness, and are usually used for qualitative exploratory analysis. Non-probability sampling can be convenient, purposive, quota, snow ball and volunteer samplings.



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- (i) **Convenience Sampling:** A convenience sampling is also known as ‘accidental’ or ‘haphazard’ sampling. It is a type of non-probability sampling procedure. In this sampling, the researcher studies all those persons who are most conveniently available or who accidentally come in his contact during a certain period of time in the research. In other words, the sample is selected because of the convenience of its accessibility and proximity to the researcher.

For example, if a researcher wants to study the tribal village life, the researcher will select the one which he knows or which will be easy to access or which is located nearby. The researcher considers one or more of the above factors in selecting the village as his sample of study. The researcher does not apply any random sampling method. It is the convenience factor that determines his choice.

The convenience sampling procedure is useful in pilot survey. It is easy, time saving and less expensive. When the researcher wants to have the basic knowledge to plan further investigation this method is employed. However, it is criticized because it suffers from biases. Moreover, the sample is not a representative one.

- (ii) **Purposive Sampling:** Purposive sampling, also known as judgemental, selective or subjective sampling is a non-probability sampling technique. The researcher purposely chooses people who are thought to be most relevant to the research topic and are easily available to him. Purposive sampling is significantly useful in tribal studies. The probability sampling methods may not be effectively followed in the exploratory qualitative study of tribal cultures. Students of tribal studies widely use purposive sampling method as it provides a wide range of choices. Hence, we shall discuss the different types of purposive sampling for the benefit of students of tribal studies.

Purposive sampling can be **maximum variation sampling**, also known as heterogeneous sampling. The researcher seeks maximum variation among the items in the sample. When a researcher wants to know the food habits of the tribal population in a village he would interview such diverse persons as men, women, rich, poor, children and old persons. He may also include persons from different occupations. Maximum variation among the items according to different traits, behaviour pattern, categories and experiences provides greater insight into the topic of research.

Purposive sampling can be **homogeneous sampling**. It is just opposite to maximum variation sampling. The researcher selects a homogenous group who share common characteristics. For example, to study the food habit of traditionally rich tribal persons in the village he will study only the rich people of that category.

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The researcher selects such a sampling to address a research question pertaining to specific issues present in a particular group.

The purposive sampling can also be **typical case sampling**. The researcher selects such a sample of items/members whom he considers are typical/normal for the purpose of study. To study, for example, the normal food habits of tribal people he will select an average tribal traditional family, not the rich or educated or traditional elite family of the village.

There may be *extreme or deviant cases* of food habits in a tribal village. The habit may not be a normal food habit in tribal villages. For example, the food habit of a priest during some rituals may not be a normal food habit of the tribe. A pregnant lady may follow some food taboos. A tribe person of some tribes who kills a tiger observes food taboos for a certain period of time. Such examples are extreme or deviant cases of food habits. The researcher selects such a sample purposely to focus on individual behaviour, attitude or experience which is not normal. Such information provides significant insight into individual cases within a group.

The purposive sampling may also be **critical case sampling**. This procedure of sampling is useful in exploratory qualitative studies, where resources are limited and where a single case can be decisive and be used for a logical generalization. It is this decisive aspect of the sample that is important. In order to know whether the sample is decisive or not, the following statements will be useful: if it happens to a group, it may also happen to other similar groups; if it does not happen to a group, it may not happen to other similar groups. In our example of food habits, if a priest of a particular tribe has a different food habit at the time of performing rituals, priests in other tribes will have a different food habit too. The study of the case of the priest with a different food habit during a ritual is a critical case sampling as it can be logically generalized to other such cases. This differs from extreme case sampling in that in the former the study is tribe/group specific. But in the latter, the purpose is to make logical generalizations under similar cases.

Purposive sampling may also be **total population sampling**. Here, the researcher studies each member of the universe/population. This is possible when the population is very small. For example, to study the food habits of a traditional tribal elite family, the researcher shall study each and every member of the family that constitutes his population. For example, in a tribal village there are three families that suits to the purpose of his study. Hence, he will study each and every member in these three families of the village. This will give a significant insight into the issues studied.

The purposive sampling may be **expert sampling** also. In this situation, the expert in the field constitutes the item of sample. To study the work of a traditional tribal mid-wife at the time of child delivery, the researcher will select the women who are in this profession. This type of sampling is selected during an exploratory qualitative study where the researcher is interested to highlight new areas or opens up to include a new group of participants with a new area of knowledge.

**Advantages:** Purposive sampling has a wide range of techniques. This gives an opportunity to collect a huge amount of cross-section of information. The qualitative research becomes progressive in the field of gathering information by using various techniques. A researcher may start with critical case sampling to judge whether

the research is worth investigating or not. If he is affirmative then he may proceed to use expert sampling.

**Disadvantages:** The use of different techniques by the researcher implies that he wants to prove a specific point. In every sampling technique his judgement is used to select respondents. The procedure has high probability of the researcher's bias. Representativeness of the sample is often questioned because of the obvious research bias. Nevertheless, purposive sampling with its wide range of techniques is a significant sampling procedure in non-probability sampling. It is widely used in tribal researches.

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**(iii) Quota Sampling:** This is a version of stratified sampling of the probability type. But it has a difference. Instead of dividing the population into strata and randomly choosing the respondents, it works on 'quotas' fixed by the researcher. Quota sampling is a non-probability sampling method. The sample of any sub-group shall have the same proportion of individuals as the entire universe selected for the study.

Suppose a researcher wants to study the opinion on career options of tribal students studying in a University. The researcher finds from the University records that 500 tribal students are on the roll. Hence, the researcher may decide to study 10 per cent of students. In other words he will study 50 tribal students in total. He cannot take any 50 students as respondents. There may be boys and girls, there may be students from urban setting and from rural setting. If the researcher considers rural-urban and male-female criteria he will have four groups—rural male, rural female, urban male and urban female. He will select respondents from each group in such a way that from each group 10 per cent of respondents are selected and in total they make up 50. Suppose there are 50 urban boys and 30 urban girls and 300 rural boys and 120 rural girls. Ten per cent of each group will come to 5, 3, 30 and 12 respectively; and the total comes to 50. However, within a sub-group the selection of sample items depends on personal judgment of the researcher.

Normally, there are three steps to be considered during quota sampling. These are:

- Choosing the relevant stratification of the population on the basis of some criteria (in our example we used rural-urban divide and male-female divide criteria, and divided/stratified the population into four groups)
- Fixing the quota (10 per cent in our example)
- Selection of respondents on the basis of quota fixed and considering representativeness

**Advantages:** Normally, this method is useful in the preliminary stages of research and when detailed accuracy is not required. Following are the advantages of quota sampling:

- It is easily and quickly administered, as it does not require a strict use of random sampling technique.
- It allows the researcher to compare the groups easily.
- It is relatively inexpensive.

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- It is useful when it is not easy to get a probability sample and the intention of the researcher is to create a sample that is as representative of the selected population as possible. In this sense a quota sample is non-probability based equivalent of the stratified random sample.

**Disadvantages:** The disadvantages of quota sampling are:

- It is often difficult to find exact proportion of respondents. The 15 per cent of a sub-group of 23 persons will come about 3.45.
- It is difficult to select appropriate control categories.
- The sample, on the basis of quota of respondents from each sub-group may not be representative. Consider our example. In the urban tribal boys sub-group there may be students from higher income group and students from very low income group. Their career options may be different. Hence, the respondents in the sub-group may not be representative. Precisely, selected traits of population are considered, hence the quota method may not provide representativeness of the respondents.

(iv) **Snowball Sampling:** Snowball sampling is a type of non-probability sampling procedure. It is also known as chain referral, or referral or chain sampling. This method is employed when the target population is unknown or when it is difficult to approach the respondents in any other way. Moreover, such a technique is applied where other non-probability procedures are not useful much. It is more direct and purposeful. Convenience sampling, for example focuses on members of the sample which are easily accessible. But snowball sampling focuses on members who are difficult to identify and locate.

In **snowball** sampling, the researcher begins with the research with a few respondents who are known and available to him. Subsequently, these respondents give other names who meet the criteria of research, who in turn give few more new names. This process is continued until 'adequate' number of persons is interviewed or until no more respondents are discovered.

Snowball sampling uses the social network that exists between the members of the same group. In recent years, you will find a new social category as sex workers. But it is difficult to find sex workers as subjects for interview. Even most of the people in the community might not have known them except the user group. It is also difficult to identify the people who take the service of these sex workers. Under such a situation, the researcher aims at identifying one sex worker. As there exists a network between them, the researcher comes to know of the other sex workers from the first one.

Creation of sample using the snowball procedure has two steps: (i) identification of at least one respondent from the population in the beginning, and (ii) use of the first respondent to find other respondents and through every other respondent to find the required number of respondents.

Snowball sampling is named after snowball because once the snowball starts rolling it picks up more snow along the way and grows larger and larger. Similarly, the researcher starts with one respondent and gradually comes to know many other categories by asking more from every respondent he interviews.

**Advantages:** The advantages of this method are:

- Snowball sampling procedure is cheap, simple and cost effective.



- It needs less planning and human resource as compared to other sampling procedures.
- Snowball sampling is a type of chain referral process of identifying respondents. Hence, respondents who are normally not reached are accessible. It makes a study possible.
- The hidden/unreached respondents have a social network. This helps in reaching the other respondents through the first one or subsequent ones. Normally, sex workers, or drug abusers, or AIDS patients have a social stigma of opening up. But this barrier is eased out through snowball sampling, for the reference comes from one among their category.

**Disadvantages:** The disadvantages of snowball sampling are:

- The researcher has little control over the procedure of selecting sample members.
- Representativeness in terms of coverage of different types of respondents cannot be ascertained.
- As selection of respondents depends upon the first and subsequent respondents, it is likely to carry the respondents' bias in selecting members.
- Members of the sample are not selected following the probability sampling procedure. Hence, sampling error cannot be determined.
- The previous respondents will name those people whom they know. There may be many unknown members in the population.
- As a corollary, generalization about the population cannot be made.

Nevertheless, the method is still a useful procedure of sampling when the researcher studies hidden or hard-to reach respondents.

- (v) **Volunteer Sampling:** A volunteer sampling procedure is a non-probability sampling procedure. In this procedure, the respondent himself volunteers to give information he holds. No doubt, people volunteer their services sometimes for payment, or sometimes to gain self-importance, or for both. Sometimes they have a motive behind it, that something about the culture should not be disclosed. In many tribal communities, the elites have started interpreting a phenomenon differently in the light of newly acquired ideology. Some elites do not like to reveal a practice which they now feel wrong.

Therefore, this procedure is a weak procedure of selecting members of a sample. Nevertheless, it is useful when respondents are difficult to find by any other procedure.

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## 3.5 QUANTITATIVE AND QUALITATIVE METHODS OF RESEARCH

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From the viewpoint of presentation and analysis, research methods may be either quantitative or qualitative. Each method has its own distinguishing features; hence each method has its own tools and techniques. In this section, we shall discuss the above two methods and the tools and techniques associated with them.

**Quantitative methods** are research methods dealing with numbers and anything that is measurable. They are, therefore, to be distinguished from qualitative methods.

## NOTES

### Check Your Progress

6. Define a census.
7. What do the terms sample and sampling mean?
8. What is systematic random sampling?
9. Why do sampling errors arise?
10. What happens in a volunteer sampling procedure?

Counting and measuring are common forms of quantitative methods. The result of the research is a number, or a series of numbers. These are often presented in tables, graphs or other forms of statistics.

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An intelligent way of differentiating qualitative research from quantitative research is that largely qualitative research is exploratory, while quantitative research is conclusive. Quantitative data is measurable while qualitative data cannot be put into a context that can be graphed or displayed as a mathematical term.

In the social sciences, particularly in sociology, social anthropology, tribal studies and psychology, the use of one or other types of method has become a matter of controversy. On the other hand, advocates of quantitative methods argue that only by using such methods can the social sciences become truly scientific; advocates of qualitative methods argue that quantitative methods tend to obscure the reality of the social phenomena under study. These methods underestimate or neglect the non-measurable factors, which may be the most important.

**Qualitative research** is an important approach to research methodology in social sciences. The research involves methods of data collection and analysis that are non-quantitative. The methods used in qualitative research provide subjective information. There are different angles to define qualitative research. Historical-comparative researchers would argue that it always involves the historical context, and sometimes a critique of the ‘front’ to get at the ‘deep structure’ of social relations. Qualitative research most often is *grounded theory*, built from the ground up.

Qualitative research approaches began to gain recognition in the 1970s. The methods are designed to help researchers understand people and the social and cultural contexts within which they live. Qualitative research involves an in-depth understanding of human behaviour and the reasons that govern human behaviour. It seeks to describe the meanings of the central themes in the life of the respondents. The research depends more on personal interaction than on questionnaires. The investigator gets an opportunity to probe or ask follow-up questions. He gets details on the topic from the respondents.

Qualitative research relies on the reasons behind various aspects of behaviour. Simply put, it investigates the ‘why’ and ‘how’ of decision-making, as compared to ‘what’, ‘where’, and ‘when’ of quantitative research. Hence, the need is for smaller but focused samples rather than large random samples. No doubt, these methods are very much significant in tribal studies.

Data is not inherently quantitative, and can be bits and pieces of almost anything. They do not necessarily have to be expressed in numbers. Usage of frequency distributions and probability tables is not necessary. Data can be in the form of words, images, impressions, gestures, or tones which represent real events or reality as it is seen symbolically or sociologically. Qualitative research uses unreconstructed logic to get at what is really real—the quality, meaning, context, or image of reality in what people actually do, not what they say they do (as on questionnaires). Unreconstructed logic means that there are no step-by-step rules, that researchers ought not to use pre-fabricated methods or reconstructed rules, terms, and procedures that try to make their research look clean and neat (as in journal publications).

## Methods of Qualitative Research

The methods of qualitative research are:

1. Participant-observation
2. Ethnography
3. Photography
4. Ethnomethodology
5. Dramaturgical interviewing
6. Sociometry
7. Natural experiment
8. Case study
9. Unobtrusive measures
10. Content analysis
11. Historiography
12. Secondary

### A Comparison

Qualitative research involves analysis of data such as words (e.g., from interviews), pictures (e.g., video), or objects (e.g., an artefact).

Quantitative research involves analysis of numerical data. The following table gives a brief comparison between the two methods:

*Table 5.1 Difference between Qualitative and Quantitative Research*

| Quantitative  | Qualitative       |
|---------------|-------------------|
| Objective     | Subjective        |
| Deductive     | Inductive         |
| Generalizable | Not generalizable |
| Numbers       | Words             |

We can understand better the difference between quantitative and qualitative aspects of a research asking the following two questions:

1. How many *mithuns* (*bos frontalis*) did you give to your in-laws as ‘bride price’ when you got married?
2. Why did your men give bride price that too in the form of mithuns to your in-laws at the time of marriage?

The answer to the first question comes in terms of quantitative information. But the answer to the second question comes in terms of descriptive information. The research that uses the first type of data for analysis and interpretation is simply called quantitative research. On the other hand, the qualitative research uses the second type of information for explanation and analysis.

### 3.5.1 Sources of Data

Research in social sciences is a methodical and systematic study of a subject. It is a search, an enquiry with the aim to generate new information, verify the existing knowledge in the subject of research and reach a new understanding.

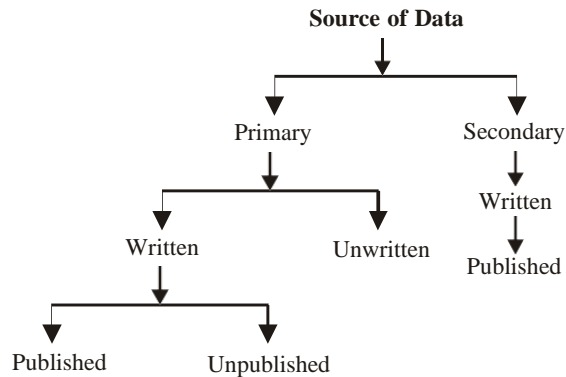
Disciplines in social sciences are generally empirical in nature and therefore information is very important in the research activities. This is because on the basis of information and facts new information is generated or the existing knowledge is verified or the existing knowledge is understood in a new way.

Facts or data are very important to research, so also are their methods of collection. We know that research becomes meaningful with correct information. That is why the method of collecting information is very important. We use different methods to collect

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data from different sources. On the basis of sources, data can be internal or external, primary or secondary, written or unwritten. In this section, we will discuss primary and secondary sources of data and written and unwritten sources of data.

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### 1. Primary and Secondary Sources of Data

Data for research are collected from various sources. But mainly there are two sources widely used by the researchers namely, primary sources and secondary sources. Data collected from primary sources are called primary data. Similarly, data collected from secondary sources are called secondary data. Primary sources may consist of published or unpublished materials or written or unwritten sources.

Field study is an important primary source of collecting data by the researchers. Internal records of the government department also constitutes the primary sources. These are also called internal data.

#### Primary Sources of Data

A researcher on social sciences in general and tribal studies in particular collects the **primary data** to have a better understanding on the community. The researcher collects the information about the people on his own. He visits the people and stays with them in their natural habitat over a long period of time. He observes them closely and sometimes even participates in their activities. If the scope of enquiry is such that observation is not possible then the researcher tries to obtain information through interviews. By doing so he collects data from primary sources.

**Primary sources** are the ‘materials on a topic upon which subsequent interpretations or studies are based, anything from first-hand documents such as poems, diaries, court records, and interviews to research results generated by experiments, surveys, ethnographies, and so on.’ Primary sources are records of events as they are first described, without any interpretation or commentary. There are also sets of data, such as census statistics, which have been tabulated, but not interpreted. Primary sources provide original materials. Some important primary sources are:

- Diaries
- Interviews (legal proceedings, personal, telephone, e-mail)
- Observation
- Case studies
- Letters
- Original documents (i.e. birth certificate or a trial transcript)
- Patents, treaties

- Photographs
- Proceedings of meetings, conferences and symposia
- Survey research (such as market surveys and public opinion polls)
- Works of Literature

Thus, primary sources are those sources from which original data are collected for the first time for a specific use. These may be from field studies whether on a sample or census basis, or from observation, or case studies. These may be from written and unwritten sources or from published and unpublished sources also.

Before deciding upon the use of primary sources, one should acquaint oneself with the work already done on the research topic. It is necessary because you can identify the data gap. In other words, by consulting the work already done by the researcher the researcher knows the problems studied, and the possible areas of investigation which he can objectively take up. This saves the researcher from repetition and thus saves time and money. Moreover, the researcher develops a perspective that helps him to focus on relevant data which he will collect. Needless to say, the researcher has to survey the available secondary sources before determining to go for primary source of data.

The nature of a primary source depends on the historical problem being studied. In political history, the most important primary sources are likely to be documents such as official reports, speeches, pamphlets, posters, or letters by participants, official election returns, and eyewitness accounts (as by a journalist who was there). In the history of ideas or intellectual history, the dominant primary sources are books, essays and letters written by intellectuals. A study of cultural history could include fictional sources, such as novels or plays. In a broader sense, primary sources also include physical objects like photographs, newsreels, coins, paintings or buildings created at the time. Historians may also take archaeological artefacts and oral reports and interviews into consideration. Written sources may be divided into three main types. As has been said written sources are also included in primary sources:

- **Literary sources** tell a story or message. They are not limited to fictional sources (which can be sources of information for contemporary attitudes), but include diaries, films, biographies, scientific works, and so on.
- **Diplomatic sources** include charters and other legal documents which usually follow a set format.
- **Social documents** are records created by organizations, such as registers of births, tax records, and so on.

In the study of historiography, when the study of history is itself subject to historical scrutiny, a secondary source becomes a primary source. For a biography of a historian, that historian's publications would act as primary sources. Documentary films can be considered a secondary source or primary source, depending on how much the filmmaker modifies the original sources.

### Advantages of Primary Sources of Data

Being a source itself, the primary source is significant primarily in field research. The following are some of its advantages:

- Primary source provides data which is original and relevant.
- This source generates data which may not exist or may not be available for the specific purpose of research.

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- The source, especially field investigation, is not limited by disciplinary boundaries. Hence, the data base is wide and thus widens the scope before the enumerator.
- Data collected is specific, focused and makes the study objective.

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### Disadvantages of Primary Sources of Data

Primary source is not an unmixed bliss. Some of its limitations are as follows:

- Collection of data from primary sources is expensive and time consuming.
- There is always the risk of enumerator's bias which influences the quality of data.
- Respondent's self-eulogizing or irresponsible information is likely to present an erroneous picture of the culture and society. Margaret Mead's findings on adolescent sexuality in Samoa has come under fire because she believed in witticisms of sexual fantasies of her female informants. Derek Freeman in his book entitled *Margaret Mead and Samoa* (1983) presents her belief in witticisms strongly.
- There may be distorted presentation of a fact due to language problems or interpreter's interpretation. The label given to many tribes comes from miscommunication. The people of the Shan race are known as Khamptis in Arunachal Pradesh; the reason is believed to be miscommunication.

Even if the enumerator learns the language, it may not be possible to understand the whole system in two or three years.

A classic example of misinterpretation is Max Muller's translation of *chhatish koti devata* as 'thirty-six crore gods'. He translated *koti* for crore though *koti* also means 'high standard', the top thirty six. Short duration of Sanskrit learning did not help him to understand the symbolic complexity in the language system.

There may also be a gap between what the enumerator means in his communication to the interpreter and what the interpreter understands. The same gap may arise between the interpreter and informant when the interpreter conveys the question of the enumerator to the informant. The reverse, i.e. informant's information, interpreter's understanding and his communication to the enumerator may not be free from communication lapse. The result will be unreliable data.

Despite the drawbacks, primary source has its own merit and necessity in tribal studies and in other disciplines.

### Secondary Sources of Data

A **secondary source** is a study written by a scholar about a topic using primary sources and other secondary sources. Secondary sources are those sources which provide data collected through primary sources by another researcher for certain specific uses or for general presentation in summary form.

An example of a secondary source is the biography of a historical figure in which the author constructs a narrative out of a variety of primary source documents, such as letters, diaries, newspaper accounts, photographs, and official records. A scholarly secondary source is familiar with the existing secondary literature and seeks to engage it in terms of arguments and evidence. Most, but not all, secondary sources utilize extensive citation. Scholarly secondary sources are peer-reviewed by scholars before publication in book or article form, and books are reviewed and evaluated in the scholarly journals.

When a historian is writing about the historiography of a particular topic say XYZ, the primary sources used are secondary sources written by scholars about XYZ.

You should be clear that the distinction between primary and secondary sources is not always a matter of kind. In fact in many cases the distinction is a matter of degree. You will find an explanation in the following paragraph as to how Census Reports can be used either as a secondary source or a primary source depending on the nature of use. Here, we give another example. An evaluation report on the impact of tribal sub-plan may be a primary work for the researcher who conducted the study on the basis of field data. But to another researcher it may be a secondary source when he uses the report as a source of data for his study. Data which is primary in the hands of one become secondary in the hands of another.

Secondary sources offer an analysis or a restatement of primary sources. They often attempt to describe or explain primary sources. Examples of secondary sources include: Dictionaries, encyclopaedias, textbooks, biographies, commentaries, dissertations, indices, abstracts, bibliographies (used to locate primary and secondary sources), journal articles, monographs, and books and articles that interpret or review research works. Secondary sources are not evidences, but rather commentary on and discussion of evidence.

Sometimes we talk of **tertiary sources of data**. Tertiary sources consist of information which is a distillation and collection of primary and secondary sources. They can be:

- Almanacs
- Encyclopaedias
- Tribal atlas
- Fact books

However, distinction is not often made between tertiary and secondary sources. The tertiary source data are treated as secondary source data.

*Table 5.2 Examples of Primary and Secondary Sources in Different Disciplines*

| Discipline        | Primary Source             | Secondary Source                         |
|-------------------|----------------------------|--|
| Art               | Original artwork           | Article critiquing the piece of art      |
| History           | Slave diary                | Book about the underground railroad      |
| Literature        | Poem                       | Treatise on a particular genre of poetry |
| Political Science | Treaty                     | Essay on Native American land rights     |
| Theatre           | Videotape of a performance | Biography of a playwright                |

### Advantages of Secondary Sources of Data

The advantages of secondary sources of data are as follows:

- Collection of field based primary data is expensive. The researcher has to spend money on printing data forms and hiring enumerators. He has to incur other field expenses like engaging an interpreter. Such expenses are not incurred while using

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secondary sources. Hence, it is economical to use secondary sources to collect data.

- Collection of data from secondary sources is time saving. It may take months to complete field work for obtaining primary data. Secondary data, if available, can be collected in a few days.
- Sometimes secondary source remains the only alternative from time, money and above all from the practical point of view. For example, a researcher may require data from diverse subjects pertaining to health, education, income, employment and population of tribal people at a macro level—national or international. These data cannot be generated by an individual researcher from field study for his research. Even individual research organizations may not create such a data base for general use. But these data are available in government publications in the form of census data and national income data. Moreover, international organizations like ILO and UNO also conduct field studies on tribes and indigenous people all over the world. Primary sources for these data cannot be the viable alternative.

It should be kept in mind that Census Reports become a primary source if data from these reports are reconstructed and interpreted differently to substantiate to a specific research perspective. If used without any change then Census Reports become secondary sources.

- Secondary source often supplements data from primary sources. Secondary source may provide lots of usable information which can well be utilized by the investigator to develop new insights concerning the problems he is studying. It will save time and money, and also from the unreasonable work of repetition while conducting a survey by the researcher.
- Some of the field data are authenticated with reference to the available secondary information. Information collected from the field may be verified with historical data. Tribal people do not keep record of events. Suppose one informant informs the enumerator that the village was established in the year following the great earthquake. No doubt, the year of the occurrence of the earthquake will be available from secondary sources. This will help determine the year of establishment of the village. Secondary source, if available and cross-checked with, adds objectivity to subjective information.
- A comparative study of tribal cultures in general cannot be possible for a researcher on the basis of field study and primary data. Ruth Benedict wrote *Patterns of Culture* by using the data collected by her and other ethnographers. Franz Boas has also advocated to study a culture in the historical context along with field data.

### **1. Disadvantages of Secondary Sources of Data**

The disadvantages of secondary sources of data are as follows:

- Secondary data is 'other's data'. It is difficult to find secondary data which exactly suits the objectives of the research problem.
- There are risks involved in secondary sources of data at four levels: reliability, suitability, adequacy and accuracy. Due to individual bias, small size of sample, selection procedure of sample and errors of definition, the secondary data may be erroneous.



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- Secondary data are by definition old data. These data cannot be timely even on the same topic. Moreover, researches on tribal culture from new perspectives necessitate primary data. New perspectives may need current data which earlier studies may not provide. Data on social change collected ten years ago cannot be of any help to throw light on tribal women empowerment from rural development schemes. Therefore, secondary sources cannot present recent dynamics for better appreciation of changing tribal situation.
- Secondary source may perpetuate a wrong interpretation or may be inadequate in generalizing a culture. Malinowski's generalization of the Trobriand culture was later found to be male biased from the field study of Annette Weiner (1976). Reliance on secondary sources limits the scope of expansion of the horizon of tribal knowledge system over space and time. Ethnographic data will not be of much help to explain tribal perception in identity movements, though it may supplement it.

Both primary and secondary sources have their own uses. One should not be used as an alternative of the other where it does not fit well. Both the sources have their advantages and disadvantages. A researcher has to select one or the other source depending upon time, cost and his objective. He can also select both the sources.

## 2. Written and Unwritten Sources of Data

Tribal societies do not have written records. But there are some references about a tribe available in personal diaries or in government records and so on. Thus, it is important to know both the written and unwritten sources so that a researcher can meaningfully conduct research in tribal societies. This source is also important to those researchers who study societies of similar nature.

**Written document:** Written sources include published documents and unpublished materials. Published materials may include printed documents, archival record, print media, statistics and so on. Unpublished materials may include personal letters, field diaries, field notes, travellers' diaries and so on. Printed documents may be official or unofficial. Official documents include the records of various governmental departments like Parliamentary documents, gazetteer, annual action plan, various Acts and laws and so on. Unofficial documents include auto-biography, books and journals, various pamphlets of non-governmental organizations, hand-outs, posters, personal letters, diaries and so on. Print media is a source of information of socio-economic life and changes of different communities and different places. They provide useful documentation to study public policies, development schemes of tribals and so on. Archival records also provide some information of interest to the researchers in tribal studies and other disciplines in social sciences. The researcher can also conduct field study and prepare his own written records.

**Unwritten documents:** Unwritten sources are very important in providing information to a researcher. It can be visual or audio. However, the following are some of the unwritten sources of data collection.

- **Folklores:** Tribal societies do not have a script and hence no written records. However, they have a treasure house of oral sources which are transmitted from one generation to another. This includes myths, legends, folktales, folk songs, jokes, riddles and performing arts.

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- **Iconographic documents:** Iconographic documents provide valuable information about the time, the techniques and the social environments of the time when they were made. For example, the statues in Konark temple tell us about the tantric tradition and the artistic skill of that time.
- **Photographic and cinematographic documents:** Photography and films are the sources of information about social reality. It is because they reproduce scenes and events of social life which help the researcher to understand the society. Cinema provides an image of the society as a whole or a particular social environment. Photographic documents provide means of communication which the researcher can analyse thoroughly. A satellite image of the earth provides immense sources of material to analyse the resources of the earth.
- **Non-photographic documents:** This includes visual documents of specialists or artists. Some of the documents provide valuable information about the society in which they have been conceived. For example, the painting of Radha by a Rajasthani artist and by an Assamese artist differs in the dresses because artists conceive the image of Radha in their respective social setting. The painting of Radha by the Rajasthani artist is likely to wear a Ghagra while that by an Assamese artist a Meckhla or saree.
- **Phonetic documents:** These include all documents pertaining to communication by sounds. In modern times, they may be recordings of songs, music and speeches. But these phonetics also help in studying the non-literate society. For example, from the vocabulary used in a culture, one can thoroughly study the level of technology of that culture.
- **Objects/material culture:** These include material elements used by human beings. They may consist of pottery, implements, coins, beads, religious and magical objects, objects of games and entertainment or domestic objects like cooking utensils, basketry and clothes.

### Published Sources

In recent years, field study has not been the only source to study the tribes. Tribes have been linked to the market economy. Central and state governments require data on them for proper planning of their development. These data are published for official use and for publicizing the achievements of the government. Census reports provide different types of statistics about population. There are also demographic data on tribes. These data help in understanding sex ratio of tribal population, literacy, occupation, health status, rural-urban variations and so on. A comparison with the previous data of census reports presents the dynamics of tribal demography. Annual Reports of line departments of the government are also published sources. A researcher can gather data on tribes from the publications of Labour Bureau, National Sample Survey Organization, Anthropological Survey of India, National Health Survey, etc. Various treaties, diplomatic records, social records, reports of ILO, UNO and other International Agencies, publications of indigenous and tribal groups also come under published sources.

Published sources are primarily secondary sources and include books on tribal issues, journal articles and so on.

## Unpublished Sources

Unpublished sources include materials such as diaries of administrative officers, travellers' diaries, personal letters, unpublished biographies and autobiographies. Unpublished data may also be available with scholars and research workers, trade associations, labour bureau and other private/public organizations and individuals.

Data available through electronic media (through internet) can be grouped under unpublished materials. The desired data can also be accessed from websites like Google, Yahoo and so on. These data can fall into the category of secondary sources.

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### 3.6 SUMMARY

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In this unit, you have learnt that,

- Research and data are inseparable. Data helps in understanding, analysing, interpreting and solving a research problem.
- Research is a human activity based on intellectual investigation and aimed at discovering, interpreting, and revising human knowledge on different aspects of the world.
- Social science research is carried out with the aim of discovering new facts and verification of the old ones. The academic purpose of social research is the acquisition of knowledge.
- On the basis of nature, data can be quantitative and qualitative. Quantitative data are those which are quantifiable. In other words, they can be expressed in quantitative (numerical) terms.
- Qualitative data, on the other hand, are not quantifiable. They refer to attributes—qualities, characteristics, etc.
- Method and methodology are sometimes used as synonyms, when they are not. Methodology is the study of methods and deals with the philosophical assumptions underlying the research process, while a method is an approach to data collection under those philosophical assumptions.
- Technique is defined as an apparatus or device, either verbal or physical, used to elicit information. It refers to the way one uses a tool to collect data. Tool is the simplest element, an instrument, in research.
- Objectivity in research ordinarily means value-neutrality. In other words, the research shall be free from value judgment, it shall not focus on what should/ought to be; rather it shall focus on what is.
- Researches on tribes try to produce a valid knowledge of tribal culture. But such an exercise is possible only through the scientific approach to research.
- Collection of data is not a haphazard process. It is systematic and hence emphasizes on the rules and procedures. These are known as the techniques of data collection.
- There often arises a confusion between the terms 'sample' and 'sampling'. Sample is simply a part of population, while sampling is the procedure of selecting the sample and knowing about the population on the basis of the sample.
- There are two important methods of sampling, they are:
  - o Non-probability

#### Check Your Progress

11. What is qualitative research?
12. List two advantages of primary sources of data.
13. What is a secondary source of data?
14. What are the risks involved in secondary sources of data?
15. What do unpublished sources of data include?

o Probability

- Probability sampling is one in which every unit of the population has an equal probability of being selected for the sample. In other words, every item in the population has a known chance of being included in the sample.
- Sample error is the difference between the results derived from the sample and the 'true' value of its population. There are no sampling errors in a census survey because the calculations are based on the entire population.
- Non-probability sampling methods are procedures in which the rules of probability theory are not applied in the selection of a sample. Non-probability sampling can be convenient, purposive, quota, snow ball and volunteer samplings.
- Quantitative methods are research methods dealing with numbers and anything that is measurable. They are, therefore, to be distinguished from qualitative methods.
- Qualitative research is an important approach to research methodology in social sciences. The research involves methods of data collection and analysis that are non-quantitative.
- A researcher on social sciences in general and tribal studies in particular collects the primary data to have a better understanding on the community. The researcher collects the information about the people on his own.
- A secondary source is a study written by a scholar about a topic using primary sources and other secondary sources.
- There are risks involved in secondary sources of data at four levels: reliability, suitability, adequacy and accuracy.
- The earliest method of field investigation in social research was observation. Observation is a method that employs vision as its main means of data collection.
- Scientific observation involves three processes: (i) sensation, (ii) attention, and
- (iii) perception.
- Participant observation is a method in which the investigator becomes a part of the situation he is studying.
- Observation method is the most appropriate method when the informants are unable to provide information or are unwilling to give exact information.
- Social research has one fundamental advantage over physical research in the sense that the researcher can talk to his subject, know his feelings and reactions. This technique is known as interview, or personal interview.
- There are different ways of classifying an interview process. On the basis of formality, it can be either formal or informal.

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- Rapport establishment is an essential part of interview method. It creates a friendly atmosphere. As such the interviewee is likely to cooperate more with the interviewer than through questionnaire method.
- Pierre Guillaume Frédéric Le Play is said to have introduced the case study method into social science in 1829. He used it as a handmaiden to statistics in his studies of family budgets.
- The case study design is regarded with disdain because of the investigator's subjectivity in collecting data for supporting or refuting a particular explanation.
- Genealogy is the study and tracing of family pedigrees. It is a well-established method in ethnography. Precisely, the genealogy method is used to study family origins and history.
- In its original form, genealogy was mainly concerned with the ancestry of rulers and nobles, often arguing or demonstrating the legitimacy of claims to wealth and power.
- Participatory methods are non-conventional methods. In conventional methods like interview, observation and questionnaire method, interviewees mostly remain passive. But participatory methods in research are ways to ensure participation.
- Participatory methods have formed into a body of methods called PRA (Participatory Rural Appraisal).
- A focus group, also called 'focused interview' is an interview of a small group of respondents by a trained moderator in an informal way to know the perceptions, opinions and beliefs of the respondents on the research topic.
- Focus group research involves organized discussion with a selected group of individuals to gain information about their views and experiences on a topic.

## NOTES

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### 3.7 KEY TERMS

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- **Research:** It is a human activity based on intellectual investigation and aimed at discovering, interpreting, and revising human knowledge on different aspects of the world.
- **Quantitative data:** They are those data which are quantifiable.
- **Qualitative data:** They are, on the other hand, are not quantifiable.
- **Methodology:** It is the study of methods and deals with the philosophical assumptions underlying the research process, while a method is an approach to data collection under those philosophical assumptions.
- **Technique:** It is defined as an apparatus or device, either verbal or physical, used to elicit information. It refers to the way one uses a tool to collect data.
- **Tool:** It is the simplest element, an instrument, in research.
- **Census survey:** The information collected about each item of the universe is called a census survey.
- **Universe:** It is the totality of observation or items which are of interest to the researcher.
- **Census:** A census is the process of obtaining information about every member/unit of a population.
- **Sample:** A sample is a part or sub-set of the universe selected for the purpose of collecting information.
- **Sampling unit:** It refers to individual items to be studied within the sampling frame.
- **Sampling frame:** It is the list of sampling units of the population from which random sampling is to be drawn.
- **Sample error:** It is the difference between the results derived from the sample and the 'true' value of its population.
- **Case study:** It is defined as a method of exploring and analysing the life of a social unit, called as the subject (or the case) in-depth.

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### 3.8 ANSWERS TO ‘CHECK YOUR PROGRESS’

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1. Research is a human activity based on intellectual investigation and aimed at discovering, interpreting, and revising human knowledge on different aspects of the world.
2. Generally, data can be classified in the following ways:
  - Quantitative and qualitative data
  - Sample and census data
  - Primary and secondary data
3. Methodology is the study of methods and deals with the philosophical assumptions underlying the research process.
4. Objectivity in research ordinarily means value-neutrality. In other words, the research shall be free from value judgment, it shall not focus on what should/ought to be; rather it shall focus on what is.
5. The researcher designs the research work with four main ideas: the strategy; the conceptual framework; the question of why, who and what will be studied; and the tools to be used for collecting and analysing empirical materials.
6. A census is the process of obtaining information about every member/unit of a population.
7. There often arises a confusion between the terms ‘sample’ and ‘sampling’. Sample is simply a part of population, while sampling is the procedure of selecting the sample and knowing about the population on the basis of the sample.
8. Systematic random sampling is a probability sampling procedure wherein the random sampling method is applied to a systematic process of data collection.
9. Sampling errors arise because we do not estimate all items of the population. We only estimate a part of it, i.e. of the sample.
10. A volunteer sampling procedure is a non-probability sampling procedure. In this procedure, the respondent himself volunteers to give information he holds.
11. Qualitative research is an important approach to research methodology in social sciences. The research involves methods of data collection and analysis that are non-quantitative.
12. The advantages of primary sources of data are:
  - Primary source provides data which is original and relevant.
  - This source generates data which may not exist or may not be available for the specific purpose of research.
13. A secondary source is a study written by a scholar about a topic using primary sources and other secondary sources.
14. There are risks involved in secondary sources of data at four levels: reliability, suitability, adequacy and accuracy.

15. Unpublished sources include materials such as diaries of administrative officers, travellers' diaries, personal letters, unpublished biographies and autobiographies.
16. Observation by the observer without actively participating in group activities or becoming a member of the group or community is called non-participant observation.
- 17.
18. C. William Emory defines the interview technique as 'a two-way purposeful conversation initiated by an interviewer to obtain information that is relevant to some research purpose.'
19. There may be a case that does not conform to the existing theory of knowledge. When such a case is studied in detail, it is known as deviant case study.
20. Genealogy is the study and tracing of family lineages. It is a well-established method in ethnography. Precisely, the genealogy method is used to study family origins and history.
21. A focus group, also called 'focused interview' is an interview of a small group of respondents by a trained moderator in an informal way to know the perceptions, opinions and beliefs of the respondents on the research topic.



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## 3.9 QUESTIONS AND EXERCISES

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### Short-Answer Questions

1. Why should data be appropriate, focused, authentic and reliable to conform to the objectives?
2. State the differences between method and methodology.
3. How are the terms methodology, method, technique and tools interdependent in research?
4. 'While conducting a survey, there are two important considerations.' What are they?
5. Give reasons for the preference given to the sample surveys over census surveys.
6. Write short notes on:
  - (i) Simple random sampling
  - (ii) Sampling error
  - (iii) Purposive sampling
7. What are the differences between the quantitative and qualitative methods of research in tribal studies?
8. List the disadvantages of primary sources of data.
9. Name some published sources of data.
10. List the characteristics of the observation method of data collection.
11. What are the considerations to make the interview method effective and objective?
12. Why is the method of case study considered to be better than the other methods of data collection?
13. What is triangulation?
14. What is the role of interviewer in participatory method?

### Long-Answer Questions

1. Discuss the relationship between research and data. Also, discuss the method of planning data collection.
2. Describe some of the major concepts used in research.

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3. What does objectivity in research mean? Also, provide the distinction between objective and subjective researches.
4. Explain the concepts of census and sample surveys.
5. Critically analyse the two methods of sampling: Probability and Non-Probability sampling.
6. Evaluate the quantitative and qualitative methods of research in tribal studies.
7. Assess the primary and secondary sources of data.
8. Discuss the observation and interview method of data collection in field study.
9. Assess the case study and genealogy method of data collection in field study.
10. Explain the participatory and focus group discussion method of data collection in field study.

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## 4.2 FURTHER READING

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Beteille, A. 1975. *Six Essays in Comparative Sociology*. New Delhi: Oxford University Press.

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# NOTES

# **UNIT-IV      TOOLS AND TECHNIQUES IN RESEARCH**

## **STRUCTURE**

- 4.0 Introduction
- 4.1 Unit Objectives
- 4.2 Some Field Methods
  - 4.2.1 Observation
  - 4.2.2 Interview Method
  - 4.2.3 Case Study
  - 4.2.4 Genealogy Method
  - 4.2.5 Participatory Methods
  - 4.2.6 Focus Group Discussion
- 4.3 Summary
- 4.4 Key Terms
- 4.5 Answers to ‘Check Your Progress’
- 4.6 Questions and Exercises
- 4.7 Further Reading

## **4.0      INTRODUCTION**

There are five questions that relate to the topic ‘collection of data’. The answers to these questions form the subject matter of discussion taken up in this unit.

What is data? In simple terms, we can say that data is quantitative and qualitative information. What is the need of collecting data? The answer to this question lies in the role data plays in research work. It speaks of the purpose of data collection. How to collect data? The answer to this question entails the methods and techniques of data collection. Lastly, you can ask, from where does one obtain data? In these questions, the reply is concerned with the sources of data.

Primary significance of collection of data is the purpose it intends to serve. Then follow other aspects of data collection. Data is collected because they help in addressing a research problem. Therefore, Simpson and Kafka (1952) have said, ‘Data have no standing themselves; they have a basis for existence only where there is a problem.’ In this unit, we shall discuss some aspects of collection of data for research.

## **4.1      UNIT OBJECTIVES**

After going through this unit, you will be able to:

- Describe the nature and significance of research and the importance of data in research
- Define concepts like method, methodology, tool and technique, census and sampling as used in research

- Explain the types of sampling
- Distinguish between primary and secondary sources, written and unwritten sources and published and unpublished sources of data
- Distinguish between qualitative and quantitative methods of research
- Assess the various field methods of collecting data for conducting a research

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## 4.2 SOME FIELD METHODS

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In this section we shall discuss some of the methods widely used by the researchers during field study. These methods are quite important in the study of tribes because they capture the qualitative and quantitative aspects of tribal life. These are also known as primary sources of data collection.

### 4.2.1 Observation

The earliest method of field investigation in social research was observation. This is because, fieldwork involves, as DeWalt and DeWalt (2002) points out, ‘active looking, improving memory, informal interviewing, writing detailed field notes, and perhaps most importantly, patience.’

There is no doubt that most of the ethnographers have employed this method while working among the tribes. Observation is a method that employs vision as its main means of data collection. The Concise Oxford Dictionary defines observation as ‘accurate watching and noting the phenomena as they occur with regard to the cause and effect or mutual relations’. It is watching the other person’s behaviour as it actually happens without controlling it. In this method, the required information is obtained directly through observation rather than through the reports of others. It is useful when the questioning method is restricted by some kind of communication problem and the informant’s unwillingness to share information. The behaviour of a child who cannot speak can be studied better using observation.

Observation as a method is not simply watching; it is watching with a purpose. Thus, observation is more than the bare act of observing: To perform observation, a being must observe and seek to add to its knowledge. Observation is also defined as ‘a planned methodical watching that involves constraints to improve accuracy’. It is a systematic field method. Goode and Hatt write, ‘Science begins with observation and must ultimately return to observation for its final validation.’

Frank Hamilton Cushing lived among the Zuni Pueblo people for four and a half years, much before Malinowski, as a participant observer in a study for the Smithsonian Institution’s Bureau of Ethnology during the first part of 1880s. He learned the language, participated in the customs, was adopted by a Pueblo, and was initiated into the priesthood. His case is so far the best known case of fieldwork. But Cushing did not publish his work for which he was criticized as having gone native (DeWalt and DeWalt, 2002).

Scientific observation involves three processes: (i) sensation, (ii) attention, and (iii) perception. Sensation is gained through the sense organs and depends upon the physical alertness of the observer, for he observes with a purpose. Erlandson, Harris,

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Skipper and Allen (1993) maintains that observation enables the researcher to describe the existing situations using the five senses, providing a 'written photograph' of the situation under study. Attention is concerned with concentration and readiness to observe what the investigator wants to observe. Perception is the act of interpreting what is reported by sense organs. Through this process, observation serves the following purposes:

- Studying collective behaviour and complex social situations
- Following up of individual units composing the situations
- Understanding the whole and the parts in their interrelation
- Obtaining detailed information of the situation and information related to it

In other words, observation studies both the group and the individual in the group.

### What does an observer observe?

An observer observes in detail everything the people do and the observer is permitted to observe. The observer can observe the proceedings of *Adi Kebang* (a village council of the Adi tribe) and during the proceeding may observe the following:

- What people discuss, how they discuss, who are the people
- Facial expressions
- Language used, voice modulation
- Patterns of communication, behaviour
- Sitting pattern—is it as per status?
- Status symbol, if any
- Gender dimension and so on

### Characteristics of Observation

Observation as a method is not confined to tribal studies. It is used in other disciplines also. Observation differs from other scientific methods because of its distinct characteristics. Its difference from the other methods is understood by studying its characteristics. They are:

- As you know, observation involves sensation, attention and perception. In other words, it depends upon the physical and mental activity.
- Observation is always direct while other methods could be direct or indirect.
- Field observation takes place in natural settings.
- Observation tends to be less structured.
- It makes only the qualitative (and not the quantitative) study which aims at discovering subjects' experiences and how subjects make sense of them.
- Observation is purposive, not random. The observer goes to the field with certain objectives of study. He may observe everything he is permitted to observe, but he concentrates on those facts in details which fit into his objectives. At the end, observation becomes selective and purposeful.
- Observation needs efficiency. As you know, mere watching is not enough, there must be scientific thinking and use of tools of research which have been properly standardized.

- Observation studies the relationship between cause and effect of social events. Through observation you can know the reason behind many practices or happenings which exists in the society.
- In this method, the observer first observes the things and then collects data.

### Aids in Field Observation

Tribal communities are not static as was considered in earlier researches. It is dynamic and is exposed to various forces. In most of the cases it is a part of society of the nation with its distinct characteristics. Therefore, the observer has to employ a wide range of tools to capture the ground reality objectively. We shall discuss here some of the tools which help in field observation. P. V. Young, Willim J. Goode and Paul K. Hatt have called these tools as 'Aids' in observation. Goode and Hatt emphasize that an observer 'must self-consciously apply a range of tools for systematizing and recording the data' keeping in view the 'the research problem itself'. The following are some of the aids in field observation:

- **Field experience log:** This may take the form of field notebook, or a diary, or it may be a daily record of each item written under appropriate headings and sub-headings. The observer may not carry his diary or record book to the field. But he must always keep a notebook for writing notes. These notes need to be compiled in the diary or record book daily at the end of the day, for memory may betray when one sits to read the notes after several weeks. The investigator may find it useful to record both observation and interpretation of the observation during the field work.
- **Cameras and photographs:** These are essential in field research. Photographs are used at a later stage to supplement interpretation. P. V. Young writes, 'Photographs tend to present accurately a mass of detail which is apt to escape the human reporter. The photographic "eye" views with authenticity and impartiality. It has not preconceived notions and selective interests.'
- **Voice recorder:** It is profitable for an observer to keep permanent record of various sounds of a phenomenon with the help of a tape recorder. Recording helps collect more detailed information at the time of observation than would be possible by an observer working alone. Sounds so recorded help in an in-depth analysis at a later stage.
- **Maps:** A map is a very important tool in field research. Its utility is not limited to the graphic presentation of facts, but these help in locating problems, verifying hypothesis, analysing data and discovering hidden facts and relationships. P. V. Young writes, 'Maps are in some respects much like photographs, since they also give "pictures" of various situations. Maps and particularly social base maps are more highly selective than photographs, since they give just those spatial relations upon which one wants to concentrate.' By using different base maps the data can be reflected against a variety of social backgrounds. Moreover, the social base maps, showing the relation of typological aspects of a community to its social organization will call for further investigation which perhaps would not have come to light otherwise.
- **Detailed observation plan:** Before field study, the observer should prepare a detailed plan of observation, which is often called 'observation design'. This will be the important tool to guide the investigator for precision and focus on relevant

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aspects to be observed. In the plan, the necessity of training the investigator, tools to be used, aspects to be studied, place where study is to be conducted and time required, shall be considered.

- **Observation schedules:** To facilitate observation in the field, the researcher may make use of observation schedule. Observation schedule is a device used by an observer to systematically record observations. It is similar to interview schedule except that it employs observations instead of verbal questions. Questions in the observation schedule are answered not by talk but by observations. This helps the observer not to feel lost in a sea of data.

Use of observation schedule helps objectify the observation of complex situations. P. V. Young asserts that an observation schedule, 'aids in standardizing the recording of observed phenomena; it isolates individual elements, and thus facilitates concentration and measurement.'

Preparation of schedule is a task at the planning stage. However, an outline is prepared with the scope to revise it in the field. Goode and Hatt suggest that the schedule will be:

... drawn up in outline before the beginning of the work, and will be revised in the field. Often, these will contain such basis organizing data as age, sex, and numbers of individuals; occupational structure; religion; income; hierarchy of power; family pattern; etc. Even when these items are not the principal focus of the research, they will be essential for any description of the group, community, or organization.

'The construction of observation schedules involves many procedural difficulties. The schedule must be so devised as to provide an optimum of verifiable, quantifiable data and to avoid selective bias and misinterpretation of observed behaviour. The units of observation must be simple, minute, and meticulously worded, if they are to lend themselves to precise and uniform recording by several observers at different times'. – P. V. Young

- **Checklist:** The observer has to prepare a check list of topics to be observed, tools to be used, and other details. He uses it to ensure that the observer looks every bit of evidence that he has previously determined as essential. It should be prepared in advance before observation, but should include a blank space for recording phenomena that were not anticipated while formulating the problem and deciding upon the topic.
- **Socio-metric scales:** Use of socio-metric scales quantify the observation and thus objectify the study. Random House Kernerman Webster's College Dictionary defines sociometry as 'a measurement of attitudes of acceptance or rejection through expressed preferences among members of social groupings'. The scales are used in social research to measure a wide range of social factors, such as attitudes, morale, status and home environment. The anthropologists also use it in field research to study the ethnic relationship and the way individuals identify with ethnic groups. For instance using sociometric scale James Page (1988-89) investigated intra-ethnic and inter-ethnic identification in Malaita province of Solomon Islands in the Pacific. In tribal studies this can be profitably used to study the attitude, morale, home environment, socializing process of tribal children and identity assertion of the tribal people.



## Types of Observation

Before going to the field for observation, the observer plans his observational study. While planning he decides upon the way he will observe the phenomenon and record the information. He may also decide upon his role: whether to take active participation or watch the events passively. In other words he will decide upon the type of observation he will apply. These are important types of observation. In early stages of tribal studies, usually participant observation was considered to be most useful. However, non-participant observation was also widely used. In recent years, along with these two methods controlled observation is also gaining importance to study some events.

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- (i) **Participant Observation:** It is a method in which the investigator becomes a part of the situation he is studying. H. R. Bernard (2002) writes, 'Many phenomenologist's see objective knowledge as the goal of participant observation'. Danny Jorgensen, for example, advocates complete immersion and *becoming the phenomenon* you study. 'Becoming the phenomenon' Jorgensen says, 'is participant observational strategy for penetrating to and gaining experience of a form of human life. It is an objective approach insofar as it results in the accurate, detailed description of the insiders' experience of life' (1989:63). 'In fact, many ethnographers have become cab drivers or exotic dancers... in order to do participant observation fieldwork.'

Observation method is the foundation of research in tribal studies. It involves establishing rapport in a new community, learning to act so that people go about their business as usual when you show up; and removing yourself from cultural immersion so that you can intellectualize what you have learned, put it into perspective, and write about it convincingly. For instance, the observer may participate in the activities of the people going for collection of vegetables or trapping animals or fishing in the river. This does not mean that he will merely accompany the people, but he will collect the vegetables, make the traps and place them as the trapper does, and do the fishing. He can actively participate in the agricultural activities or in festivals. Malinowski studied Trobriand Islanders by applying participant observation. In India, M. N. Srinivas had used this method in studying the process of 'Sanskritization' in Mysore.

P. V. Young writes, 'The participant observer shares, to lesser or greater degree, the life of the observed group. This sharing may be intermittent but active contacts at close proximity afford intimate study of persons'. However, the degree of participation depends upon the nature of study.

Participant observation ethnography relies on a few key informants rather than on a representative sample.-Bernard, H.R.

In all cases, an observer cannot be a genuine participant in many activities in which tribal people believe as taboos. He cannot be a genuine member in some of the institutions like boys' or girls' 'dormitories'. He cannot be a genuine member of a particular clan institution that may be hostile to other clan institutions of the village.

- (ii) **Non-participant Observation:** Observation by the observer without actively participating in group activities or becoming a member of the group or community is called non-participant observation. In this the observer remains detached and does not participate or intervene in the activities of those who are being observed. He merely observes their behaviour. The observer may go with the people to the

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agricultural fields, but only watch them working as an onlooker without participating in their works. In this method, the observer may not reveal his real purpose. The informants are not aware of the fact that their particular activities are observed by somebody. Hence, the observer goes in disguise, stating a different purpose, so that the behaviour of the informants is not influenced by their knowledge that they are being observed. However, there lies an ethical question in this kind of observation.

Purely non-participant observation is extremely difficult. It is most likely to make both the observer and the group uncomfortable. The observer actively participates in some of the ordinary activities while remains only a distant observer in others. A non-participant observation is, therefore, in practice only a **quasi-participant observation**.

**(iii) Non-controlled Observation:** When the observation is made in the natural settings and the activities are performed in their usual course without being influenced or guided by any external force it is known as non-controlled or natural observation. In the words of Goode and Hatt, 'Most of the knowledge which people have about social relations is derived from uncontrolled observation, whether participant or non-participant.' In this observation the observer visits the places of occurrences of phenomena in order to observe, no matter whether the observer uses participant or non-participant observation. P. V. Young emphasizing participant observation writes that many observers 'must of necessity identify themselves closely with the groups studied because the subject matter is so novel that it needs intensive study under close proximity.'

**(iv) Controlled Observation:** Non-controlled observation is generally not very reliable because observation itself may be biased and there is no check upon it. Various observers may observe the same thing but may draw different conclusions. That is why controlled observation techniques have been developed.

Controlled observation affords greater precision and objectivity and can be repeatedly observed under identical circumstances. The main aim of a controlled observation is, thus, to check any bias due to faulty perception, inaccurate data and influence of outside factors on the particular incident. In this the control is exercised: (i) over the phenomena and (ii) over the observation or observer.

To understand the reaction of tribal people to a new development scheme, the observer may discuss it with different groups and individuals separately. In this the phenomenon is put under the guided conditions. Since social research deals with social phenomena it is not easy to put it in a laboratory or under controlled conditions fully. In our example, the first person with whom the scheme was discussed may convey it to the others. Therefore, the reaction of the later persons to be studied may be different from the first one.

As the event cannot be fully guided or controlled, it is possible to exercise control over the observer only. Goode and Hatt remark that it is difficult for the observer 'to control the *object* under investigation, he must at least put control *on himself*'. In this sense, the observation schedule, maps, checklist, etc. are controls over the observer.

**(v) Structured Observation:** One of the most profitable bases of classification of observational procedure is the degree of structuredness. Accordingly, observation may be structured or unstructured.

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Structured observation is organized and planned. It employs formal procedures, and is subjected to high levels of control and differentiation. It has a set of well-defined observation categories for systematic study. The units to be observed are carefully defined. The conditions of observation are standardized. This observation is used mostly in studies designed to provide systematic observation or to test casual hypothesis. Its use and construction presupposes the observer's knowledge in all aspects of the situation under study. Structured observation may take place in the natural field setting or in laboratory setting.

- (vi) **Unstructured Observation:** On the other hand, observation method can also be unstructured. Unstructured observation is loosely organized and the process is largely left to the observer to define. Unstructured observation is mostly used as an exploratory technique. As the observer experiences the situation, his understanding is likely to change. This, in turn, may call for changes in what he observes. Such a shift in focus according to the demand of the situation is a characteristic of unstructured observation. Obviously, unstructured observation is flexible.

In practice, both structured and unstructured observations may be used for better results. Therefore, the focus should not be on the distinction between the structured and unstructured observations. It should be on the degree of structuredness so that the scope of observation is wide.

### **Advantages of Observation Method**

Observation method is widely used in social research. It is a popular method of study because of certain advantages that it has. The advantages and merits of this method are enumerated below:

- Observation method is the most appropriate method when the informants are unable to provide information or are unwilling to give exact information.
- This method is useful for formulating **hypothesis**. Through observation the researcher is able to know about the sequence and causes and effect relationship. It is this sequence and the cause and effect relationship that forms the basis of hypothesis.
- It is a direct method in which the researcher himself collects data. Many other methods are indirect and so the researcher has no agency to check and test their validity. Observation gives ample scope to check the validity of data.

### **Disadvantages of Observation Method**

Observation is an important method of social research. Although this method is widely used in social research and has its importance but it suffers from certain drawbacks. Its limitations may be listed as below:

- It is not possible to study every phenomenon. It means that the phenomenon in a social research is generally a human phenomenon and the people involved may not agree to be observed.
- The method is not suitable for large scale extensive studies.
- Many of the social events that form a part of social phenomena are uncertain as far as their occurrence is concerned. The observer cannot predict when the events occur. Some events may not occur during his field study also.

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- Many social problems particularly those of abstract nature cannot be observed through observation method.
- Observation is likely to become faulty if the subject of study becomes conscious that he is being observed.
- Personal bias and the prejudices of the observer also make the observation faulty.

Observation is a popular method in the field of scientific study. It has limitations, but in spite of these limitations it is scientific and rightly can be called the classical method of scientific enquiry.

### 4.2.2 Interview Method

Social research has one fundamental advantage over physical research in the sense that the researcher can talk to his subject, know his feelings and reactions. This technique is known as interview, or personal interview. It is a direct method of enquiry and employs the verbal method of collecting data, especially in the field research connected with social problems. The interviewer in a one-to-one conversation collects detailed personal information from individuals using oral questions. We get both quantitative and qualitative data from this method as per the nature and objectives of the research.

C. William Emory defines the interview technique as ‘a two-way purposeful conversation initiated by an interviewer to obtain information that is relevant to some research purpose.’ According to Pauline Young, ‘interview may be regarded as a systematic method by which a person enters more or less imaginatively into the life of a comparative stranger.’ During an interview the past incidences, feelings and reactions are recalled by the subject in front of the interviewer. The interviewer listens to the subject with a scientific approach, always ready to find sequences of fundamental traits of human behaviour, underlying universal laws, guiding and motivating human actions and reactions. The researcher tries to penetrate deeply into the circumstances being narrated by the subject and realize the full significance of the feelings being expressed by him.

Interview is thus defined as ‘a conversation with a purpose’. The conversation is focussed by the content specified by the research objectives of description and explanation. The information revealed during the interview provides insight into the nature of social reality. It provides insight into the unexplored dimensions of the problem.

### Characteristics of Interview Method

The characteristics of interview method are as follows:

- Interview can be direct—face-to-face, or indirect—over phone or internet.
- It is a conversation with a purpose. The conversation is initiated by the interviewer for the specific purpose of obtaining research-relevant information.
- The conversation is focused in consistent with the objectives of research. Interview is a two-way process. It involves the interviewer asking questions to the interviewee (s) to get answers. The interviewee mostly answers the questions and also asks certain questions which the interviewer replies.
- The interview is mostly oral, though the gestures, glances, facial expressions, pauses, and modulation of voice mean a lot. It provides insight into the process of interview and information. Goode and Hatt, therefore, remark that interviewing is fundamentally a process of social interaction.
- An interview is planned before the actual interview takes place.

- Proper time and place of interview plays an important role in obtaining reliable data.
- Interview is non-experimental in design.

### **Considerations to Make the Interview Effective and Objective**

Interview has a purpose and it seeks scientific information. Obviously, it demands pre-planning, a definite attitude and behaviour and the quality of the interviewer. Here are some considerations to be kept in mind.

- Interview is not a mere conversation. It includes observation and knowing things about the person interviewed. It is, therefore, necessary that before the actual interview takes place, it should be properly arranged and planned.
- It is necessary for reliable collection of data that the interview should take place at a proper time and place.
- Rapport establishment is the most important element in interview process. This helps the interviewer to get valid data. In order to establish a good rapport, the interviewer should consider the following:
  - The interviewer must be introduced to the interviewee.
  - He should explain the objective of the interview to the interviewees. This helps remove his misgivings if any with respect to the research.
  - In the beginning of any interview, generally the respondent is very cautious and comes only with the formal information. The researcher has to be tactful and should create a friendly atmosphere.
  - He must build up the confidence of the interviewee. One of the ways is to ensure confidentiality of identity of the interviewee. He should ensure that the data collected will be used for academic purpose only.
  - He should sound interested in listening to what the respondent is telling. This would create confidence in the respondent and encourage him to come out with the required information.
- Interviewer must be a patient listener. Sometimes it so happens that the respondent after narrating a particular thing becomes silent. The researcher like a patient listener should keep quiet and let the respondent begin again. He can also help the respondent recall the things correctly.
- The beginning of the interview is quite important and so is the closing. The interviewer should not close the interview abruptly or in a manner that the respondent should feel that because the job has been done, therefore the researcher does not bother about him. The closing of interview should be natural. The respondent should not fear that he has outspoken too many of his secrets to a stranger. He should in no way feel threatened and insecure.
- Training of the interviewer is very important. The interviewer should be well acquainted with various interviewing processes and techniques. The interviewer should conduct a pilot survey, i.e. a preliminary practice of the interview plan and questions. By carrying out a pilot survey, the interviewer can check the accuracy and reliability that could be obtained from the interview. A preliminary practice or rehearsal will make the interviewer confident and focused.

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### Types of Interview

There are different ways of classifying an interview process. On the basis of formality, it can be either formal or informal. In a formal interview, questions are standardized unlike in an informal interview. The interviewer is allowed to make suitable changes in the question to suit a context. It can either be an individual or group interview depending on the number of persons to be interviewed at a time. On the basis of the nature of data to be collected, the interview can be qualitative or quantitative interview. Quantitative and qualitative data are obtained depending on the structure of the interview questions. Accordingly, we can have structured or unstructured interview. If we combine qualitative or quantitative methods, we get mixed interview or semi-structured interview.

**1. Unstructured Interview:** It is known as uncontrolled, unguided or undirected interview. No direct or predetermined questions are used in this type of interview. It is generally held in the form of free discussion or story type of narrative. In this there are no specifications in the wording of questions or the order of questions. The interviewer forms questions as and when required. In other words, in unstructured interview, the questions are unplanned and spontaneous. Spontaneous questioning is more responsive to participant, but it does not allow for generalization like the planned questions. Clearly, the structure of questions in an unstructured interview is flexible, being presented in the form of a guide. Usually we get qualitative information from unstructured interview. Precisely, in this interview, the interviewer has:

- Only the general nature of questions in mind
- No prior indication of the specific issues on which the questions are to be asked
- No specific and ordered sequence of questions in mind
- No time-limit for conducting the interview

The biggest advantage of this type of interview is that the questions are asked spontaneously, there is greater possibility of exploring in an unrestricted manner. However, it has few limitations too. With no systematic control over asking questions, the reliability of data becomes doubtful.

**2. Structured Interview:** It is also known as controlled, guided or directed interview. In this kind of interview a complete schedule is used. The interviewer is asked to obtain answers to those questions only. He generally does not add anything from his own side. The language too is unchanged. He can only interpret or amplify the statement wherever necessary.

The structured interview is based on the structured interview guide. Interview guide is a set of specific points and definite questions prepared by the interviewer. Structuredness determines the degree of quantitative data. The more structured or standardized the interview is, the more is the extent of getting quantitative data. Structuredness is standardization of questions. Standardization increases the reliability of the information and research findings. Structured interview allows little freedom to make adjustments to any of its element, such as content, wording, or order of questions. In this kind of interview, all dimensions, i.e., specifying the setting of the interview, regulating questions and range of responses, limiting the facet of the problem, are regulated.

**3. Semi-structured Interview:** Somewhere between the structured and unstructured interview, there exists **semi-structured interview**. It has characteristics of both. This method is used for both quantitative and qualitative research.

*Table 5.3 Comparison of Types of Interview*

| Types of interviews | Advantages   | Disadvantages  |
|---------------------|--|--|
| Structured          | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Provides quantifiable data</li> <li>• Replication</li> <li>• Degree of reliability is more</li> <li>• Possibility of generalization</li> </ul>  | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Planned questions are restrictive, so answers are also restrictive</li> <li>• Less scope for the interviewee to open up beyond planned questions</li> <li>• Questions are not flexible to deal with the changing context</li> </ul> |
| Unstructured        | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Questions are spontaneous, hence flexible, responsive and sensible to participants</li> <li>• Informal element is more, so the atmosphere of interview becomes relaxed and natural</li> <li>• Provides qualitative data</li> </ul>                                      | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Difficult to replicate</li> <li>• Generalization for a wider population is not possible</li> <li>• Interviewer bias may be reflected in open and spontaneous questions</li> </ul>   |
| Semi-structured     | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Includes standardized questions which can generate quantifiable data</li> <li>• Replication</li> <li>• More reliable than unstructured interview</li> <li>• The possibility of spontaneous questions makes the interview responsive, flexible to some degree</li> </ul> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Answers to spontaneous question are not quantifiable</li> <li>• Spontaneous questions may reflect interviewer's bias</li> </ul>   |

**4. Individual or Group Interviews:** Some scholars make the distinction between the individual and group interviews. Individual interview is one in which the interviewer interviews only one interviewee at a time. But in a group interview, the interviewer interviews more than one interviewee simultaneously. The individual interview (also called personal interview) helps establish close contact between the interviewer and the interviewee. As a result, detailed knowledge about intimate personal aspects of the individual can be obtained. Group interview suits to collect routine information which may not reflect in a personal interview.

When the entire interview has been completed, one important question that emerges is how far the narrative and generalization drawn from it are valid from the research point of view. In order to achieve validity, the researcher should carefully try to avoid any bias being introduced. Even after the interview has taken place, it requires thorough screening and editing. Invalid parts have to be discarded.

### Advantages of the Interview Method

Interview method has its merits and demerits too. It is a popular method and has its score over other methods when nature and purpose of the research is concerned. The following are some advantages of this method:

- Through interview we can gather information on topics which are not open to observation. Some events may not happen during the time of observation. Such information can be obtained from the method of interview. Thus, through the interview method it is possible to study the phenomena with the historical background.
- Face-to-face interview uses schedules and the interviewer himself interviews the interviewees. He can explain the questions to the interviewee. In case of

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questionnaire method questions are sent to respondents/interviewees who may not be interested to return the questions. They may not sometimes understand the questions in the right sense.

- It is the best method for getting information about inner feelings, emotions and sentiments.
- It is applicable to a situation where interviewees are not able to read and write. On this account it also scores over the questionnaire method. Moreover, people feel convenient to speak than to write on different topics. It is very useful in tribal studies as many villagers may not be acquainted with the words and concepts and the meaning they imply.
- Face-to-face contact helps minimize interviewees' bias. The interviewer removes the doubt if any and understands many things from the body language of the interviewee.
- Rapport establishment is an essential part of interview method. It creates a friendly atmosphere. As such the interviewee is likely to cooperate more with the interviewer than through questionnaire method. The face-to-face contact brings more cordiality than contact through sending questionnaires by post or through persons other than the researcher. In tribal areas, the questionnaire method has its own limitation because of less postal service and most of the interviewees may not know how to read and write.
- The interviewer can interview a number of persons as per requirement. But in case of the questionnaire method the researcher may not get the required responses as all interviewees may not return filled in questionnaires.

### Disadvantages

The interview method is also not free from limitations. Some of its limitations are as follows:

- The method is too much dependent on the memory of respondent.
- In this method there is no check upon the interviewee. The interviewee narrates stories and the interviewer has to listen to them. Every detail is not useful. If the interviewer is not able to remove irrelevant details, data is likely to become doubtful.
- There is a possibility of the influence of bias and the prejudices.
- It is not economical.
- Interviewer may not find his sample interviewee because of 'non-availability' or 'not at home'.

Nevertheless, the interview method is useful for the study of social phenomenon which is abstract and complex in much respect. Through this method the researcher has a greater opportunity to appraise the accuracy and validity of replies.

### 4.2.3 Case Study

Pierre Guillaume Frédéric Le Play is said to have introduced the case study method into social science in 1829. He used it as a handmaiden to statistics in his studies of family budgets. But this method has been popular in social science disciplines like psychology, sociology and anthropology. Case study is defined as a method of exploring and analysing the life of a social unit, called as the subject (or the case) in-depth. Therefore, Carla Willig (2008) asserts that case studies 'are not characterized by the methods used to



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collect and analyse data, but rather its focus on a particular unit of analysis: a case.’ The case may be an individual, organization, event, action, a family, an institution, cultural group, a process, an episode, a community or any other unit of social life existing in a specific time and place. It is useful to understand what a unit means in a case study. In this context Robert E. Stake (2005) gives an example. He writes, ‘A doctor may be a case. But his or her doctoring probably lacks the specificity, the boundedness to be a case.’ The point which is important is that the topic of the case can be an individual, but not the means by which the individual engages in a particular practice.

Yin (2009) defines case study as an ‘empirical inquiry about a contemporary phenomenon (e.g., a ‘case’), set within its real-world context—especially when the boundaries between phenomenon and context are not clearly evident’. For P. V. Young, case study is a ‘comprehensive study of a social unit—be that unit a person, a group, a social institution, a district, or a community’. To Goode and Hatt, case study is ‘a way of organizing social data so as to preserve the unitary character of the social object being studied.’

From the above definitions we can outline the following characteristics of case study:

- The case study method involves the study of a unit in detail, both horizontally and longitudinally. In other words, case study is an intensive or in-depth study of the unit. In the words of Goode and Hatt, the case study is ‘an approach which views any social unit as a whole’. As the unit is studied intensively by examining the context and other complex aspects related to the case, a wide range of topics to be covered is produced by any given case study.
- It usually deals with the knowledge of behavioural pattern—what and why—of the subject.
- The method is non-experimental because the researcher has no control over the unit under investigation.
- The relevant data is likely to come from multiple and not singular sources of evidence.

### Types of Case study

The case study method is of three types. These are as follows:

- **Single case study:** Here, only a single case is studied. The single case study is sometimes used to test a theory. The case study may be either exploratory or descriptive or explanatory.
- **Deviant case study:** There may be a case that does not conform to the existing theory of knowledge. When such a case is studied in detail, it is known as deviant case study. The researcher tries to explore the reasons of difference.
- **Multiple/comparative case study:** The study of two or more cases is called multiple or comparative case study. If the purpose is to test a theory, then the researcher gets more than a case to test it.

### Steps in Case study

The case study follows the following four important steps:

- **Choice of case:** The first step in the case study method involves a choice of the unit. The researcher has to decide the unit to be taken up for the study. Depending

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upon the nature and objective of research he has to choose the unit as an individual or a group of individuals, an institution or a group of institutions. Then he selects the unit to be studied if there are many such units.

- **Collection of data:** The second step of this method involves collection of data using different tools and techniques. The researcher may use different tools and techniques for the different aspects to be studied.
- **Analysis of data:** Data collected has to be classified and analysed for interpretation. Analytical tools like ratio and percentage or advanced ones like variation may be used whenever necessary. Analysis can be descriptive like ethnographic studies.
- **Interpretation and reporting of data:** After analysis data is interpreted. Relations among aspects may be established. Cause and effect relations may be explained. But while interpreting the presentation shall be logically consistent. The interpreted data are finally presented in a report/thesis form.

### When to use the case study method

Case study as a method has its own logic of use. This logic concerns three situations where the use of case study is profitable. The first situation is the one where choice of a method is determined on the basis of overall advantage of the method. It depends on the kind of research question that a study is trying to address. When research question is *descriptive* or *explanatory*, the case study method has a score over other methods. Other methods may not provide the rich descriptions or the insightful explanations that might arise from applying the case study method.

The second situation demands its application when the research proposes the study of a unit in natural settings. Case study provides original data which is qualitatively rich than derived data obtained from the use of other methods. Even observation method cannot be handy to capture some aspects which are not allowed by the interviewer for observation. As case study uses various instruments, it has greater scope to study more aspects relating to the unit in greater detail.

The third situation is a recent need of evaluating government programmes and schemes. Scholars and NGO activities commonly use this method for evaluation studies.

We apply case study method under three situations. But what benefit does it give? In other words, what benefit does the researcher get by using the case study method under the three situations? Precisely, what is his objective of employing the case study method? The researcher employs the case study method:

- To get intimate and detailed information about the structure, process and complexity of the research problem
- To formulate hypothesis
- To expand quantitative findings
- To test the feasibility of the quantitative study
- To refute a universal generalization
- To use the case study as a unique, typical and an interesting case in its own right

A single case can represent a significant contribution to theory building and assist in focusing the direction of future investigation in the area.

## Designing Case Studies

Yin (2009) identified five components of research design that are important for case studies:

- A study's questions
- Its propositions, if any
- Its unit(s) of analysis
- Logic linking the data to the propositions
- Criteria for interpreting the findings

The **study's questions** are most likely to be 'how' and 'why' questions, and their definitions is the first task of the researcher. While developing the study's questions the researcher has to decide whether to use 'theory' or not. The study's **propositions** sometimes derive from the 'how' and 'why' questions, and are helpful in focusing the study's goals. Not all studies need to have propositions. An exploratory study, rather than having propositions, would have a stated purpose or criteria on which the success will be judged. The **unit of analysis** defines what the case is. This could be groups, organizations or countries, but it is the primary unit of analysis. Here, the researcher has to consider the selection of a single or a multiple of cases. **Linking the data to propositions** and the **criteria for interpreting the findings** are important components of case study for its validity and reliability. However, these components are, according to Yin, the least developed aspects in case studies.

### Sources of Evidence

Case study does not depend upon any single source of data. Stake (1995), and Yin (2009) identified at least six sources of evidence in case studies. These are as follows:

- 1. Documents:** Documentary sources consist of letters, memoranda, agendas, administrative documents, newspaper articles, or any document that is germane to the investigation.
- 2. Archival records:** Archival documents can be service records, organizational records, list of names, survey data, and other such records. The investigator has to be careful in evaluating the accuracy of the records before using them. Even if the records are quantitative, they might still not be accurate.
- 3. Interviews:** Interviews are one of the most important sources of case study information. There are several forms of interviews that are possible: Open-ended, focused, and structured or survey. In an open-ended interview, key respondents are asked to comment about certain events.

The focused interview is used in a situation where the respondent is interviewed for a short period of time, usually answering set questions. This technique is often used to confirm data collected from another source.

The structured interview is similar to a survey, and is used to gather data in cases such as neighbourhood studies. The questions are detailed and developed in advance, much as they are in a structured interview.

- 4. Direct observation:** Direct observation occurs when a field visit is conducted during the case study and the researcher focuses on human actions, physical environments, or real world events. It could be as simple as casual data collection activities, or formal protocols to measure and record behaviours. This technique is useful for providing additional information about the topic being studied.

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**5. Participant-observation:** Participant-observation makes the researcher an active participant in the events being studied. This often occurs in studies of neighbourhoods or groups.

**6. Physical artefacts:** Physical artefacts can be tools, instruments, or some other physical evidence that may be collected during the study as part of a field visit.

### Disadvantages of Case Study Method

The case study method has been criticized on the basis of following limitations:

- The case study design is regarded with disdain because of the investigator's subjectivity in collecting data for supporting or refuting a particular explanation. Case study requires rapport building. The more the rapport, the more subjective will be the entire process of study rather than factual.
- Case study provides little evidence for inferences and generalizing theory.
- It is difficult to establish reliability in case study.
- One more argument against case study is that it has no representativeness, i.e., each case studied does not represent other similar cases.
- There are new developments in social science researches which provide better information than the researcher obtains from case study. According to Goode and Hatt, 'modern social research has attempted gradually to systematize and make precise the various special "qualitative" techniques which were once thought to be exclusive characteristics of the case study approach.'
- Herbert Blumer, as quoted by Young, is of the opinion that the case study method is not in itself a scientific method, but a first step in scientific procedure.

### Advantages of Case Study method

The various criticisms levelled against the use of case study method have not discouraged social scientists to drop the method as unscientific, unsystematic and unfit for valid generalizations. On the other hand, they have made determined efforts to put the method on more scientific lines. The social scientists have adopted improved techniques of collecting, recording and processing the case study.

The method is still profitably used for the intensive study of subjective aspects and deviant cases. It widens the range of personal experiences and provides scope for further research.

#### 4.2.4 Genealogy method

Genealogy is the study and tracing of family pedigrees. It is a well-established method in ethnography. Precisely, the genealogy method is used to study family origins and history. This method was used by early ethnographers to identify kinship relations as determined by marriage and descent. Hence, it involves the collection of the names of relatives, both living and deceased, and establishing the relationships among them based on primary, secondary and/or circumstantial evidence or documentation. Genealogists, therefore, use oral interviews, historical records, and other records, and recently genetic analysis, to obtain information. By collecting information from these sources, they build up a cohesive family tree.

The word genealogy comes from two Greek words; *genea*, meaning ‘generation’ and *logos*, meaning knowledge. Thus, the method means ‘to trace the ancestry’ and therefore, it is the science of studying family history.

The pedigree of the Japanese emperors has a divine origin which is easily recited and memorized. This pedigree is mainly a chain of names mixed with semi-fabulous legends which was first written down in the early centuries of the Common Era.

Genealogy is often also referred to as family history, although these terms may be used distinctly: the former being the basic study of who is related to whom; the latter involving more ‘fleshing out’ of the lives and personal histories of the individuals involved.

With the advent of the Internet, the number of resources available to genealogists has vastly increased. However, some of these sources must be treated with caution due to issues of accuracy. The classes of information that genealogists seek include: place names, occupations, family names, first names, and dates. Genealogists need to understand such items in their historical context in order to properly evaluate genealogical sources. Genealogists collect oral histories and preserve family stories to discover ancestors and living relatives. Genealogists also attempt to understand not just where and when people lived but also their lifestyle, biography, and motivations. This often requires or leads to knowledge of antique law, old political boundaries, immigration trends, and historical social conditions.

The history of genealogy method can be traced through three stages. The first one is oral tradition, the second one is written document in some cases and the third one is the efforts of Europeans approximately around 1500 and thereafter to trace their ancestry. No doubt, the genealogy method draws on primary sources of data. These include oral tradition, records made at the time of an event, say birth or death certificate. In some groups of people there is a tradition of keeping records of family history. In Arunachal Pradesh, the Galo people have the rich tradition of tracing their origin from the mythical ancestor Tani. In fact, all groups of Tani tribe follow the tradition of tracing their origin from Tani. The Khamptis maintain *cheteiu*, a family history that could be explored to prepare the genealogical tree of many families.

Genealogical study became important among the settlers of New Zealand, USA and Canada as they took interest in linking their ancestry with their European families. Therefore, it is not a surprise when George Washington’s ancestry was traced to old English landed families. In USA, Canada, Denmark, New Zealand and Australia there are societies to study genealogy. The New England Historic Society in USA, International Confederation of Genealogy and Heraldry in Denmark are some examples.

In its original form, genealogy was mainly concerned with the ancestry of rulers and nobles, often arguing or demonstrating the legitimacy of claims to wealth and power. Genealogy, as a popular hobby, received a big boost in the late 1970s after the telecast of *Roots: The Saga of an American Family* by Alex Haley. It contained Haley’s account of his family line.

In China, with its ancient system of ancestor worship, long, drawn-out pedigrees including claims to descent from Confucius are not unknown.

Information (or evidence) found in historical or genealogical sources can be unreliable and it is a good practice to evaluate all the sources with a critical eye. Factors influencing the reliability of genealogical information include: the knowledge of the informant (or writer); the bias and mental state of the informant (or writer); the passage of time and the potential for copying and compiling errors.

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### 4.2.5 Participatory Methods

Participatory methods are non-conventional methods. In conventional methods like interview, observation and questionnaire method, interviewees mostly remain passive. But participatory methods in research are ways to ensure participation. The question arises: *Why participation, who to participate with and where to participate?* Obviously, the participation shall be in the process of conducting research and thus participation does not merely mean involvement in one stage or the other; it means participation in the entire research process. This takes care of the question *where to participate*.

Now the question is *who to participate with*. If we see, it is always the researcher who designs the research, collects data directly or through his investigators, analyses, interprets, draws conclusions and produces a research piece. The researchers and the investigators are external agents. They are called subjects. The objects, on the other hand, are people/respondents from whom data is collected. In fact, the research is about them (object), for it is their information which gives the 'subject' to learn. But the subject finally 'claims' ownership of 'knowledge' because of his research. The objects, however, remain passive and respond to the subject's requirements. As the knowledge belongs to the people, and the research is about them, it is but fair to think that they should participate in the research process. This roughly answers to *why* and *who to participate with*. However, this is not possible through conventional research methods of survey type by using questionnaires and schedules to collect data.

In conventional researches the researchers usually give importance to the male voices and among male population to the voices of the elites. Therefore, in conventional methods the understanding of the social reality happens partially. For example, when Annette Weiner (1976-77) re-studied Trobriand Islanders, she found that what Malinowski depicted to be true for the entire Trobriand society was only true for the world of men.

In development understanding, now, the focus is on people-centred development. It means people are at the centre of development unlike earlier times. In earlier times, the notion of development happened to be at the centre and people at the periphery. Planners and administrators were the one who thought of people's development and implemented development programmes. As a result, a section of people were deprived of the participation in their own development. In the new development process, people's role has been recognized in the process of their development. In other words, the voices of marginalized and local people, such as the tribal community, assumed importance in recent years. But these voices could not be rightly captured through conventional methods of research. The search for a new method evolved and we have what is called participatory methods. These methods have enabled participatory researches.

As Partha Nath Mukherji writes, 'Participatory research is thus a *process*, specifically directed towards ameliorative or transformative change/development in the conditions of life and living of the group/population, who themselves are participants in the research process.' He further enumerates three important considerations which form the bases of participatory research methodology:

- There is a target community/group which is in felt-need of changing its underdog (oppressed, marginalized, exploited) situation to a more favourable one.
- This target group in cooperation and conjunction with an acceptable, external interventionist-oriented researcher formulates research goals, participates in data collection and, as far as possible, also in analysis and drawing of conclusions, which directly feed into decision-making relating to community action for change/development.

- The ultimate aim of external researcher is to attempt to ensure complete *ownership of knowledge* (e.g. of the health system, technology, management techniques) by the target community.

## Meaning of PRA

Participatory methods have formed into a body of methods called PRA (Participatory Rural Appraisal). A discussion of PRA will help you to understand participatory methods better.

PRA is a perspective, a method and a technique—all in one. It is a growing family of participatory approaches and methods that emphasize local knowledge and enables local people to make their own appraisal, analysis and plans. It is a method which allows the investigator to interact and understand the local people by learning from and with them. PRA involves a set of principles, a process of communication and a list of methods for empowering local respondents so as to enable them to put forward their viewpoint according to their participation of the social issue or the social problem.

## Sources of PRA

PRA evolved from five sources namely:

- Activist participatory research
- Agro-ecosystem analysis
- Applied anthropology
- Field research on farming systems
- Rapid rural appraisal

These sources are the positive sides of the evolution of participatory methods. There are also negative sides which required a method alternative to conventional methods. This search was due to the non-involvement of people in conventional methods who formed the object of research. This is shown in the following figure.

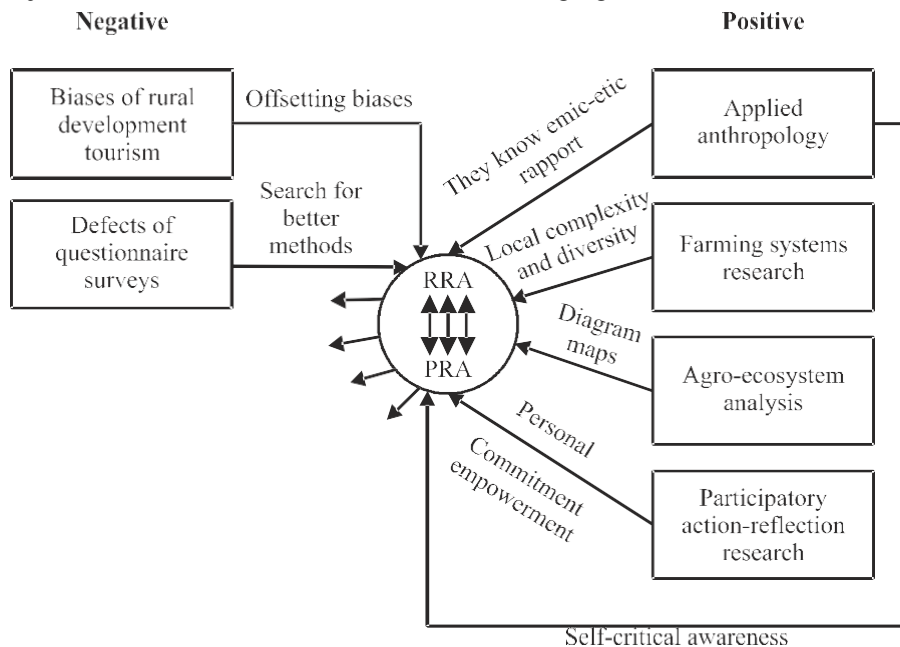


Fig. 5.1 Sources of PRA

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**Activist Participatory Research** was associated with adult education movement and was mainly used by NGOs since early 1970s. Ivan Illich and Paulo Freire proposed de-schooling and an alternative—**pedagogy**—facilitating a horizontal dialogue between the teachers and taught (adult learners). The objective was to establish the control of the learner over his learning process. Participatory research was conceived within this framework. The term gained its coinage from a group of adult educators in 1974-75 and was conceptualized and adopted by the International Council for Adult Education. It has gained importance with the increasing non-governmental sector which undertakes developmental activities in rural areas.

**Agro-ecosystem** analysis was developed in Thailand from 1978 onwards. The studies drew on systems and ecological thinking. In applied anthropology, **participant observation** and importance of field study have been well established methods of data collection. The observation and importance of people and their knowledge have contributed to the growth of PRA. Many field researches were conducted on **farming systems** where the importance of farmers’ knowledge was recognized. Farmers’ participation in agricultural research became the focus and their ability to conduct their own analysis was recognized. This understanding contributed to the growth of participatory methods. The idea of **Rapid Rural Appraisal (RRA)** developed in some workshops conducted at the IDS (Institute of Development Studies), Sussex, on rural development tourism, IKS and RRA itself. From the discussion, RRA emerged as a method which later contributed immensely to the growth of PRA. Relation between RRA and PRA can be viewed from the table below:

*Table 5.4 RRA and PRA Compared*

| Basis                           | RRA                              | PRA  |
|---------------------------------|----------------------------------|--|
| Period of major development     | late 1970s, 1980s                | late 1980s, 1990s                            |
| Major innovators based in       | Universities                     | NGOs   |
| Main user                       | Aid agencies<br>Universities     | NGOs, Government field<br>Organizations      |
| Key resource earlier overlooked | Local people’s knowledge         | Local people’s capabilities                  |
| Main innovation                 | Methods                          | Behaviour                                    |
| Predominant mode                | Elicitive, extractive            | Facilitating, Participatory                  |
| Ideal Objectives                | Learning by outsiders            | Empowerment of local people                  |
| Longer-term outcomes            | Plans, Projects,<br>Publications | Sustainable Local action<br>and institutions |

*The RRA-PRA Continuum*

|   |                      |                    |
|---|----------------------|--------------------|
| Nature of process                         | RRA ↔                | PRA                |
| Mode                                      | Extractive-elicitive | Sharing-empowering |
| Outsiders’ role                           | Investigator ↔       | Facilitator        |
| Information owned<br>analysed and used by | Outsiders ↔          | Local people       |
| Methods used                              | RRA ↔                | PRA                |

In RRA the outsider is an investigator whereas in PRA the outsider is a simple facilitator. The knowledge belongs to the local people but not to the investigator. It is the understanding of local people that provides a basis for the outside investigator to learn.



## Principles of PRA

Following are the principles of PRA which guide the participatory researches:

**A reversal of learning:** In participatory method, the importance is given not to the investigator but to the respondent. It is the respondent who shares his knowledge with the investigator. The respondents do not remain passive. The investigator simply performs the role of a facilitator. He learns from face-to-face interaction with the people.

**Optimal ignorance:** This refers to knowing what is not worth knowing. The investigator is to collect accurate and necessary information for his purpose. In the conventional method, the investigator collects information more than required for his purpose. In the process he spends more time and money. But PRA promotes quick appraisal of data which is to the point. As a result, the data which is necessary are collected.

**Seeking diversity:** Conventional methods seek representativeness in the population to collect the data. But PRA seeks diversity i.e. all the groups, sections on the basis of caste, gender, religion, etc. so that the issue is understood in its totality.

**Offsetting biases:** There is always a difference between the mind-set of the investigator and the understanding of the respondents. Therefore, the investigator fails to understand the viewpoint of the respondents in the right perspective. Moreover, there are other biases. For example, the investigator tries to find the respondent with whom he can communicate. A male investigator usually and conveniently ignores female respondents. But in PRA, because of its principles of seeking the diversity, these biases are offset.

**Triangulation:** This is an important principle of PRA. Triangulation means checking the validity and reliability of data using different methods. Data collected using a single method may not be correct. Therefore, the data is checked and re-checked using different methods to improve the accuracy of the research.

**Learning rapidly and progressively:** As has been said the investigator has his individual mind-set. Hence, he does not fully understand the perception of the people. When he interacts with them and learns from them he accurately appreciates their knowledge. The local people have their own experience, their history and culture, their ideas and their priority. The more the investigator interacts with them the more he learns. His level of knowledge progressively increases as PRA is the least time consuming. He learns rapidly through interaction. Therefore, in PRA the investigator learns rapidly and progressively.

**Investigator as facilitator:** In PRA the role of investigator is to facilitate and motivate the respondents. He creates an enabling environment so that the respondents easily share their experience with the investigator.

### *PRA Methods*

PRA methods are ever growing. There is no end to the discovery of participatory methods. PRA believes in flexibility and hence different research issues may need different methods for study. It also depends on the user, who uses the method. But there are some methods common to PRA literature. They can be divided into two methods: (i) methods directly or indirectly supportive of PRA; and (ii) methods which involve direct participation of the respondents. Supportive methods include primary and secondary sources of data, direct observation and other conventional methods. But methods of direct participation are diverse and situation-specific. Some important ones are as follows:

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- (i) **Participatory mapping and modelling:** The respondents are asked to draw a map even on the ground or build the model of the resource bases of the village. It is not necessary that the respondents should be literate. Therefore, it is useful in tribal villages with low level of literacy. Participatory maps include maps relating to social issues, resources, health, wealth, literacy, livestock and economic activities. Such maps can portray the image of dwellings in the village, farms and fields, water points and various soil varieties.
- (ii) **Transect walk:** This refers to the walking of the investigator with the respondents from one end of the village to the other. The walk can be taken from north to south and from east to west. While walking, the investigator can observe soil conditions, crop varieties and vegetation types, which the respondent may explain. In this way, the investigator learns different aspects of land use, crops grown, and agro-ecological zones within a short time. While explaining, the respondents can also provide information relating to the past land use pattern or crop varieties.
- (iii) **Time lines:** This refers to the sequence of events like construction of the road or establishment of school in the village. A list of events gives an idea of development of the village over a time period.
- (iv) **Seasonal diagram:** In the villages different activities take place in different seasons. Moreover, different crop items available in nature depend on seasons. All these can be presented in what we call seasonal diagrams in which different activities in different seasons can be known. In other words, the annual calendar of the activities, along with the items available can be known.
- (v) **Venn diagram:** This diagram is also known as *chapatti* diagram because it looks like a *chapatti*. The size of diagrams and their distance from each other inform about the importance of the subject discussed. However, overlapping diagrams represents interaction between two institutions or individuals. The diagrams are useful to study the relationship of institutions and individuals.

Participatory methods are more popular in action researches especially for rural development—both tribal and non-tribal villages. Field scholars also use it for quick generation of data with some degree of accuracy.

### 4.2.6 Focus Group Discussion

A focus group, also called ‘focused interview’ is an interview of a small group of respondents by a trained moderator in an informal way to know the perceptions, opinions and beliefs of the respondents on the research topic. The group is formed by interactive respondents having some common interest or characteristics. A moderator brings the interested respondents together with a view to elicit information through their interaction about a specific or focused issue. It is a form of qualitative research. An ideal focus group typically consists of 7-10 persons.

Focus group interviews were born in the late 1930’s by social scientists who had doubts about the accuracy of traditional information gathering methods. It is defined as a research technique involving means to reach end. When it becomes a research technique it is different from group discussion. In focussed group discussion the researcher introduces the topic. Some kind of control is exercised and at the same time the researcher allows free and spontaneous discussion from participants. It is a mixture of control and freedom. It is a participatory method. It is a method in which stakeholders take part. It is interactive. It is empowering. It is a collaborative exercise. It is a method where the

researcher empowers people. People react forcefully to the conclusion drawn about them. Thus, the gap between the researcher and the researched is fading. The researcher has mainly three roles in focussed group discussions. He is a moderator, a note taker and is a participant too.

The focus group can be of the following types depending on the nature of conducting the interview:

- **Two-way focus group:** This consists of two sub-groups. One sub-group watches the other, discusses on the observed interactions and draws inferences.
- **Dual moderator focus group:** In this type, two moderators conduct the interaction. One moderator conducts the session while the other ensures that all issues are covered.
- **Duelling moderator focus group:** In this type, two moderators remain present during the discussion. But they deliberately take opposite sides on the discussion of the issue.
- **Respondent moderator focus group:** In this group one of the respondents is asked to act as a moderator.

### Conducting a Focus Group

Focus group is planned and conducted for reliable information. The information collected from a focus group discussion is raw data. The researchers' task is to prepare a statement regarding the collected data. The first step is to transcribe the entire interview. This will provide a complete record of the discussion and will facilitate the analysis of data. The next step is to analyse the content of the discussion. The aim of this analysis is to look for trends and patterns that reappear within either a single focus group or among various focus groups. Some researchers suggest that content analysis begins with a comparison of the words used in the answer. Also, the researcher must consider the emphasis or intensity of the respondents' comments.

Krueger (1988) has identified three stages of conducting a focus group. These are conceptualization, interview and analysis and reporting.

**Conceptualization:** This stage includes defining the objective of research, justification of selection of focus groups over other methods, selection of issues, determining whom to study, planning the resource requirement and specification of procedure.

**Interview:** This phase includes formulation of adequate and appropriate questions, selection of moderator, understanding of group dynamics, introduction to the issues of discussion, responding to participants' comments, recording of discussion, and finally concluding the discussion with a thanking note.

**Analysing and reporting:** In this stage data is examined and reported. Krueger (1988) suggests three levels at which data is examined and reported. These are: at the level of raw data, descriptive statement level and the third one is the level of interpretation. Raw data needs to be ordered by natural levels or thematically. At the second level, respondent's comments are summarized. At this stage, data receives meaning to descriptions. The third level, i.e. the level of interpretation depends on the descriptive process or presentation of the meaning of data rather than the summary of data.

Focussed group is useful in describing and interpreting perceptions of group participants. It is not a top down approach. It is a research where people's need and

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perspective matter. It is primarily useful in obtaining free information, probing concept and ideas, probing range of behaviour and depth. Focused group discussion is a rapid appraisal tool. It takes less time. Focused group discussion is useful before one starts a survey for developing relevant hypothesis. It can be used as an exploratory research design. The main purpose of focus group research is to draw upon respondents' attitudes, feelings, beliefs, experiences and reactions in a way which would not be feasible using other methods, for example observation, one-to-one interviewing, or questionnaire surveys.

### Advantages of Focus Group

It can be concluded that focus group interviews can be used in a variety of settings. A review of the literature reveals that for successful data collection, focus group methodology must be employed in a manner to promote validity. The issues outlined above are essential elements for credible qualitative (action) research. The following are a few highlights about focus group discussion:

- Focus group research involves organized discussion with a selected group of individuals to gain information about their views and experiences on a topic.
- Focus groups can reveal a wealth of detailed information and deep insight. The benefits of focus group research include gaining insights into people's shared understandings of every day life and the ways in which individuals are influenced by others in a group situation.
- It has high face validity. Respondents in the group interact among themselves and each one in the group is also influenced by others.
- This method fits well to a situation where people do not know how to read and write.
- It is less expensive and time saving. Groups can be formed and assembled at a shorter notice. Data can be obtained at a shorter time from the interactions of the members.
- The researcher can get information from both verbal and non-verbal communication. Body language if observed properly can give a lot of information.
- The researcher can interact for clarification and ask follow-up questions.
- The focus group is a flexible method. A wide range of topics can be discussed, and a number of groups can be formed for interaction. Therefore, focus group interviewing is particularly suited for obtaining several perspectives about the same topic.

### Limitations of Focus Group

Focus group technique is not free of shortcomings. Some of them are as follows:

- The moderator cannot have full control over the group
- As the group is small, and as convenience sampling is used to select respondents, there is the risk of generalization
- Moderator may knowingly or unknowingly feel biased for the group
- A dominating member in the group may also produce biased information

Nevertheless, focus group has its own advantage and is still used by social science researchers including scholars of tribal studies.

#### Check Your Progress

16. Define non-participant observation.
17. How does C. William Emory define the interview technique?
18. What is a deviant case study?
19. State the use of the genealogy method of data collection.
20. What is a focus group?

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## 4.2 SUMMARY

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In this unit, you have learnt that,

- Research and data are inseparable. Data helps in understanding, analysing, interpreting and solving a research problem.
- Research is a human activity based on intellectual investigation and aimed at discovering, interpreting, and revising human knowledge on different aspects of the world.
- Social science research is carried out with the aim of discovering new facts and verification of the old ones. The academic purpose of social research is the acquisition of knowledge.
- On the basis of nature, data can be quantitative and qualitative. Quantitative data are those which are quantifiable. In other words, they can be expressed in quantitative (numerical) terms.
- Qualitative data, on the other hand, are not quantifiable. They refer to attributes—qualities, characteristics, etc.
- Method and methodology are sometimes used as synonyms, when they are not. Methodology is the study of methods and deals with the philosophical assumptions underlying the research process, while a method is an approach to data collection under those philosophical assumptions.
- Technique is defined as an apparatus or device, either verbal or physical, used to elicit information. It refers to the way one uses a tool to collect data. Tool is the simplest element, an instrument, in research.
- Objectivity in research ordinarily means value-neutrality. In other words, the research shall be free from value judgment, it shall not focus on what should/ought to be; rather it shall focus on what is.
- Researches on tribes try to produce a valid knowledge of tribal culture. But such an exercise is possible only through the scientific approach to research.
- Collection of data is not a haphazard process. It is systematic and hence emphasizes on the rules and procedures. These are known as the techniques of data collection.
- There often arises a confusion between the terms ‘sample’ and ‘sampling’. Sample is simply a part of population, while sampling is the procedure of selecting the sample and knowing about the population on the basis of the sample.
- There are two important methods of sampling, they are:
  - Non-probability
  - Probability
- Probability sampling is one in which every unit of the population has an equal probability of being selected for the sample. In other words, every item in the population has a known chance of being included in the sample.
- Sample error is the difference between the results derived from the sample and the ‘true’ value of its population. There are no sampling errors in a census survey because the calculations are based on the entire population.

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- Non-probability sampling methods are procedures in which the rules of probability theory are not applied in the selection of a sample. Non-probability sampling can be convenient, purposive, quota, snow ball and volunteer samplings.
- Quantitative methods are research methods dealing with numbers and anything that is measurable. They are, therefore, to be distinguished from qualitative methods.
- Qualitative research is an important approach to research methodology in social sciences. The research involves methods of data collection and analysis that are non-quantitative.
- A researcher on social sciences in general and tribal studies in particular collects the primary data to have a better understanding on the community. The researcher collects the information about the people on his own.
- A secondary source is a study written by a scholar about a topic using primary sources and other secondary sources.
- There are risks involved in secondary sources of data at four levels: reliability, suitability, adequacy and accuracy.
- The earliest method of field investigation in social research was observation. Observation is a method that employs vision as its main means of data collection.
- Scientific observation involves three processes: (i) sensation, (ii) attention, and (iii) perception.
- Participant observation is a method in which the investigator becomes a part of the situation he is studying.
- Observation method is the most appropriate method when the informants are unable to provide information or are unwilling to give exact information.
- Social research has one fundamental advantage over physical research in the sense that the researcher can talk to his subject, know his feelings and reactions. This technique is known as interview, or personal interview.
- There are different ways of classifying an interview process. On the basis of formality, it can be either formal or informal.
- Rapport establishment is an essential part of interview method. It creates a friendly atmosphere. As such the interviewee is likely to cooperate more with the interviewer than through questionnaire method.
- Pierre Guillaume Frédéric Le Play is said to have introduced the case study method into social science in 1829. He used it as a handmaiden to statistics in his studies of family budgets.
- The case study design is regarded with disdain because of the investigator's subjectivity in collecting data for supporting or refuting a particular explanation.
- Genealogy is the study and tracing of family pedigrees. It is a well-established method in ethnography. Precisely, the genealogy method is used to study family origins and history.
- In its original form, genealogy was mainly concerned with the ancestry of rulers and nobles, often arguing or demonstrating the legitimacy of claims to wealth and power.

- Participatory methods are non-conventional methods. In conventional methods like interview, observation and questionnaire method, interviewees mostly remain passive. But participatory methods in research are ways to ensure participation.
- Participatory methods have formed into a body of methods called PRA (Participatory Rural Appraisal).
- A focus group, also called ‘focused interview’ is an interview of a small group of respondents by a trained moderator in an informal way to know the perceptions, opinions and beliefs of the respondents on the research topic.
- Focus group research involves organized discussion with a selected group of individuals to gain information about their views and experiences on a topic.

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## 4.2 KEY TERMS

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- **Research:** It is a human activity based on intellectual investigation and aimed at discovering, interpreting, and revising human knowledge on different aspects of the world.
- **Quantitative data:** They are those data which are quantifiable.
- **Qualitative data:** They are, on the other hand, are not quantifiable.
- **Methodology:** It is the study of methods and deals with the philosophical assumptions underlying the research process, while a method is an approach to data collection under those philosophical assumptions.
- **Technique:** It is defined as an apparatus or device, either verbal or physical, used to elicit information. It refers to the way one uses a tool to collect data.
- **Tool:** It is the simplest element, an instrument, in research.
- **Census survey:** The information collected about each item of the universe is called a census survey.
- **Universe:** It is the totality of observation or items which are of interest to the researcher.
- **Census:** A census is the process of obtaining information about every member/unit of a population.
- **Sample:** A sample is a part or sub-set of the universe selected for the purpose of collecting information.
- **Sampling unit:** It refers to individual items to be studied within the sampling frame.
- **Sampling frame:** It is the list of sampling units of the population from which random sampling is to be drawn.
- **Sample error:** It is the difference between the results derived from the sample and the ‘true’ value of its population.
- **Case study:** It is defined as a method of exploring and analysing the life of a social unit, called as the subject (or the case) in-depth.

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## 4.2 ANSWERS TO ‘CHECK YOUR PROGRESS’

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22. Research is a human activity based on intellectual investigation and aimed at discovering, interpreting, and revising human knowledge on different aspects of the world.
23. Generally, data can be classified in the following ways:
  - Quantitative and qualitative data
  - Sample and census data
  - Primary and secondary data
24. Methodology is the study of methods and deals with the philosophical assumptions underlying the research process.
25. Objectivity in research ordinarily means value-neutrality. In other words, the research shall be free from value judgment, it shall not focus on what should/ought to be; rather it shall focus on what is.
26. The researcher designs the research work with four main ideas: the strategy; the conceptual framework; the question of why, who and what will be studied; and the tools to be used for collecting and analysing empirical materials.
27. A census is the process of obtaining information about every member/unit of a population.
28. There often arises a confusion between the terms ‘sample’ and ‘sampling’. Sample is simply a part of population, while sampling is the procedure of selecting the sample and knowing about the population on the basis of the sample.
29. Systematic random sampling is a probability sampling procedure wherein the random sampling method is applied to a systematic process of data collection.
30. Sampling errors arise because we do not estimate all items of the population. We only estimate a part of it, i.e. of the sample.
31. A volunteer sampling procedure is a non-probability sampling procedure. In this procedure, the respondent himself volunteers to give information he holds.
32. Qualitative research is an important approach to research methodology in social sciences. The research involves methods of data collection and analysis that are non-quantitative.
33. The advantages of primary sources of data are:
  - Primary source provides data which is original and relevant.
  - This source generates data which may not exist or may not be available for the specific purpose of research.
34. A secondary source is a study written by a scholar about a topic using primary sources and other secondary sources.
35. There are risks involved in secondary sources of data at four levels: reliability, suitability, adequacy and accuracy.
36. Unpublished sources include materials such as diaries of administrative officers, travellers’ diaries, personal letters, unpublished biographies and autobiographies.
37. Observation by the observer without actively participating in group activities or becoming a member of the group or community is called non-participant observation.



38. C. William Emory defines the interview technique as ‘a two-way purposeful conversation initiated by an interviewer to obtain information that is relevant to some research purpose.’
39. There may be a case that does not conform to the existing theory of knowledge. When such a case is studied in detail, it is known as deviant case study.
40. Genealogy is the study and tracing of family lineages. It is a well-established method in ethnography. Precisely, the genealogy method is used to study family origins and history.
41. A focus group, also called ‘focused interview’ is an interview of a small group of respondents by a trained moderator in an informal way to know the perceptions, opinions and beliefs of the respondents on the research topic.

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## 4.2 QUESTIONS AND EXERCISES

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### Short-Answer Questions

15. Why should data be appropriate, focused, authentic and reliable to conform to the objectives?
16. State the differences between method and methodology.
17. How are the terms methodology, method, technique and tools interdependent in research?
18. ‘While conducting a survey, there are two important considerations.’ What are they?
19. Give reasons for the preference given to the sample surveys over census surveys.
20. Write short notes on:
  - (iv) Simple random sampling
  - (v) Sampling error
  - (vi) Purposive sampling
21. What are the differences between the quantitative and qualitative methods of research in tribal studies?
22. List the disadvantages of primary sources of data.
23. Name some published sources of data.
24. List the characteristics of the observation method of data collection.
25. What are the considerations to make the interview method effective and objective?
26. Why is the method of case study considered to be better than the other methods of data collection?
27. What is triangulation?
28. What is the role of interviewer in participatory method?

### Long-Answer Questions

11. Discuss the relationship between research and data. Also, discuss the method of planning data collection.
12. Describe some of the major concepts used in research.

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13. What does objectivity in research mean? Also, provide the distinction between objective and subjective researches.
14. Explain the concepts of census and sample surveys.
15. Critically analyse the two methods of sampling: Probability and Non-Probability sampling.
16. Evaluate the quantitative and qualitative methods of research in tribal studies.
17. Assess the primary and secondary sources of data.
18. Discuss the observation and interview method of data collection in field study.
19. Assess the case study and genealogy method of data collection in field study.
20. Explain the participatory and focus group discussion method of data collection in field study.

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## 4.2 FURTHER READING

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