The Debate about Qualitative Aspects of Social Science Research in the Academic Process in Nepal
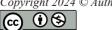
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Abstract

Research is a prerequisite to pursue an academic degree in social science (or any other discipline). Research is one of the intended outcomes of a dedication to an academically guided methodology.Students are required by the institution to submit their research in order to continue their academic career. This article explores concepts and practices in social research, seeking knowledge through secondary data and the researcher's own experiences. In order to study critical points of view, the author gathered relevant literature. Research can take numerous forms, including articles, publications, theses, reports, and dissertations.The interpretation suggests that creativity and discovery serve as critical social cornerstones for modern academic transitions.This work investigates early circumstances in research from a social science perspective to evaluate the quality of academic research. Rather than being impartial, social research relies on human interpretation. Imagination and hypothesis are collaborative ways of generating new ideas based on gaps, but they do not constitute a research process. However, they guide the path for research in social sciences.Only research that improves awareness of damaging beliefs and one's own societal responsibilities can generate new ideas in social situations.

Introduction

This research was based on conversations with my MPhil colleagues and academic debates with professors during my public administration classes in the 2020 batch at Tribhuvan University's Central Department of Public Administration. The thought originated from an online interview I conducted for an MPhil Young Fellowship with the University Grand Commission (UGC), Bakhatapur, Nepal. When the fellowship committee enquired about the thesis I was preparing, I mentioned that it would use a qualitative and ethnographic research methodology.

As social scientists, we construct the present based on the past (Stockemer, 2019). We were having a conversation about public administration at our institution, which is part of the management program. In this approach to research, researchers recognize that their backgrounds shape their interpretations (Creswell, 2024). I did my best to respond to the committee's inquiries about qualitative research methodology and its relevance to the field of public administration. The UGC awarded me an MPhil research fellowship.This is an outcome of a process of my life while I am thinking and doing 'research advancements in social impacts of tourism' (Woosnam& Ribeiro, 2022). Knowledge is gained by chance (Kenaphoom, 2021). It was a delight to be able to undertake qualitative research in the field of public administration. I conducted study on tourism governance from a homestay standpoint (2022). I refer to it as "transmissibility" or "called replication." As part of my MPhil dissertation, I executed qualitative research at Panauti historical sites under the mentorship and guidance of Professor Shree Krishna Shrestha. He guided me academically. He continues to offer me with a plethora of information about qualitative research methods. Later, during our *Chiya Guff* (Tea talk, Informal conversation while having tea or chit-chat), my friend and co-author AsimThapa (Gautam&Thapa, 2023) offers me a plethora of technical and non-academic advice for writing an academic paper about qualitative research from a management standpoint.

Despite studying public administration and anthropology, I favor qualitative research based on constructivism or social constructivism (Creswell, 2024). Thus, the article's conclusion is based on a number of examples from my academic experience. However, I believe that qualitative tourism research should adhere to ethical standards and norms (Ren, Pritchard, & Morgan,2010). The qualitative approach is a method of answering a specific research question that allows researchers to identify and articulate intricacies (Jones &Smith, 2017).Research, driven by the pursuit of knowledge, serves as a means to verify, falsify, and uncover hidden truths. In fact, the role of a researcher- and research itself-is dynamic rather than static. Regardless of the type of research, the process and its contribution to knowledge remain meaningful in contemporary social science studies.

As researchers, we need to comprehend neutrality and purity. Values and biases are

prevented from influencing results (Guba& Lincoln, 1994). Due to its mechanical system, nothing in the universe is static (Kenaphoom, 2021).This statement describes the diversification and various utility of research and human dynamism. The ways of us in social science research is like 'burgeoning body of research' (Woosnam& Ribeiro, 2022). There are many ideal syndicates in Nepali social science academic studies. Students, researchers, and scholars all have ego-driven attitudes that can be classified as anti-social research personalities. The statement "most academic social science research in Nepal is dominated by a bourgeois perspective" (P. xiv), made by renowned anthropologist L.P. Uprety (2021), is a very insightful and important statement regarding the trend of social science research in Nepal. Knowledge acquisition can take two forms: normative and empirical (Stockemer, 2019).

Nothing is new in research; rather, research is a method of creating newness. Discovering knowledge is a fundamental way, where knowledge is composed of facts (Kenaphoom, 2021). Verification or falsification of research aims is the process of doing social science research in academic environments.Focus on efforts to verify (Positivism) or falsify (Post positivism) a pre-set hypothesis (Guba& Lincoln, 1994). Academic research in social science is the constructform of the concept, in other ways, builds scientific knowledge (Bhattacherjee, 2012). Research is always based in the gap to create bridge for new get way, which is never ending process for researcher and there are no perfectionists' approaches, because 'no one is expert in all the methods for research' (Bernard, 2006). Researchers usually have various conceptual frameworks for different research sectors (Kenaphoom, 2021). Numerous data, books, and methods can be systematically used to handle everything. The findings of various academic research initiatives might be published in books, dissertations, articles, or other media. Research should be debates of what is relevant to research and what is not (Ren, et al., 2010), but for this orthodox mindset is the main barrier, such a mindset only focuses for the structure not a newness and critical juncture. Research in social aspect is a way of thinking: examining critically different areas of our daily activities, building code of conducts for govern, and testing and developing new theories that contribute for advancement of social life (Kumar, 2014). Research, researchers, and philosophers are the products of paradigm; assessment includes wisdom (Kenaphoom, 2021). In the process of discovering rigidity is not a way of knowing, what Buddha told us change create positive efforts (Aich, 2012) is the universal fact, from the research code and its paradigm.

An essential tool for developing theories is qualitative research methods(Stockemer, 2019). Doing qualitative research is not an easy (Sutton & Austin, 2015) job to get a degree or to achieve knowledge. It could go through numerous phases and processes in order to produce academic content. The final research project required to complete any degree is social science research. Generally, they adhere to the protocols and standards

expected for the highest training of disciplinary scholars, culminating in a book-length, highly honed, and specialized contribution to knowledge in a field (Purdue.edu, 2024).We must move 'hylozoism' away from a narrow and packed attitude among scholars. Social research focuses on a broader perspective of social events via broader lenses to achieve a certain goal;therefore it is part of the systematic management of tools and processes in a holistic approach. Based on these ideas, the linkage and interrelationships in social institutions and networks serve as the laboratory for social research.

Whatever, the nature and structure of research, research must think like a researcher (Bhattacherjee, 2012) is the very first step. The ultimate reality of everything in the universe (Kenaphoom, 2021) is knowledge through interpretation as per the context of the subject. Ontology is the concern of any research work by the researchers. Subjective interpretations of social occurrences, whether etic or emic in nature, are an important research method in social events. Academic scholars in social science can take a range of approaches, including inductive, deductive, and abductive methods.The integration and operationalization of social science research leads to new theories and validation points for established notions. On the basis of certain philosophical foundations, research is a craft (Bernard, 2006) that craft must avoid bias in every step of doing research.

Research Methodology

Procedures and Design

The research strategy in this work focuses on methodically reproducing social science studies on the logic of practice. This article primarily relies on secondary data and the researcher's personal reflection as 'self.' It adopts a qualitative, reflective approach that helps researchers examine their subjectivity in relation to people and events in the field (Primeau, 2003).The design process is guided by meanings and their reflections. All relevant readings are collected from previously published research publications; this article may also be used as a resource for additional readings.

Social science students should be proficient in both quantitative and qualitative methods because they are complementary (Stockemer, 2019). Each research method and design has unique values for research and analysis. This article will provide a thematic review based on the available material. The study article's technique and design are referred to as "thick description" (Geertz, 1973). Critically, the study paper should adopt a qualitative approach.

Results and Discussion

Method of Inquiry in the Social Structure

The appropriate distribution of tools and procedures is to solve social malpractices through grassroots initiatives.When I faced questions about my methodology during the research in the tourism field, I thought that 'tourism research and its knowledge creation

in order to contextualize our presentation (Ren, et al., 2010). Questions of methods are secondary to questions of paradigm (Guba& Lincoln, 1994). Today, structural thinking has evolved in traditional research in a variety of ways. In structural research, causes and consequences are inextricably linked. They contend that acts and their consequences drive research.

Academic knowledge is socially constructed (Ploder&Hamann, 2020). Constructivists in social research believe that individuals seek to understand the world in which they live and work (Creswell, 2024). The critical path in research must focus on addressing current wrongdoings using insights gained through critical observation in transdisciplinary natural environments. Critical mass is being created in social science research today.Whether qualitative or quantitative, all research can be quantified (Stockemer, 2019). The goal of any research is to categorize and measure social phenomena in all of its manifestations.

Philosophical Guidance of Research

Ontology studies existence, epistemology focuses on the nature and limits of knowledge, axiology examines values, and methodology analyzes methods in a field of study (Shrestha & Sharma, 2024).The process of establishing boundaries and restrictions in social science research is an expression of philosophical principles. The process of conducting research and comparing outcomes to those of others, with the goal of generating new generalizability interpretations.A new paradigm emerges only where a new paradigm emerges (Guba& Lincoln, 1994).This perspective raises awareness of the actual epistemic view (Ploder&Hamann, 2020). Rationalism or empiricism, research is a way of knowledge, a way for knowledge, a test for existing knowledge, an establishment of new knowledge, and a paradigm of knowledge. It is a way of bridging the gap in social reality. The philosophical position determines the ontological and epistemological characteristics of a research study, making it fundamental to the research design(Bhatta, 2018).

Metaphysics and ontology are parts of research in the most general characteristics of the truth or the study of being (Kenaphoom, 2021).Philosophically and practically in the research paradigm are issues and critical (Guba& Lincoln, 1994).We are followers of 'monism' philosophical thought for the research and are guided by 'idealism'. Acceptance and 'materialism' should be the foundation of the researcher for the sake of knowledge production.

Qualitative Social Research: Debate of Research

There are two major research paradigms-qualitative and quantitative-that guide social research in practice (Bhatta, 2018) to generate perspectives.With fresh gaps and ideas, the common topic of social and pure research purpose and value has been timely renewed, rebuilt, and transformed. Social science, are referred to as 'soft' (Guba &

Lincoln, 1994).

Pure scientific study focuses on closed libraries, but social science research uses society as an open field. However, both studies aim to develop a more compassionate society and enhance society. In an inductive research approach (This serves as the foundation for the initiation of this article), I believe the researcher is the essential instrument and the architect of the research (Ren, et al., 2010).Need to rethink how research is conducted (Sutton & Austin, 2015) while conducting qualitative research in the field of social science.

The basis of qualitative research is inductive reasoning about meaningful practice, while deductive reasoning is used to test available perspectives. The main contribution is to develop and reconstruct new techniques. Qualitative research is also the means to pave the road for future social research. Both qualitative and quantitative methods are appropriately useful with any research paradigm (Guba& Lincoln, 1994). So, both methodologies are aesthetically appropriate in both social and pure science research processes. Any research aims to investigate available (and concealed) information. As scholars, we must engage with epistemology rather than research design. Philosophically speaking, academics' research interests must be backed by studies and theories. Research is an epistemological process. Another phase in the research process is to discuss the nature of the investigation. In academia, each study approach has its own style. Scholars have long debated the benefits of social science against pure research.

Social Science Research:As a Method for Subjective Analysis

Subjective interpretation is an important creative component of social science research. The investigations are fairly lengthy and emphasize the insider's perspective throughout; objective interpretation is not rigid in social science research. From my understanding tourism research considers research as a heterogeneous (Ren, el at., 2010). Subjective interpretation is incentive learning through agglomeration of both top-down and bottom-up. In a nation like Nepal, where diversity is essential, in-depth, thorough study must concentrate on subjective interpretation.

Individuals develop subjective meanings of their experiences-meanings directed toward certain objects or phenomena (Creswell, 2024). Qualitative research is a group of methodologies (Jones & Smith, 2017). In Nepal, social research is focused on building rural and community regions in order to create a more empowered and engaged society. Numerous researcheshave also shown flaws with existing social systems. Many social studies have been undertaken on the topics of regionalism, gender, caste, nation-building, and revolutions and resistance.

Data does not necessarily mean numbers. Words are data too (Guthrie, 2010). In social science, qualitative research is a method and an important part of the researchers'

lives. Research ethics and methods provide the foundation for debates about knowledge, ensuring that discussions are grounded in integrity, rigor, and respect for participants and data. The emerging context of the paper, tourism research in order to raise political awareness (Ren, et al., 2010) but there is not any place for academic discourse (!). Knowledge production is a continuous, adaptable, and interpersonal task. According to my anthropological perspective, subjectivity is not inherent in nature because it comprises social research, which reveals heterogeneity.

Is Ethnography the Only Property of Anthropology?

Ethnography represents a new paradigm in current social science research. Qualitative research takes a long time and is extremely demanding. This is data in multiple ways for triangulation (Sangasubana, 2011). Until now, ethnography has served as a reflection of the society being studied. From a contextual and utilitarian standpoint, it is a synonym for academic society reflection. I believe that our comprehension of research methods and methodologies is somewhat limited in this day and age. However, ethnography is a learning process for researchers, much like a newborn kid. So, it is a path of developing the researcher in the research sector. We judge others from an egoistic stance. The knowledge of 'impacts work in multiple and poly-directional paths' (Ren, et al., 2010) is like the mantra to accept diversified research process and methodology in modern world. The general consensus among social scientists is that ethnography belongs only to anthropology. Ethnography is not the same as an individual or syndicated research approach. Which strategies are popular and useful to everyone? If they want to do study with extreme attention and rigor, there is a longitudinal approach. Humor and politeness are essential components of ethnographic research methods. Ethnographic knowledge gives us intimate information about diversity in a realistic, naturalistic setting.

Ethnographic research can enable the construction of reflective meanings' understanding in predictable patterns and often relatively close to the field being studied (Sutton & Austin, 2015; Jayathilaka, 2021). It is a product of multiple practices (Ploder&Hamann, 2020). My personal experience and mentality regarding the construction of the research approach raise questions about the traditional understanding of a hierarchy of knowledge (Ren, et al., 2010).What if, instead of relying on close relationships with society as a study lab, ethnography is the method of research that involves extensive close-ups of the research domain?

Ethnography is a common characteristic of all researchers. Whether it is a researcher in a technological or academic discipline, research is an ethical technique to obtain additional information. Ethnographic research is a responsibility to address processes of injustice within a particular setting (Madison, 2005). So, who is thinking about societal happenings that may be similar to all in order to solve problems? If my interpretation is

true, our upbringing has contributed to a number of negative aspects of our personalities. We have to understand that 'knowing is not a singular activity' (Ren, et al., 2010). Every moment and every aspect of life is a process of discovering something new. In fact, life itself is a continuous journey of learning. At the same time, research provides a structured approach to interpreting and understanding these processes of knowledge acquisition.

Ethnographic research emphasizes the truth that reality is socially constructed (Jayathilaka, 2021). This is the inductive reasoning process used to build theories in qualitative research, and it will serve as the foundation for future researchers in the discipline. The process of creating theories, also known as theory development, is iterative (Stockemer, 2019).Ethnography is a broader method to social study that is relevant and valuable to everyone. Everyone can conduct research from an 'insider's perspective', allowing them to 'experience' the moments in the research area as the researcher does. In this case, the ethnographic approach is one of the best alternatives to the inductive procedure for research reasoning, since it allows social scientists to build new theoretical perspectives.

This research is not a quick dip into a research site using a simple method (Jayathilaka, 2021). Rigorous processes in social research are complex and time-consuming while making close contact with society and social phenomena. The place for impact in knowledge production and construction is always an effect of a network of heterogeneous materials (Ren, et al., 2010). Creating a barrier and a bar in social science research is simply the opposite of what the technique is. Ethnography is a gentle and extremely useful research approach for identifying social reality; information is never consistent and undeniable, which is why syndicate-like activities are noticed. This approach offers an empirical path to questions of reflexivity (Ploder&Hamann, 2020).

Conclusion

Each research study follows a specific methodology, which in turn dictates its research design. Each research design incorporates distinct tools and techniques for data collection and management. The structure and aesthetic of research methods and designs are determined by the overarching methodology of the study. A researcher's dedication and the academic rigor of the study serve as fundamental pillars for achieving meaningful academic outcomes.

We must reconstruct our thinking and cognition as researchers. Research is a method of learning via trial and error and systematic reflection. Following investigation, the findings will be methodical and critical in nature. The quality of research work is constantly challenged and uncertain. This is especially true in third-world universities, where there are limited resources and desire for research. Every scholar, researcher, and student must conduct their research in compliance with the regulations of their respective universities. Similar to my MPhil research, I am pursuing a PhD in Public Administration

at Tribhuvan University, focusing on tourism governance in homestays from a collaborative approach. Conducting qualitative research in public administration is challenging but offers many opportunities for learning. This approach emphasizes the sharing and structuring of qualitative aspects in academic research. The researcher's approach to conducting research, along with the academic framework for future studies, serves as a reflection of this article.

The debate surrounding qualitative research in the context of Nepalese academia is also an integral part of the research process. It serves as a way to raise questions and find pathways to address them. Every debate in research helps establish the foundation for further investigation. Moreover, the creation of debates is cyclical, a continuous process of making and remaking discussions, which forms the basic and researchable paths in the academic world.The things must be interpreted in a real-world context. In this theme review or self-reflective work, I ask some questions about conventional research in Nepal's academic culture. Being a researcher enables spontaneous innovation in the sphere of knowledge production through discovery and the examination of existing beliefs. We have a fairly systematic approach to conducting research; we build research design domains under the label of a subject or discipline. Research is a method of producing information (knowledge based information) in order to 'meet broader thinking like the sky'. The syllogism approach is used in research to test existing theories, whereas the inductive method is used to create new ones. Newcomers to the academic research field should be guided didactically.Academic research is not a static process of interpreting and managing data. Instead, it evolves based on the nature of the subject and the requirements of the research design. Every research endeavor ultimately leads to its own unique conclusion, shaped by its methodological approach and the contextual demands of the study.

Author Contribution Statements

This paper was solely written by me, and all contributions, activities, including any faults and mistakes, are entirely my own.

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