

Research Methods for Social Sciences Qualitative and Quantitative

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Qualitative Method: PRA & PLA

- ▶ It is a method of capturing the complexities of field level realities through observation and discussion with the people.
- ▶ Information are collected through active participation of the people.
- ▶ A variety of field-oriented methods are used for collection of information.
- ▶ The methods are known as RRA, PRA and PLA
- ▶ They were first developed by Robert Chambers, Peter Hilderbrand, Michael Collinson and Robert Rhoades in late 70s at IDS, Sussex.

Advantages of qualitative methods

- ▶ Gives quick results–time saving.
- ▶ Flexible method so suits the ever changing situation and circumstances.
- ▶ Helps in understanding the complexities of situations and relations.
- ▶ Helps in understanding social exclusion and power relations of social and individual experience and the context of those experiences.
- ▶ Constructive rather than positivist–helps in finding out problems and solutions.

Transformation to Qualitative Methods

- ▶ The Participatory qualitative method developed as a result to paradigm shift in development studies, policies and actions from provision to participation.
- ▶ It developed as an alternative to the conventional survey techniques.
- ▶ It is now used to complement the findings of quantitative tools.
- ▶ It is done by a team of multi-disciplinary team of well trained researchers.

The tools : Transect Walk

- ▶ The research team makes a round of the village from one end to another.
- ▶ It observes and records the physical and natural assets, the social, economic and cultural parts of the settlement and social, cultural and economic activities taking place in the village.
- ▶ It continues to discuss and record different aspects of the village and the reasons and relevance of whatever has been observed with the villagers accompanying the team.
- ▶ It helps in development of familiarity and preliminary understanding of the village.

The mapping exercises

- ▶ The villagers are asked to draw the maps on a chart paper or on the ground using sketch pen or local materials.
- ▶ The research team continues to discuss with the villagers the reason and the relevance of the locations of the community and resources.
- ▶ Social and resource mapping–map of settlements and the location of natural and physical assets.
 - It helps in understanding the relationship between the geography and the community.
 - Collection of information about the geographical polarization of the community and command over resources.

Cont....

- ▶ Seasonal mapping–seasonal variation in activity, income, production, prices, availability of water and other resources, labour demand, migration
- ▶ Food Calendar–a seasonal narration of the food they consume–the sufficiency of food, the community and gender wise variation in food intake. The coping mechanism in times of distress.
- ▶ Health calendar to find out incidence and seasonality of disease and health condition.
- ▶ Activity mapping and time dispossession exercise to find out their drudgery and possibility of alternative and/or additional engagements.
- ▶ Farm mapping to find out the variation in soil condition, moisture and the crops grown (cropping pattern).

Historical profiling, FGD and wealth ranking exercise.

- ▶ Historical profiling–changes in conditions(like cropping pattern, livelihood conditions, social relations) and the factors which caused them
- ▶ Focus Group Discussion–generating discussion in a group of villagers about their needs, problems, priorities etc.
- ▶ Wealth ranking exercise–the extent of poverty, the dimensions of poverty and the reasons behind it.

Quantitative methods

- ▶ Uses survey technique for collection of data and statistical tools for analysis
- ▶ Macro Data
 - Gives a broad overview of the issue
 - Widely acceptable
- ▶ Micro Data
 - Based on small sample size limited validity and acceptability.
 - May suffer from the problem of elephant and blind men.
 - Useful in formulation of hypothesis, or finding out depth of information on the issues where macro data is silent. They are used to complement each other.

Macro sources

- ▶ Census–every 10th year–demographic and related issues.
- ▶ NSS–annual and quinquennial–consumption expenditure, employment–unemployment and special rounds.
- ▶ CSO–annual on income and production
- ▶ NFHS– on health issues–3 rounds of survey.
- ▶ BPL survey of the state governments
- ▶ DISE data for education facility and infrastructure.

Precautions in use of Macro sources

- ▶ Methods of collection of data
- ▶ Questionnaire
- ▶ The investigators and their motivation and intension
- ▶ The respondents and their motivation and intension
 - The reference period issue in consumption exp. Survey.
 - BPL survey
 - DISE data.

Precautions in use of Micro sources

- ▶ Questionnaire
- ▶ Field work and investigators
- ▶ Classification issue
- ▶ Statistical tools
- ▶ Report writing.

Thank You