

Course Title- Research Method Tools

Ph.D. – Political Science

2 credits

50 marks

Course Objective

The course aims to familiarise students with major research tools and techniques used in contemporary social science and political science research. It equips students to move from the formulation of a research problem and research questions to the collection, analysis, interpretation, and presentation of evidence. It combines conceptual understanding with practical training in designing research questions, reviewing literature, collecting and analysing data, conducting interviews and fieldwork, undertaking surveys and ethnography, and using digital tools such as R, NVivo, bibliometric analysis and systematic literature reviews.

By the end of the course, students should be able to select an appropriate research tool for a particular research problem and apply it to a research project.

UNIT One — Research Foundations

1. Research, Hypothesis and Data
2. Literature Review
3. Systematic Literature Review
4. Bibliometric Analysis

UNIT Two — Data Collection

5. Sampling
6. Field Research
7. Interview Methods
8. Focus Group Discussion
9. Questionnaire and Question Design
10. Survey

UNIT Three — Interpretive and Qualitative Methods

11. Ethnography
12. Narrative Interview
13. Interpretive Phenomenology
14. Process Tracing
15. Thick Ethnography

UNIT Four — Advanced/Contemporary Research Tools

16. Research in Conflict Areas
17. Reading and Analysing Data
18. Mixed Methods

UNIT Five — Digital Research Tools

20. NVivo
21. R Programming
22. Integrating Research Tools

UNIT I: Suggested Readings

1. Research, Hypothesis, Data Types of Data

Suggested Readings

- Alan S. Zukerman “Comparative Political Science, Vol. (1), *Comparative Political Science : Research Schools and Methods*
- Lowndes, Vivien, Marsh David & Stoker Gerry, *Theory and Methods in Political Science*, Bloomsbury Publishing India, Chapter 13, Chapter 18,
- Gary King, Robert O. Keohane & Sidney Verba (2021), *Designing Social Inquiry: Scientific Inference in Qualitative Research*, Chapter one, pp1-32
- Ram Ahuja, *Research Methods*, Rawat Publications.

2. Review of Literature

Suggested Readings

- Denicolo, P. & I. Becker (2012), *Developing Research Proposals* Sage, New Delhi
- Walter, Maggie (2006), *The Nature of Social Science Research*, Oxford University Press

3. Bibliometric Analysis

Suggested Readings

- Donthu, N., Kumar, S., Mukherjee, D., Pandey, N. & Lim, W. M. (2021). "How to conduct a bibliometric analysis: An overview and guidelines." *Journal of Business Research*, 133, 285–296.

4. Systematic Literature Review

- Legeseb, Gudina, Mengista b, Soromessab (2020), "Method for conducting systematic literature review and meta-analysis for environmental science research" *Methods X* (7).
- Snyder, Hannah, (2019), "Literature review as a research methodology: An overview and guidelines" *Journal of Business Research* 104, 333–339.

UNIT II: Suggested Readings

5. Sampling and its Types

- William G. Cochran (1977), *Sampling Techniques*, Wiley, 3rd edition.

6. Fundamentals of field research in social sciences

- Bleich, Erik Bleich & Robert Pekkanen, (2013) "How to Report Interview Data," in Layna Mosley (ed.), *Interview Research in Political Science*, Cornell University pp. 84–105.
- Colin Elman & Diana Kapiszewski, (2014) "Data Access and Research Transparency in the Qualitative Tradition," *Political Science & Politics* 47(1), pp. 43–47.
- Diana Kapiszewski, Lauren M. MacLean & Benjamin L. Read, (2015), *Field Research in Political Science: Practices and Principles*, Cambridge University Press
- Roselyn Hsueh, Francesca Refsum Jensenius & Akasemi Newsome, (2014), "Fieldwork in Political Science: Encountering Challenges and Crafting Solutions" Introduction, *Political Science & Politics* 47(2), pp. 391–393.

7. Method to conduct interview

Individual In-depth Interview

- Rubin, Herbert J., and Irene Rubin, (1995) *Qualitative Interviewing: The Art of Hearing Data*, Beverly Hills, CA: SAGE Publications.

- Kvale, Steinar, (1996) *Interviews: An Introduction to Qualitative Research Interviewing*, Thousand Oaks, CA: SAGE Publications
- Patton, Michael Quinn (1990) *Qualitative Research and Evaluation Methods*, Beverly Hills, CA: SAGE Publications.

Interview based on Open Ended Questionnaire*

- Leech, Beth L. 2002. "Asking Questions: Techniques for Semistructured Interviews." *PS: Political Science & Politics* 35 (4): 665–668.
- Aberbach, Joel D., and Bert A. Rockman. 2002. "Conducting and Coding Elite Interviews." *PS: Political Science & Politics* 35 (4): 673–676

Narrative Interviewing

- Jovchelovitch, Sandra, and Martin W. Bauer, (2000), "Narrative Interviewing." In *Qualitative Researching with Text, Image and Sound: A Practical Handbook*, edited by Martin W. Bauer and George Gaskell. London: SAGE

Process Tracing

- Collier, David, (2011) "Understanding Process Tracing." *Political Science & Politics* 44 (4): 823–830.
- Bennett, Andrew, and Jeffrey T. Checkel, eds. (2015), *Process Tracing: From Metaphor to Analytic Tool*, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

8. Focussed Group Discussion

- David L. Morgan (1996), "Focus Groups," *Annual Review of Sociology*, 22, 129–152.
- Barbour & Kitzinger (1999), *Developing Focus Group Research: Politics, Theory and Practice*.

9. Framing of questions – open ended close ended

- Pasek, Josh, and Jon A. Krosnick, (2010) "Optimizing Survey Questionnaire Design in Political Science: Insights from Psychology." In *The Oxford Handbook of Political Methodology*, edited by Janet M. Box-Steffensmeier, Henry E. Brady, and David Collier. Oxford: Oxford University Press.
- Mullinix, Kevin J., Thomas J. Leeper, James N. Druckman, and Jeremy Freese. 2015. "The Generalizability of Survey Experiments." *Journal of Experimental Political Science* 2 (2): 109–118.

- Goode, William J., and Paul K. Hatt, (1952), "The Collection of Data by Questionnaire" and "The Interview Schedule." In *Methods in Social Research*, New York: McGraw-Hill.
- Young, Pauline V. 2014. "Schedules and Questionnaires as Tools of Inquiry." In *Scientific Social Surveys and Research*, New York: Prentice Hall.

10. Survey

- Zaller, John, and Stanley Feldman, (1992), "A Simple Theory of the Survey Response: Answering Questions versus Revealing Preferences." *American Journal of Political Science* 36 (3): 579–616.
- Hobbs, William R., & Donald P. Green, (2024), "Categorizing Topics Versus Inferring Attitudes: A Theory and Method for Analyzing Open-ended Survey Responses" *Political Analysis*.
- Schuman, Howard, and Stanley Presser, (1996) "Open versus Closed Questions." In *Questions and Answers in Attitude Surveys: Experiments on Question Form, Wording, and Context*. San Diego: Academic Press

UNIT III: Essential Readings

11. Ethnography

- Fenno, Richard F. (1978) *Home Style: House Members in Their Districts*, Boston: Little, Brown.
- Schatz, Edward, ed. (2009) *Political Ethnography: What Immersion Contributes to the Study of Power*, Chicago: University of Chicago Press.
- Ethnography? Participant observation, a potentially revolutionary praxis, Alpa Shah, London School of Economics, and Political Science *Hau: Journal of Ethnographic Theory* 7 (1): 45–59
- Vanderbilt University Writing Studio. 2020. Taking Good Notes in the Field. Nashville, TN: Vanderbilt University

12. Narrative Interviewing

- Jovchelovitch, Sandra, and Martin W. Bauer, (2000), "Narrative Interviewing." In *Qualitative Researching with Text, Image and Sound: A Practical Handbook*, edited by Martin W. Bauer and George Gaskell. London: SAGE
- Process Tracing

- Collier, David, (2011) "Understanding Process Tracing." *Political Science & Politics* 44 (4): 823–830.
- Bennett, Andrew, and Jeffrey T. Checkel, eds. (2015), *Process Tracing: From Metaphor to Analytic Tool*, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

13. Interpretive phenomenology

- Eatough, V., & Smith, J. A. (2017), “Interpretative phenomenological analysis” In *The Sage handbook of qualitative research in psychology*, Sage Publication.

14. Process Tracing

- Collier, David, (2011) "Understanding Process Tracing." *Political Science & Politics* 44 (4): 823–830.
- Bennett, Andrew, and Jeffrey T. Checkel, eds. (2015), *Process Tracing: From Metaphor to Analytic Tool*, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

15. Thick Ethnography

- Geertz, Clifford. (1973) "Thick Description: Toward an Interpretive Theory of Culture." In *The Interpretation of Cultures: Selected Essays*, New York: Basic Books.
- Zapata-Barrero, R., Yalaz, E. (2018), *Qualitative Methods in Migration Research*. IMISCOE Research Series. Springer
- Shah, A. (2017). Ethnography?: Participant observation, a potentially revolutionary praxis. *HAU: Journal of Ethnographic Theory* 7 (1). 45-59.
- Dube, S. (2024). Disciplines and subjects: anthropology, history, modernity. *Eastern Anthropologist*, 77, 1-2. 1-17
- Pachirat, T. (2011). *Every twelve seconds: Industrialized slaughter and the politics of sight*. Yale Agrarian Studies Series. Yale University Press. New Haven. Pp. 320.

UNIT IV: Suggested Readings

16. Research in Conflict Areas using Altai

17. Reading Data-

- Qualitative Data Analysis: A Methods Sourcebook, Matthew B. Miles, A. Michael Huberman, and Johnny Saldaña, Chapter 4

18. Mixed Methods

- Creswell W. John, (2014), *A Concise Introduction to Mixed Methods Research*, Sage Publication.
- Booth, Andrew & Grant J. Maria, (2009), “A typology of reviews: an analysis of 14 review types and associated methodologies” Collaborative Research(SCNMCR), University of Salford, UK, (SchARR),University of Sheffield, Sheffield, UK

UNIT V: Essential Readings

19. Basics of R Programming

- Dalgaard, Peter J. (2002). *Introductory statistics with R*, Springer Publication

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