

Understanding & Applying Research Methodology in Literature



Manju Bala

Assistant Professor
Deptt. of English,
M.M.P.G. College,
Fatehabad

Abstract

Conducting research is a major opportunity for research scholars as well as academicians to express their ideas and expression, address and debate on a particular topic, and to generate new knowledge. The application of research approaches is one that mostly higher degree research scholars and early researcher find it challenging to apply in their research reports. The present paper draws light on research paradigms and approaches, which are applicable in literature. The paper illuminates the key aspects of research methodology that researchers should comprehend well to be able to apply this concept judiciously and aptly in their research proposals. It offers suggestions for scholars, how they can locate their research into a paradigm and make their research report applicable for conferences and research journals. With the explicit purpose of helping higher degree research scholars, this paper present the different research methodologies best suited to branches of literary as well as humanities.

Keywords: Research Methodology, Paradigm, Approaches, Ontological.

Introduction

Conducting research is the nervous system of any literature on higher learning. It is a careful and systematic examination of the observed information to find the solution of the existing problem. Research is more than a set of specific skills, it is a way of thinking, and it examines and analyzes critically the various aspects of any literary piece of work. Research is a structured inquiry which uses scientific methodology to solve problems and create new knowledge that is generally applicable. The term research consists of two words, namely 're' and 'search', generally re means again and search means to find out. According to Advanced Lerner's Dictionary, "Research is the careful investigation or inquiry especially to search for new facts in any branch of knowledge". Research is like undertaking a journey and one must know about one's destination and which route to take. During the journey at every step, there is a multiplicity of ways and methods to reach one's destination. In the same way, while conducting research scholars find many methods, approaches, and procedures. Researchers have to choose the appropriate method and approach according to the nature of his research proposal.

Thomas Kuhn first uses the word paradigm to suggest a philosophical way of thinking in his book. *The Structure of Scientific Revolution (1962)*. Epistemologically, it has been taken from Greek where it means pattern. In educational research, the word paradigm means to describe a researcher's 'worldview' (Mackenzie and Knipe, 2006). Here worldview is the perspective, way of thinking or a set of beliefs that informs the meaning or analysis of data. A research paradigm is a set of common beliefs and agreements shared between researchers and academicians about how the problem should be understood and addressed. According to Lincoln and Guba, a paradigm involves ontological, epistemological and methodological perspectives of a research proposal (web). Ontological involve what is a reality? Epistemology involves how do one know something? Ontology and epistemology create a holistic view of how a particular problem is viewed and find out answers and how can one see ourselves in relations to existing knowledge. The methodology is a descriptive term used to mention research design, method, approaches, and methods used in the investigation the well planned to generate something new. Selection of a topic, making hypothesis research design, data gathering analysis and synthesize the whole information are all parts of a methodology. In short, methodology maintains the logic and process of systematic investigation used in conducting a research project so as

to find the solution to the problem. A research process consists of the following steps:

Defining the research problem and reviewing the literature. What do you deem to research? Basically, there are two types of research problem first types is related to states of nature and the second type includes those related to the relationship between variables. This is crucial to decide the Future direction of research process. While choosing a topic, always remember the time allocated to you the length of the research proposal. Then identify a broad area of interest tries to specify your topic by focusing on an aspect of the subject or method to it. An extensive literature review is an integral part of the entire research process. Review entrance the knowledge of a research problem. The main sources of the literature review are journals and abstract books. Research scholars may use the internet source for literacy review. Bibliography given at the end of the journal gives a clean and complete description of the sources that were used while preparing the report. After the selection of the topic, the next step is the formulation of the hypothesis. A hypothesis is a goal or tentative conclusion which a researcher wants to text through his research. The hypothesis may be true or false at the end of the research. Research design involves developing a research plan and implementing it. It involves the process used for gathering the information. The scholars decide the nature of his research design according to his topic, whether it to be exploratory, experimental or descriptive. It involves collecting processing and identifying the information.

Once the researcher has decided the 'Researchers Design' the next step is data collection. There are two types of data regarding research. Primary data involves firsthand investigation of a literary piece of work, historical text, film or performance. This type of data involves conducting a survey, an interview and conducting laboratory research. Primary sources involve statistical data, historical document or a piece of literature or art. Secondary data involves the examination of studies that other researchers have made of a subject. When a researcher uses the data which has already been collected by other scholars. Such that data can be received from journals, reports, dissertations, and research reports. Analysis of the work of other researchers play a vital role in developing scholars. The activity that constitutes a research paper-discovering, assessing and assimilating others research and then present your own ideas clearly and persuasively is at the center of the educational research.

Data collection is the most crucial and important part of a research project. Data is defined as the information recorded to represent facts about the hypothesis. Data are analyzed to determine relevancy with the hypothesis. If data and prediction are consistent then the null hypothesis is supported. If data and hypothesis are not relevant than a hypothesis is rejected. A researcher collect data by using these methods: observation, experimentation,

questionnaire, interviewing and case study method. while conducting research library remains a most reliable guide. For researchers of literature when he conducts research for papers that draw on the published work of experts. The modern academic library offers resources in print and electronic forms and other non –print media (e.g. films, sound recording) Most academic libraries provide an online central information system to guide students and academicians to research sources.

All researchers and academicians, as well as professional scholars, need to assess the quality of any work minutely before presenting it in research. Students have to identify the main themes. While evaluating sources, a researcher should not assume that the material is useful and trustworthy just because it appears in print or is on the internet. Researchers must focus on the authority, accuracy, and relevancy of the sources you use. After analyzing the data it may be possible for a researcher to arrives generalization that is building a theory. If the researcher had no hypothesis to start with, he might seek to explain his findings on the basis of some theory. Writing a report is the last and most difficult step of the research process. The reports inform what you have found out or discovered and what conclusion have drawn from your research. The research report should be written in academic style. Language should be formal and not journalistic. Researchers suggested a large number of paradigms in educational research, especially in literature. But Candy(1989), one of the leaders in the fields proposed that research can be grouped into three main taxonomies namely positivist, interpretive or critical. Positivist paradigm is first proposed by a French philosopher Auguste Comte. It defines a worldview to research which is grounded in what has known research methods as the scientific method of investigation. Comte Postulated that

Experimentation, observation, and reason based on experience ought to be the basis for understanding human behaviour and therefore the only legitimate means of extending knowledge and human understanding in its pure form, the scientific method involves a process of experimentation that is used to explore observation and answer questions. (web)

Interpretive paradigm means to understand the subjective world of human experience. This approach makes an effort to "get the head of the subjects being studied" (Cuba and Lincoln). The researched makes an effort to understand the viewpoint of a literary item. Its emphasis on the subjective understanding of the world around them and representation of individual analysis. It this paradigm theory does not precede research but follows it so that it is grounded on the data generated by research article.

The critical paradigm is suitable for research in social sciences, art, and literature, where a researcher seeks to address the political, social and

economic issues. In literature, research is treated as an art of construction rather than discovery. The central focus of research is the uncover which is hidden by social practices, leading to liberation and emancipation. The deliberate effort of the researcher to promote human rights, social justice, and reciprocity. There is a very close relationship exists between paradigm and methodology because the methodological implications of a paradigm choice permeate the research hypothesis, researcher's selection of a problem, data collection, research design as well as in data analysis process. For example, in the context of data analysis, the selection of positive paradigm means that the data to be collected will be quantitative in nature. In contrast, the selection of the interpretive paradigm corresponds with methods and designs with collect and analyzes qualitative data.

Another example of the link between paradigm choice and methodology is taken from the fields of special education. For example, writing about the implication of paradigm choice for special education research, Avramidis and Smith maintain:

Special education research using the interpretive paradigm will Require that the research will not consider the 'label' or 'syndrome' As a concept, which is contrary and valid across individual and Contexts...instead the perception of teachers, learning support assistants SENCO's parents and the children-young adults themselves will Be sought in order to gain a better understanding of the particular Needs of the given individual. (32)

There are certain aspects that s researcher need to pay extra attention in respects to research methodology. The most common issues that should be avoided are Irrelevant information and complicated background details that provides too much data but does not give accurate understanding to readers. For unconventional research approaches, it is necessary to provide accurate details and explanation about your innovation method.

In literary research, scholars must be careful about plagiarism. Plagiarism involves two kinds of literary theft. First using another person's ideas, view expression without acknowledging that person. Presenting another person's ideas, information or expressions as our own to get a better grade or some other advantage. A researcher can avoid plagiarism by making a list of writers and viewpoints discovered in his research and by giving the references of these works in works cited list.

MLA Handbook helps the scholars of literary research in documenting, the source as well as in mechanics of writing. It will not only teach the style of a research project but helps at all stages of the research project. It will guide the scholars thoroughly any question, which may have about writing a research paper, form formulating a topic to using abbreviations in the list of works that you cite in the paper.

Aim of the Study

This aim of this paper is to discuss the research paradigm and approaches, which are applicable for literary research. The paper points out the key elements of research methodology which help the researcher how to apply research methodology systematically and judiciously.

Review of Literature

"...Each methodology reflects a set of ontological and epistemological assumptions... Research Methodology is significant not only because it embodies philosophical assumptions, but also because it guides the selection of research methods" (Haiying Long "An Empirical Review of Research Methodologies and Methods in creativity studies").

"...Experimentation, observation, and reason based on experience ought to be basis for understanding human behaviour and therefore the only legitimate means of extending knowledge and human understanding in its pure form, the scientific method involves a process of experimentation that is used to explore observation and answer questions"(Comte, A. A general view of positivism).

"...The methodology articulates the logic and flow of the systematic process followed in conducting a research project, so as to gain knowledge about a research problem. It includes assumptions made, limitations encountered and how they were mitigated or minimised." (Charles Kivunja or Ahmad Bawa Kuyini. "Understanding and Applying Research Paradigms in Educational Contexts").

Conclusion

Sponsored Seminar and conference in India is a major strategy of UGC to promote knowledge in all subjects of humanities. They provide opportunities to research scholars as well as academicians to express their ideas and expressions, address and debate on a particular topic and generate new knowledge. A research methodology represents the technical steps involved in conducting the research. It provides detail about the research design, methods used in characterizing and defining them, but also explaining and interpreting the general knowledge. In most cases, there is a wide variety of methods and procedures that a researcher uses to explore a topic his academic article or dissertations. From the discussions presents above and the steps of methodology, it should be clear for readers that methodology involves epistemology, ontology critical perspective of work. Each research paradigm is governed by specific assumptions as discussed earlier. The choice of a paradigm for your research implies that the research will be nested in the study of particular elements and these elements will, therefore, guide you towards a particular methodology.

References

1. Avramidis, E. & Smith, B. "An introduction to the major research paradigms and their methodological implications for special needs research," *Emotional and Behavioural Difficulties*, (1999), 4(3), 27-36. <https://doi.org/10.1080/1363275990040306>

2. Comte, A. *A general view of positivism*. London: Smith Elder & Co.,(1856).
3. Kuhn, T. S. *The structure of scientific revolutions. (1st Edn)*. Chicago, IL: University of Chicago (1962). Press.
4. Kivunja, Charles, and Ahmad Bawa Kuyini. "Understanding and Applying Research Paradigms in Educational Contexts". *International Journal of Higher Education*, vol.6, no.5, 2017. <https://doi.org/105430/ijhe.v6n5p26>
5. Long, Haiying. "An Empirical Review of Research Methodologies and Methods in Creativity Studies." *Creativity Research Journal*, Vol.26.4,2014. <https://doi.org/10.1080/10400419.2014.971781>
6. Mackenzie, N. & Knipe, S. (*Research dilemmas: paradigms, methods and methodology. Issues In Educational Research*, (2006). 16, 1-15.
7. *The Advanced Learner's Dictionary of Current English*. Oxford, (1952).p. 1069