
UNIT 1: UNDERSTANDING ETHNOGRAPHY*

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1.0 OBJECTIVES

After going through this unit, you should be able to:

- describe the development of ethnography;
- discuss how different theoretical approaches have informed ethnographic practice;
- explain the pre-requisites of writing Ethnography;
- list the different types of ethnographies and explain their features; and
- outline the ethnography today.

1.1 INTRODUCTION

The word *Ethnography* comes from *Ethnos*, a Greek term, denotes a people, a race, or a cultural group. When *ethno* prefix is combined with *graphic* to form the term *ethnographic*, it refers to the science devoted to describing ways of life of humankind. Ethnography, then refers to a social scientific

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description of a people and the cultural basis of their peoplehood (Peacock, 1986).

Ethnography is the art and science of describing a group or culture (Fetterman, 1998:1). Emerging from Anthropology and adopted by social science disciplines, it is a systematic description of culture through fieldwork. It involves the ethnographer/researcher participating overtly or covertly in people's daily lives for an extended period and recording and collecting the available data to throw light on the issues that are the focus of the research (Hammersley and Atkinson, 1995:1). Such an endeavour aims to provide a 'thick description' (Geertz, 1973), i.e., an in-depth detailed description of everyday life and practice of the people. Ethnography as a qualitative methodology lends itself to studying the beliefs, practices, social interactions, and behaviours of the people through participant observation and later interpreting the data collected (Denzin & Lincoln, 2011; Berry, 2011). Thus,

'Ethnography is the study of the people in naturally occurring settings of 'fields' by means of methods which capture their social meanings and ordinary activities, involving the researcher participating directly in the setting, if not also the activities, to collect data in a systematic manner without the meaning being imposed on them externally' (Brewer, 2000:10)

In its early stages, there was a desire by the researchers to make ethnography appear scientific and a set of rules were followed as to how ethnography should be done. Ethnography developed as a tool of social science. It involved the social scientific observer, the observed and the research report as text, and the audience to which the text is presented (Denzin & Lincoln, 2011).

It is essential here to differentiate between ethnography as a process and as a product. Ethnography *as a process*, i.e., participating and collecting data in the field, allows the researcher to observe closely, record and engage in the daily life of another culture- an experience labelled as the fieldwork method. Whereas ethnography *as a product* (i.e., ethnographic writings), the ethnographer writes the accounts of the culture he studied in descriptive detail which are ethnographer's personal and theoretical reflections and are available for readers (Barnard & Spencer, 1996).

Here in this Unit, you would understand how the ethnographer writes ethnography for the reader to grasp the social reality. Ethnographic writing includes a detailed description that is presented in narrative form. The purpose of the description is to let the reader understand what happened in the field and the participant's worldview in the research. It also gives a glimpse of the social reality as deciphered and interpreted by the researcher and later produced as an ethnographic text. The text mentions all the particular events and activities that happened when the researcher was in the field. It would also tell the reader about those events which may be worth exploring further.

The ethnographies also include the kind of questions the researcher is trying to answer. An entire activity or event will often be reported in detail because it represents a typical or unique experience or allows a very detailed micro-analysis. But the extensive description of an event from the field is

always balanced by analysis and interpretation. An interesting, coherent and readable ethnographic report should provide sufficient description to allow the reader to understand the analysis and adequate analysis to enable the reader to understand the interpretation and explanation presented. It should also be noted that the facts presented in an ethnography are not just a set of objective truths but is an interpretation done by the ethnographer. The anthropologist who goes to the field, observes and participates in the reality, collects the data and later interprets this data. The interpretation is a construct of the reality they witnessed that forms the writing of the text. Before we go further, we must understand how ethnography became an essential part of social science research.

Check Your Progress 1

- 1) Define Ethnography

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1.2 HISTORY AND DEVELOPMENT OF ETHNOGRAPHY

In the first half of the 1800s, the term *ethnology* was more often used to study people by comparing their material artifacts and cultures. Ethnologists did not collect information by direct observation; instead, they examined the archives of government offices, missionaries documents or accounts of journeys or explorers’ accounts of the ‘primitives’. The descriptions of the ‘other’ cultures of the world written by Western missionaries, explorers and colonial administrators presented the perspectives of the colonizers/ conquering civilizations whose mission was to civilize the ‘less civilized’. Such accounts were a reversed image of the writer’s ethno cultural ideal. The pioneering anthropologists then were not fieldworkers themselves but were armchair largely anthropologists. They researched the reports from missionaries and colonial administrators to second their theories about cultures other than their own. It is only later that fieldwork became an essential component of anthropological inquiry. Thus, ethnographic methodology did not erupt suddenly in anthropology; rather, it arose gradually through the works of various authors who initiated the fieldwork. Over time, the term ethnology i.e., the comparative study of culture, fell out of favour because anthropologists began to do their fieldwork. The term ‘ethnography’(i.e., the empirical study of particular groups of people) was used to refer to the integration of both the first-hand empirical investigation and the theoretical and comparative interpretation of social organization and culture (Hammersley and Atkinson, 2007;1).

British and Chicago Schools of Ethnography

From being the ‘travelers account’, the journey of ethnography to a specialized text has been an interesting one. The interest of Westerners in the origins of culture and civilization with an assumption that contemporary

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‘primitive’ people, those thought by Westerners to be less civilized than themselves, were, in effect, living replicas of the ‘great chain of being’ that linked the occident to its prehistoric beginnings (Hodgen,1964; 386-432). The cultural diversity of people outside the West posed a problem for these scholars to account for the origins, histories and development of such racial and cultural diversity and consider why differences have risen.

Two independent intellectual developments during the twentieth century, one in Britain and the other in North America, also referred to as the British and Chicago schools of ethnography, respectively, led to the development of formal ethnography. The classical tradition of social anthropology that developed in Britain led to the British school of ethnography, whereas the other is known as the Chicago Sociological tradition.

Boas, popularly called the father of American anthropology, strongly denounced the half-baked generalizations propagated by early 19th century anthropologists based on their scanty data made available through others. For Boas, to theorise one had to be dependent on proper ethnographic data collected on a first hand basis. Boas vehemently believed that all fields of anthropology had to be investigated in order to procure accurate data and to provide a viewpoint. This thought permitted him to reconstruct the history of the growth of ideas with much greater accuracy than the generalizations of a comparative method (Hyatt 1990:43). Boas thus introduced new ways of doing fieldwork in anthropology where he emphasised on ethnographic fieldwork, cultural relativism and participant observation method. His cultural relativism brought in new insights to the study of anthropology as the emphasis shifted from the reasoning of the investigating anthropologist to the perception and interpretation of the respondents of the culture investigated. This was to do away with objective notions of one society being claimed more superior than another, or more correct than the other

Box 1.0

Though the British school is often linked with European colonialism, whose primary interest was to know the culture and native people of their colonies to exploit the labour powers of the natives and also utilize their natural resources to feed the extractive industries of Europe. It is no longer associated with colonialism. The European scholars mainly became interested in studying the ‘other’-focusing on the non-industrialized people and their culture.

While E Tylor and L. H. Morgan were the pioneers who wrote on ethnography, Bronislaw Malinowski has explicitly described steps in an ethnographic study. Through his works on the communities of New Guinea, Malinowski defined the fieldworker as a ‘professional stranger’(Agar,1980), becoming embedded into a culture and conducting fieldwork through participant observation (Participant observation is one type of data collection method by practitioner-scholars typically used in qualitative research and ethnography) to understand the social reality of the society. Malinowski emphasized holism to gain the native’s point of

view and emphasized a rigorous scientific approach. In his famous work *Argonauts of the Western Pacific*, in the Introduction itself, Malinowski described the methodological principles stating the goal of ethnography to ‘grasp the native’s point of view, his relation to life, and realize his vision of his world’. Malinowski lived for two years (between 1914 and 1918) among the Kula of the Trobriand Islands, learned their language, used natives as informants and directly observed the social life, participating in their everyday activities.

From the 1920s onwards, ethnographic methodology was incorporated in Sociology, adopted by the Department of Sociology of the University of Chicago. The Chicago School (of urban ethnography) is usually regarded as the main force behind sociological fieldwork. The Chicago school researchers Robert E. Park and Ernest Burgess and their students during the last quarter of the 19th century, just before the Great Depression, produced ethnographies based on everyday lives, communities and symbolic interactions of a specific group. The core Chicago ethnographies that resulted presented a vital picture of the then urban life and these works are considered as classics throughout the world. These ethnographies captured urban life, talked of social change and used statistical data with qualitative techniques like interviews and life histories. Community studies and homegrown ethnographies were the two forms of ethnography encouraged in Chicago.

Box 1.1

By the 1930s several ethnographies had been written about the ‘deviant sub-cultures’ and members of the down-and-out groups in Chicago. The professional thieves, taxi dancers, and urban gang members were studied using the life history method. The interviews were conducted in natural settings like brothels, street corners, tenements, mission shelters, bars and Union halls, etc. (Van Maanen, 2011;19-20).

Another significant development in the latter half of the 20th century was that ethnography spread further to psychology and human geography. It was also influenced by theoretical ideas like anthropological functionalism, symbolic interactionism, philosophical pragmatism, feminism, constructionism, post-structuralism and postmodernism. Ethnography today plays a complex and shifting role in the dynamic tapestry that the social sciences have become in the 21st century. It has also, in a way, changed what ethnographers actually do, how they collect data and how the various paradigms in social science have informed and continue to inform the ethnographic practice. Let us first discuss what ethnographers do before understanding how the theoretical discourses influence knowledge production and thus ethnographies.

Check your Progress 2

- 1) What was the positivist approach to writing ethnography?

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1.3 PRE-REQUISITES FOR WRITING ETHNOGRAPHY

In the beginning, anthropologists and ethnographers accepted the positivist approach and the central aim of ethnography was to provide a rich, holistic and complete accounts of the fields they visited. As Hammersley states, ‘the task is to document the people’s culture, perspectives and practices, of the people in these settings. The aim is to *‘get inside* the way each group of people sees the world’. The ethnographer provides a detailed description of the research setting and its participants based on the researcher’s direct observations or interviews of a few key informants.

Owing to the complex nature of social life, the ethnographers gather data participant observations, directly engaging and involving with the world they are studying. During the observations, ethnographers use interview schedules/guides and even indulge in informal conversational interviews to collect data. The interview guide and informal discussions allow the researcher to immerse in reality, engage with the informants, and probe deeper into emerging issues. Ethnographers also gather in-depth interviews, documentary data and visual data as photographs and video recordings. Ethnographers also triangulate interviews and observation methods to enhance the quality of the data. Triangulation is a technique designed to compare and contrast different methods to provide a more comprehensive account of the phenomena under study. The triangulation technique is useful as it helps to contrast what people say and what their actual behavior is. Analysis of the ethnographic data is done in an inductive thematic manner i.e., the data is categorized into themes and then through careful analysis, the ethnographers generate tentative theoretical explanations of their empirical work.

It is important here to understand that any cultural interpretation of carefully collected ethnographic data using ethnographic methods and techniques has to also take note of certain fundamental concepts that shape an ethnography, notable- a holistic perspective, contextualization, emic and etic perspective and a non-judgmental view of reality (Fetterman, 2010).

1.3.1 A Holistic Outlook

Ethnographers assume a holistic outlook in research to get a comprehensive picture of the social group and describe the history, economy, religion, politics and environment. This outlook allows the ethnographers to grasp the reality even beyond the immediate cultural scene. For instance, knowing the history of a social group would reflect on the religion and rituals and their significance. Each scene is complex and multilayered and has a context to it and having a holistic outlook would help the ethnographer to understand the social whole.

1.3.2 Contextualization

Placing the observations made on the field within a social context would provide a larger perspective. Take an example of a study on girl’s education. You may find that often the girl students’ drop out rate from school is much higher than those of boys. Suppose the ethnographer locates this issue in a

larger context. In that case, he might find that the girls drop out of education due to the additional burden of daily household chores or taking care of the younger siblings and helping their mothers. The ethnographer taking into account the larger context of gender roles and such contextualization might help grasp social life. Take another example, on reaching puberty, the girls themselves are absent from the school because of lack of hygienic toilets. Then it is understood that due to lack of infrastructure, the girl's education takes a backseat. Thus, it is essential to move beyond the immediate cultural scene and contextualize the data within the larger perspective.

1.3.3 Emic vs Etic perspective

The emic perspective -the insider's or native's perspective of reality is at the heart of most ethnographic research. This insider's perception of reality is instrumental to understanding and accurately describing situations and behaviors (Fetterman,2010;20). This emic perspective helps the fieldworker understand why members of the social group do what they do and the emic perspective helps record the multiple realities. An etic perspective, on the other hand, is the external, social scientific perspective of reality. Most ethnographers record the emic perspective and then append it with their scientific analysis. And a good ethnography requires both emic and etic perspectives (ibid;22).Although taking the emic stance is a time-consuming task, this ensures the validity of the data collected. Combining both emic and etic helps produce a more scientifically informed empirical reality.

1.3.4 Non-judgmental view of reality

It is essentially a pre-requisite for the ethnographer to have a non-judgmental view in the field. They should refrain from making any inappropriate judgments if they encounter any unfamiliar practice. But it is also understood that the ethnographer cannot be neutral and has their own set of beliefs and biases. Ethnocentric behaviour i.e., imposition of one's cultural values and standards on another culture, assuming that one is superior to the other is an error in ethnographic practice.

Check your Progress 3

- 1) Differentiate between emic and etic perspective

- 2) How do ethnographers get the insider's view of the people they study?

1.4 TYPES OF ETHNOGRAPHIES

The difference between approaches and methods used by different ethnographers, especially at different periods, can be explained to some extent by the influence of various ideas in the social sciences (O'Reilly, 2005;44).

The philosophical approaches that inform ethnographic approaches can be Positivism, Functionalism, Interpretative, feminist and post-modernism.

1.4.1 Positivist and functionalist ethnography

During the 19th century, a positivistic approach in anthropology and ethnography predominated. This approach adheres to the empiricist notions of knowledge generation and advocates objectivity and distance from the object of inquiry. Objectivity requires the researcher to maintain distance and remain detached from the object of inquiry and the results are focused on facts rather than the researcher's own beliefs and values (Payne & Payne, 2004). The primary focus is to seek generalizable laws that may be applied to human behaviour. The anthropologists like Malinowski, Evans Pritchard and Radcliffe Brown, following the positivist approach, presumed that cultures were static and homogenous and a holistic approach would be best suited to collect the data in the field. This approach opined that every aspect of a culture has a distinct role in the maintenance of the whole, i.e., every element of culture had a function and contributed to the maintenance of the whole society. The society was presumed to be in equilibrium and functioning harmoniously. Some very famous ethnographies have been produced during this time.

Some of the classical ethnographies include, Bronislaw Malinowski's *Argonauts of the Western Pacific* (1922); E.E. Evans Pritchard's, *The Nuer* (1940) and Margaret Mead's *Coming of Age in Samoa* (1928). Malinowski acknowledged that the aim of ethnography was to capture the native's worldview. The ethnographers tried to have a positivist approach and collected their data as scientifically and objectively as possible using participant observation. Similarly, Radcliffe Brown's work on Andaman Islanders is another example of an ethnographer taking an objective view of reality without considering the actual/ real thinking of the natives. Since they talked of harmonious societies in equilibrium, these ethnographies were more of a construct of reality. But it was soon realized that writing objectively about cultures does not describe actual and real situations and then it was urged to locate meanings in the situations in the field.

1.4.2 Interpretative approach to ethnography

With 'thick description', Clifford Geertz professed on meanings and real emotions rather than just noting of facts in the field. It was stated that it is essential to see humans as actors in the social world rather than simply reacting as objects in the natural world (O'Reilly; 49). It was emphasized that the actual context of the situation be noted to know the relation between the action and the environment in which the action is taking place and what participants have to say about it. The focus shifted to creating more meaningful ethnographies with rich data and more qualitative depth. The aim was to generate an interpretative understanding (or *verstehen*) that is in search for meanings. Ethnographies then focused on just recording what people say, rather what meaning it has for the people. The ethnographer would then find the logic of the actions and then only the text would be insightful. Giving an example of the famous Balinese cockfight, Geertz has stated that each item of culture makes sense only when seen in a context and what meaning does the participant in the field attach to it.

1.4.3 Phenomenological approach

Following Alfred Schutz (1972), much of the 1960s and 1970s qualitative research turned to phenomenological approach, i.e., obtaining the actor's point of view. Humans make sense of what we receive through our senses—we see, hear, smell, feel, and taste by splitting up the world around us into categories and sub-categories. By emphasizing on the 'constituted meanings', phenomenology offers a vision of the social world where human subjects define themselves and what they value and a variety of ways they experience the world. It becomes imperative for ethnographers to look how the 'lived world' of the people under study is constituted. Contemporary ethnographers cover this experiential dimension and subjective experience of the people they study and recreate a text in a reflexive manner. The idea is to make detailed observations combined with historical dimensions and create a reflexive account where the reader can draw their conclusions.

1.4.4 Critical ethnography

Some ethnographies are strategically situated to shed light on larger social, political, symbolic or economic issues. Moving from parochial vision, there has been a shift in ethnographies to larger issues like addressing the political economy or seeing from the perspective of the disadvantaged group in advanced capitalist societies. These are example of critical realist tales embedded within the Marxist frame. For example, June Nash's *We Eat the Mines and the mines Eat Us*, is a historical and contemporary account of Bolivian tin miners. Another example is Hochschild's (1983) work on the sociology of emotions, which does not have a Marxist slant but is an example of a critical tale. Using participant observation and interviews among flight attendants, the author has talked about a problematic emotional work – 'Service with a smile'. While providing a larger context, the ethnographers of these ethnographies have referred to Economics, Political Science, History and Psychology to advance their understanding of the social reality.

1.4.5 Feminist ethnography

Women ethnographers have brought a new perspective to the way ethnographies are written and read. During the 1970s when feminists began questioning the use of masculine pronouns and nouns, the female was essentially missing in the ethnographies. Sally Slocum's (1970) paper *Woman the Gatherer: The Male Bias in Anthropology* critiqued the popular conception of 'man-the hunter' and challenged the androcentric academy. Another volume by Peggy Golde *Women in the Field* is an edited volume by women anthropologists, opened the debate of how being women affected the experiences of anthropologists conducting their research in diverse settings. Such feminist paradigms have revealed that how women have been conceptualized in Western intellectual tradition, which is often constructed from a male and white-centric point of view, does not address anything associated with women. The production of knowledge was from the male perspective and power played a significant role in how the reality was looked into and how one did fieldwork. As done by traditional ethnographers, the power and hierarchy in the field further marginalized the women's perspective. And feminist methodology highlighted this. The fieldwork and analysis of the field was not free from relations of power between the

ethnographer/observer and the observed. Annette Wiener's famous re-study of the Trobriand Islands, (where she visited the site of Malinowski's classic work and incorporated women's voices) showed a different picture of the Trobrianders than one shown by Malinowski.

1.5 ETHNOGRAPHY TODAY

One of the major developments in anthropology has been the reflexive turn, which is a process of reflection that allows the researcher/ethnographer to be the object i.e., a focus on the self-examination, self-critique, and selfhood is incorporated in the text. Reflexivity in anthropology developed due to three main developments, i.e.,

- acknowledgment of the Euro-centric bias in anthropology (which was critically addressed by scholars like Talal Asad and Dell Hymes)
- the emergence of the feminist movement that accused the androcentric nature of Anthropology.
- The 1967 publication of Malinowski's field diaries, *A Diary in the Strict Sense of the Term*, revealed Malinowski's fieldwork's subjectivity.

The other two volumes that focused on different forms of new ethnographies and supported reflexivity were by James Clifford and George Marcus's *Writing Culture: The Poetics and Politics of Ethnography* and Michael Fisher and George Marcus's *Anthropology Cultural Critique*. These developments changed the methodological approaches in Anthropology and emphasized reflexive understanding of the ethnographer and their field study. The most important reflexive ethnographies were *Deep Play: Notes on a Balinese Cockfight* (1972) by Clifford Geertz and *Reflections on Fieldwork in Morocco* (1977) by Paul Rabinow.

In doing and writing ethnographies there were multiple voices, multiple identities and multiple actors – all of which needed to be given space. This included not only the natives being studied, but also the ethnographer himself/ herself, and his/ her own personality and life experiences both in and off the field. All these gave rise to reflexive ethnography and auto-ethnography and online or virtual ethnography.

1.5.1 Autoethnography

Autoethnography is where the researcher's thoughts and perspectives derives from their social interactions in the field form the central element of the study. Autoethnography refers to turning the ethnographic gaze inward on the self(auto), while maintaining the outward gaze of ethnography, looking at the larger context wherein self-experiences occur (Denzin,1997:227). It broadly refers to both the method and their product of researching and writing about personal lived experiences and their relationship to culture (Ellis, 2004;xix). As a methodology, it accommodates the subjectivity of the researcher and their influence on the research. Autoethnography began in the 1980s (although self-observation and confessional tales began in the 1960s) and two major works during 1992, namely *Anthropology and Autobiography* by Judith Oakley and Helen Callaway and *An Invitation to*

Reflexive Sociology by Pierre Bourdieu, led to its development. Personal narratives and experiences in the field were dealt with in the former book whereas awareness of the researcher's position in the social fields was discussed in the latter.

1.5.2 Online ethnography

An online or virtual medium used to study internet communities in various forms is a new way of doing ethnography. This research method explores how humans live and interact online through a wide range of different research strategies. Hine argues that ethnographic researchers start from the perspective of questioning what is taken for granted and seeking to analyse and contextualize 'the way things are' (Hine 2000: 8). In relation to the internet this means that researchers challenge the notion that the internet is the product of the features of its technology, and explore how it is constructed by the way in which people inhabit, utilize and actively make it. A diffuse and diverse set of approaches to Online ethnography has emerged that uses a variety of terms, including Virtual ethnography, Netnography and Cyberethnography, all establishing that online context could be sites for ethnographic study.

Ethnography conducted in online settings has been instrumental in demonstrating the complex nature of Internet based interactions and enabled us to explore the new cultural formations that emerge online (Hine, 2008; 401). As the Internet developed, so did various approaches to study the online spaces emerged. For instance, Kendall (2002) did fieldwork focusing on gender in an online forum. Later, Kozinets (2010) developed Netnography to efficiently study online domains used in the marketing context to understand consumer motivations and behaviours. Another example is Coleman's (2013) ethnography of a hacker community involving extensive online fieldwork. Robinson and Schulz (2009) have identified three different phases of online ethnography:

- Pioneering approaches saw the Internet as the new domain for identity formation and stressed the distinctiveness of online social formations.
- The transfer of offline methodological concerns into the online domain and
- The recent emergence of multi-modal approaches that consider video and audio data alongside textual data and also seek to conceptualize online interactions within offline spaces.

Internet studies have been a rich field for methodological development and have dramatically transformed the social research landscape. Mixed method research designs have emerged in Internet studies allowing for a combination of large -scale and small-scale focus through which researchers can explore both patterns and meanings (Hesse-Biber and Griffin, 2013). Coleman (2010) argues that ethnography in online spaces is significant as these sites have emerged as central sites of experiences in everyday life and offer heterogeneity. Online spaces have provided access for ethnographers to explore everyday life in depth and detail and have a significant contribution to social sciences.

Check your Progress 4

1) How the reflexive turn has changed the way ethnography is written today?

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2) Define Autoethnography

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3) Define Online Ethnography

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1.6 LET US SUM UP

Ethnography emerging from anthropology, developed as a tool in social science to describe the people one studies. It refers both to the process and the product. The process is defined as the actual fieldwork that the ethnographer or the researcher indulges in. The ethnographer collects the description of a particular culture- their customs, beliefs and behavior and then analyze and writes it as an ethnographic text. Also, an ethnography is not just a document on the lives of ‘others’, rather it presents the voice of a community or people, who, along with the author, are present in the text. The growth of ethnography has evolved over the years and has been informed by various theoretical approaches. The traditional ethnography has evolved and the contemporary ethnographies are more realist, confessional and critical tales, capturing new set of values, ways of thought and new ways of life. The ethnographer’s subjectivities too inform the text and along with the voice of the observed.

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1.7 ANSWERS TO CHECK YOUR PROGRESS

Check Your Progress 1

- 1) Ethnography has been defined as the art or science of describing a culture or group. It emerges from the discipline of anthropology and adopted by social sciences.

Check Your Progress 2

- 1) During the 19th Century, the positivist approach predominated in ethnography and this approach was based on the empiricist notion of knowledge generation. It believed in objectivity and keeping distance from the object of inquiry. Thus, the researcher was supposed to maintain detachment while conducting ethnographic research.

Check Your Progress 3

- 1) Emic perspective is that of the insiders i.e. the natively's perspective of social reality while the elite perspective is that of the outsiders, scientific perspective of social reality; as understood by the ethnographer.
- 2) The insider's view of the people is obtained by the researcher using methods of observation and interview through participation. It is this instrumental knowledge which helps to understand why people behave the way they do and this is the core of ethnographic research.

Check Your Progress 4

- 1) One of the major developments in anthropology has been the entry of the reflexive way of looking at social reality. It's a process of reflection which allows the researcher i.e. the ethnographer to be the object. She is allowed to be self-examines; self-critique etc. one's own views and subjectivities and include it as part of the text.
- 2) Autoethnography is where the researcher's own thoughts and perspectives derive from their social interactions in the field form the central element of the study Auto ethnography; therefore, helps to turn the 'gaze' towards the ethnographer's own self at the same time obscuring and recording the social reality outside.
- 3) Online ethnography is ethnography which is done using the internet. It is a virtual mode of collecting information etc. it differs from the traditional ethnography notions to ethnography done through technologically mediated interactions through online network.