

Concept note

One day National Seminar

‘Questioning the Trends in Researching: Yesterday, Today and Tomorrow’

27 March 2018

There are number of ways in which traditional scholarship can be distinguished from what modern investigators mean by *methodology*. A *methodology* involves presenting rules of procedure about matters such as the collection of data and their analysis. The rules are impersonal, in that they are meant to apply equally to all researchers. In this way, methodology attempts to standardize practice of the social sciences and to eliminate quirkiness. To the modern methodologist, traditional scholarship seems a haphazard and biased affair. Individual quirkiness is very much part of traditional *scholarship*. It was taken for granted by the traditional scholar that one should read as widely as possible and in many languages as possible. Through wide reading, breadth and depth of knowledge would be gained, as well as the ability to make connections between seemingly disparate phenomena. The learned scholar would be able to interpret individual texts with insight not available to those with restricted reading. The main drawback of such traditional scholarship is that it places a burden of responsibility upon the scholar. The procedures of methodology make the individual expert anonymous, in the hope of reducing the vagaries of individual bias. Yet this abolition of bias also involves abolishing judgment.

There are no neutral methodological procedures to hide behind. History of doing research is a history full of accidents and conjunctures and curious juxtapositions of events. It demonstrates to us the complexity of human change and unpredictable character of the ultimate consequences of any given act or decision that we undertake. Our experiences of research question whether or not naïve and simple-minded rules which methodologists take to guide research are capable of accounting for a ‘maze of interactions’? And it is also not clear whether or not successful *participation* of any kind is possible only for a ruthless opportunist who is not tied to any particular philosophy and who adopts whatever procedures seems fit for an occasion.

The sociologist cannot abdicate from his or her responsibility for knowledge he or she produces. He or she must validate it, assisting knowledge-users both in assessing it and interpreting its political messages. The sociological researcher is therefore both responsible and accountable. His or her accountability is not to ‘the profession’ but to those who need the knowledge, and from whose standpoint it was made. In arguing that the task of sociology is to provide useful descriptions of the world as it is, we assert that in the task of intellectual production, sociologists can also be scholarly craftspeople. This seminar will precisely try to question the trends in researching in sociology in India and the west and try to answer how a researcher can become an able craftsman or woman.

Sub Themes:

Research and theory: Interrelationship; Theory building through research: Issues and challenges; the potentialities of hypothetico-deductive research in India;

Challenges of researching in India; Critiquing research trends in India

Policy-research: then and now; Evaluation research

Gender as a category in research; Gendering of the research process;

Issues of gender in research; Challenges to women researchers; Challenges to male researchers working on gender issues

Mixing methods: Uses and abuses

Methodological triangulation and data triangulation: Issues involved and challenges faced

Mixing methods: Potentialities and its critique

Fieldwork: Access, Participation; Relationships; Maintaining of Distance

Issues and challenges in studying communities, local cultures, folkways and everyday

Moving beyond the field: Use of visuals, Secondary sources, documentary analysis, narratives and conversations

Post-modernism in research

Ethics and responsibilities of researchers; Pitfalls of use of values and morality in research; Seeing through a personal lens in research

Seminar organized by: Department of Sociology, University of Gour Banga, P.O. Mokdumpur, and Dist: Malda

Chief Patron of the Seminar: Prof. Swagata Sen, Honourable Vice-Chancellor, University of Gour Banga, Malda

Seminar Organizing Committee

Dr. Sudarshana Sen, Coordinator, Department of Sociology, University of Gour Banga; (Convener: 9830944470)

Dr. Anindya Bhattacharyya, Assistant Professor, Department of Sociology, University of Gour Banga, Organizing Secretary (9830026695)

Mr. Bappi Singha, Assistant professor, Department of Sociology, University of Gour Banga, Treasurer (9563030303)

Call for Papers

Interested participants are requested to send their papers within 300 words to sen_sl@yahoo.co.in within 26 February 2018. **All abstracts sent should contain name, full address, designation and email address.**

Please note **only selected papers will be allowed for presentation.** Selected papers will be communicated via e-mail by 28 February 2018.

No TA/DA or accommodation will be provided. However any interested candidate may request Organizing Secretary for arranging accommodation on payment via bank transaction.

Registration

Selected paper presenters are requested to register after they receive email from the Organizers. **Please download the form from the website www.ugb.ac.in and resend the filled-in form to the email: sociology.ugb.2011@gmail.com**

Teachers: Rs. 800; Research Scholars: Rs. 400

Whoever is interested to participate but not present papers are also welcome. Registration details for them are as follows:

Teacher/Research Scholars/ Students of PG Departments of the University of Gour Banga: Rs. 100 (Students {running batch} of the Department of Sociology, University of Gour Banga need not register)

Please note **registration will be open from 3 to 7 March 2018.** No transaction before or after the scheduled date will be entertained. No spot registration will be allowed.

Bank Details

United Bank of India

Branch: University of Gour Banga

A/C: 1622010065159

IFSC: UTBIOGBVF88

MICR: 7320275524

About the University and the Department

University of Gour Banga is a State aided university which started from 2008. It is NAAC accredited University. The details can be found in www.ugc.ac.in

The Department started from 2011. There are three members of the faculty. It runs P.G. courses, M. Phil and PhD.

About Malda

Malda is a district town situated more than three hundred kilometers from Kolkata and more than two hundred and fifty kilometers from Siliguri. The town is connected by rail and bus service. The nearest railway station is MALDA TOWN (IRCTC Code: MLDT). The Central Bus terminus is adjacent to the University Campus. There are toto/auto rickshaws and rickshaws available from Station to the University campus at reasonable rates.

National Seminar

27 March 2018

‘Questioning the Trends in Researching: Yesterday, Today and Tomorrow’

Organized by: Department of Sociology

University of Gour Banga, Malda, West Bengal

REGISTRATION FORM

| | |
|---|--|
| NAME IN BLOCK LETTERS | |
| DESIGNATION | |
| Name of the University/Institute/College | |
| FULL ADDRESS | |
| TITLE OF THE PAPER | |
| Email | |
| Bank Challan no. With date | |
| Name of the Bank | |
| Name of the Branch and IFSC | |

Signature