CHAPTER I

PROLOGUE
Introduction:

In social sciences, the problems of researchers are far more complex due to the non-amenability of the concerned object which is a collective of human individuals equipped with a brain that possesses an expanding capacity. In Natural Sciences, the object, Nature has autonomy and the causal forces are internal, it gives an impression to the subject that it can not only distance itself from the object but also can observe the motion in the object. This also enables the subject to quantify, to predict and to conceptualise the object. However, the subject is limited to an observer role, but in reality it should be incorporated in the role of a participator to get the full knowledge of the objective reality in which it is a part. Although the physicists do confront problems in studying electron which is in constant but unpredictable motion, it was discovered that the cluster of electrons follow a pattern which can be studied. In case of Social Sciences, the object which is in motion is far more complex and unpredictable than the electron. The object, a human collective, is in motion, but it is a part of the collective and its motion. It is precisely this reason why Peter Medavar observed that the study of the human system is far more complex than study of Nature.

The question raised in social science research methodologies move around the questions of quantification and objectivity. The relation with Nature could be altered or adjusted as the subject has succeeded in a large measure in quantifying the motion and in
distancing itself from the object. However, the debate about objectivity still continues in this regard. In case of social phenomenon, the subject is almost denied of these two advantages. It is this complexity that accounts for the general inadequacy of under development of social Knowledge. It is striking to note that the best of minds in social sciences reflected on this theoretical question, but they did not devote adequate attention to the methodological problems.

The study of human in the human collective poses variety of problems for analysis, it has a dynamic character in the sense that it has a brain which can think and guide action accordingly and some times conceal the thought process, it assumes the role of a subject also which can model the researcher and act accordingly. This human in a collective, unlike the electron in an ensemble, is heterogeneous in character who form not a single collective, but different social and interest groups which act like a pressure group directing the motion of the collective. In addition, since the human is special species which has a mental capacity to think and also act accordingly, but in the process models the researcher and react depending on its assessment of the researcher. The main difference, as modelled by the object and also the object does not change itself depending on the subject. In that sense, normal science based on paradigms, as suggested by Kuhn, is possible, but in case of Social Sciences it is not possible because of the complexity in the human nature. Myrdal also tried to model the society in motion where disputes become a common phenomenon. He
introduced concepts such as beliefs and valuations which can be changed with the help of autonomous STATE and its intervention. In this, neither the social groups nor the interest groups found a place and the society is visualised as a homogeneous entity.

Presently, Political Science theoreticians recognise that the society is in motion and they are occupied with questions such as social change and its relation to human action. Even in the modern political analysis, almost every political analyst evinced an interest in studying the object in motion, nobody seriously reflected on the methodological problems such as the source of motion in the object. They concentrated on methods of analysis. The one exception is David Easton, professor in University of Chicago. Easton recognised the crisis in the discipline of Political Science in the neglect of general theory and absence of theoretical orientation at one level and lack of proper methodology at another level. He attempted to improve the general state of discipline. In the course of doing it, he did deal with the methodology. Easton broadly suggests,

1. Enlarging the scope of discipline so as to subsume the other inter related processes and also space for innovation.
2. Altering the tools and techniques so as to gather more reliable data
3. Developing a value framework by the subject studying the object.

He proposed a general equilibrium model for studying the process in the object. However, the idea of equilibrium did
create problems. The general equilibrium model of Eastern is such that, it proposes that all variables in a political system are functionally interdependent. They tend to act and react with each other to a point where a state of stability, if even for a moment, is obtained. As a consequence, the concepts such as interdependence and hence multiplicity of social forces got added to the mode of analysis. In this general equilibrium model, there is always a tendency for the object to maintain a given equilibrium conditions, where a uniform motion is accepted as a condition of rest. This idea of stability of an object however got enlarged and was defined not as absolute rest or lack of motion, but it is only a hypothetical situation which can be useful as a point of reference and a heuristic tool.

The Eastonian methodological exercise is more an acknowledgement of the problematic and not a break through in the subject-object relation. For, the break through is not possible unless the methods and methodology succeed in capturing the social laws of motion and identifying the cause of motion internally, which were beyond the Eastonian comprehension. Thus, the best contribution coming from modern political analysis stream proved to be no match to the complexity of the problem.

The next phase of development of Political Science came around 1990. Contemporary violent international conflicts in the world scenario demanded that development of a correct theory which can analyse the conflict so that remedies became plain. The new
field concerned specially with the nature of conflicts as a
generic human problem and with techniques or initiatives that
might be applied productively in addressing conflicts so that its
resolution became a part of a political philosophy. Richard
Burke, university of Maryland, is the prime architect of such a
theory in which conflicts got internalized. Burke differentiates
conflicts from disputes and defines that conflicts are likely to
be intractable and lead to behaviours that seriously prejudice the
physical and psychological security and the future development of
the individuals, groups, societies or nations concerned. Then,
resolution of conflict, he defined as, transformation of treatment
of the problem that are the source of conflict by coercive means,
or by bargaining or negotiation in which relative powers determine
the outcome. Further he coined a new term called provention,
different than prevention, that remove not merely the conditions
that create an environment of conflict and the structural change
required to remove the conflict, which has a negative connotation,
but promotions of conditions that create co-operative
relationships, in which human dimension is taken care of.
Finally, introduces a third party. for prevention of the conflict
with an underlying assumption that both the parties involved in a
conflict are not likely to have sufficient knowledge either of the
sources of their conflictual relationships or of the solution
available to resolve them. Therefore, a most knowledgeable and
skilled 'third party' becomes a necessity. So in the theoretical
formulation, there are two interacting protagonists and a third
party facilitator and tagged with an assumption that only with the
presence of the third party, necessary insights are likely to emerge. Burke finally suggests that conflict prevention is ultimately a question of education and an altered consensus.

Altogether different theoretical formulation, constantly competing with the existing theoretical formulations, is present in which the meaning of conflict is enlarged and viewed as a contradiction between two opposing forces in a phenomenon and contradiction becomes internal to the object itself which generates motion in the object. The one scientist who was able to grasp the problem of contradiction and motion of an object was Marx. Although, it was Hegel who attempted to capture the motion through dialectics, it was Marx who brought the methodology on to the ground and located it in the concrete. It opened up several new possibilities of studying not only subject-object relations through the materialist dialectics in their historical context, Marx tried to locate the laws of motion in the changing needs of production and claimed that if a subject can capture the mode of production, his understanding of the human system can be as precise as that of physicist. For this purpose he proposed productive forces, property relations and super structure as tools of analysis. While this optimism of Marx held a new promise in the study of social motion, this has not been fully realised in the course of advancements in social enquiry. The terrain that Marx opened has not been carried forward as much as it should have really been done. The discussion on Marxism occupied enormous space in the domain of a theory, ideology and strategy of change.
This methodology of Marx became compressed into an Ideology, a doctrine, and the debate centered around Marxism at an ideological level. In the process, the human being in the collective who is responsible for motion in the collective receded back and the laws of the collective became sacrosanct and were debated under the title Marxism, which came under severe criticism, forgetting the concrete from which they were abstracted. In the process, there has been considerable neglect of the methodological aspect of Marxian laws.

E.P. Thompson is a political philosopher who brought forward Marxism as a methodology in which he tried to incorporate motion of the object and groped for a suitable model which can capture a moving object. He proposed that the model should be such that its elements also should possess this character of motion. The study proposes to examine the problems of study of motion at multiple points. An examination of this kind may touch much larger issues than power relations. This problem is intrinsic to any methodological exercise. In fact, the neglect of research on methodologies is partly an account of boundary problems. Any study on methodology, by definition, would cut across the disciplinary boundaries as methodology is more universal in its relevance and application than the discipline. The whole discussion on interdisciplinary research remained a rhetoric as it has to achieved first at the level of methodology. And research on methodology is impaired because of disciplinary constraints. It is a vicious circle. This study seeks to tackle the problem at
its base. But it might get into several trapping if the criteria applied remains conventional.

The one question that can always be raised is the question that what is 'Political' in the enquiry. In an enquiry about enquiry, political can only be the reference point and not the subject matter. If the study is restricted to the study of "political\textsuperscript{1}, it ceases to be an enquiry into the adequacy of the methodology in studying the motion. The study does use the material related to power relations in different domains as extensively as possible. However, it did touch certain facets which may not be political or power relations in the conventional sense. This is done more to enlarge the scope of the discussion. If it were to be restricted only to what is called 'Political' in the conventional sense, it would end up where David Easton ended in spite of his competent treatment of the subject. Further, the relevance of the subject-object relations in a methodology is verified in different disciplines, in addition to Political Sciences, such as Economic and Semiotics of language studies and also examine whether the researcher can be transformed from an observer role to a participator role. For that purpose, the problems a researcher experiences in describing the object and also the causes for the non amenability of object should be taken into account.

The basic objective of research in any sciences—be it a study of Nature or that of Society—is to understand the reality
around in terms of the relation of human being with nature or with the rest of the society. A researcher, called as subject from now onwards, experiences number of problems in acquiring knowledge about the reality/called as an object from now onwards. Research methodology deals with the problems a subject faces in its quest for knowledge about the object and it also equips the subject with necessary tools of analysis. Krishna Bharadwaj [1980] expands the limits of the purpose of acquiring the knowledge by the subject about the object from mere understanding to that of transforming the reality when she says, "In Social sciences where the basic task, it would be argued by many, is to understand and interpret the process of social change at work and actively utilise (in the view of some) such knowledge to influence that process, the theoreticians, however lofty his ivory tower and abstracted his mode of reasoning, can not but imply a view about the nature and structure of social relations and the manner of their functioning." [Bharadwaj (1980); P-23. Haragopal and Vanamala [1984] expressed a similar opinion about knowledge and its usefulness when they say, "For in the learning process, people come to a new awareness of selfhood and begin to look critically at the social situation in which they find themselves and often take the initiative in acting to transforming to the society [Haragopal et al (1984); P-54]. Further, describing the growth of knowledge and its close linkage to approaches and methods used in investigation, they said, "These methodology courses attempt to equip the social scientist with most of the statistical skills to enable him to quantify the qualitative variables." [Haragopal et
Among the innumerable objects present in reality, subject gets attracted to a particular object. What interests the subject? May be, the subject has familiarity/acquaintance/belief in some particular theories about reality and develops an interest about theories. Students in Physics laboratory perform experiments with simple pendulum to verify the value of the acceleration due to gravity, an already known constant, which theorises that earth has an inherent gravitational force with which it attracts the bodies on earth. Similarly, they do experiments with plane mirrors to verify the already known laws of reflection and refraction which theorises the nature of light. This also means that the subject's disbelief, may be intuitional, about the veracity of a particular theory, forces it to collect evidences by which one can disprove the existing theories. Altogether a different case is, Subject, in the process of discovery, may come across such evidences that it enriches the knowledge about the object. Magnetic properties of iron were discovered like this. Thus, the subject locates itself in the already existing theories and in the process of research, either verify/falsify/improve/alter the already existing knowledge about reality, which shows that the entry point of the subject to the object is through theory; and the primacy of the subject is theoretical model of the object.

In an altogether different process of research, the subject
develops interest in the problem as it is not in correspondence with the theory it was acquainted with. Some of the reasons for a subject to develop interest may be as follows. Northtrop, according to Young and Schmid [1974] suggested that the scientific inquiry starts, "When something is unsatisfactory, when the facts necessary to solve a problem are unknown; when the traditional beliefs are inadequate in explaining the problem" [Young and Schmid(1974): p-5].

Haragopal & Vanamala [1984] identified, as one of the factors which, direct the scholar to prefer one topic over the other is, "...to satisfy a personal interest or curiosity" [Haragopal et al(1984): P-62]. Young and Schimid, [1974] identifies 'wonderful restlessness', a lively curiosity, endowed with imagination in the study of man. The entry point of the subject now is through the problem.

This different routes to research, through theory based on intellectual curiosity or through problem, are visualised in terms of differing entry points available to the subject to reach the object. These routes, some researches view, as theoretical research and applied research. Misra R.P classifies basic/pure

Subject uses (1) techniques of observation such as field studies, questionnaires (individual as well as collective), case studies and interviews (2) Computation techniques between the variables, mathematical, Statistical as well as econometrics—such as mean, median, frequency distribution, standard deviation, correlation ....sophisticated techniques to establish a relation between the variables and constructs a picture of object in the mental space of the subject.
research as that "involving the asking and answering of questions that do not, involve immediate solutions of pragmatic problems and applied research as that directly concerned with mundane needs - food, clothing, shelter, life styles, institutions etc, [Mishra(1989); P-1]. Goode and Hatt[1952J, though differentiates research into pure and applied, not as mutually exclusive but with an interplay and feels "Good theoretical research may be applicable to practical problems, and applied research can contribute to theoretical sociology". [Goode and Hatt(1952); p-38].

This seemingly simple process of understanding the object, in fact creates a number of problems in practice for the subject, making the process a complex one. Why the subject faces problems?

Problems Faced by the Subject

Subject faces problems in understanding the object due to the following reasons.

1. The subject is temporarily distanced from the object.
2. The subject is spatially distanced from the object.
3. The subject had conceptual differences about the object.

A subject, if it is interested to study an object belonging to the past by which the subject and object are separated by time frame, naturally the subject faces number of problems. For example, if a subject is interested to study the role of political and social organisation, or the existence of classes or the role of religion in Mohenjedaro, an ancient civilisation of the past.
It experiences problems. Similarly, a study of poor people and their life styles and their dependence on the rulers such as Akbar, Asoka or Krishna Deva Raya of the past; or the differential performance between male and female in Vedic period, which are happenings of the past, creates problems for the subject.

A subject, if it is interested to study an object at a distance by which the subject and object are separated by a space frame, it faces problems. If Sun is the object and subject is interested to study the elements in the Sun, their reaction pattern, or the solar flames and Sun spots; or aboriginals of Africa or Tribals of Orissa are the objects and the subject is interested in their relations of production and their culture. This creates problems in understanding the object for the subject.

Conceptual differences about the object also leads to difficulties. Concepts are abstract notions, generally of qualitative nature. For example, the concept 'development' is captured by the subjects by its manifestations with the help of specific indicators. Thus development can be seen in terms of material development or human development. Similarly a family can be conceptualised as cohesive, close knit democratic fusion of individual members or an explosive variable-separable, undemocratic union of individual members, ready for fission. Similarly, a human can be visualised as a political animal as Aristotle does or 'Man's true self is love' as Plato does or an ensemble of human relations as visualised by Marx. The conceptual
differences create problems to the subject to model the object.

**Problems Posed by the Object:**

In addition, the object makes itself non-amenable for the subject for various reasons

1. Object changes its form, suddenly and also frequently, generating variability in the object.
2. Object conceals its essence.
3. Object projects wrong appearances.

Earthquakes, Bhopal gas tragedy, Vijayawada riots or demolition of Babri Masjid are examples of sudden changes in the object. Atrocities on dalits, women and racial disturbances are examples of frequent changes in the object. Illustrations of objects concealing the essence is seen in the secrets stored in the core of Earth, atomic structure, DNA details in human body, or most importantly, if the object is another human being with logical thinking, this object conceals its essence. Object projecting a wrong appearance can be seen in the difference between appearance and essence. The colour of light appears as white but the essence is, it has seven colours. Election promises, democratic voting procedures can also be grouped in this. It is a known fact that election promises are never fulfilled or role of money/liquor is well known, making it an undemocratic process. In fact, the subject's path from the appearance to essence give rise to various sciences.

In Marx's opinion "In natural world, Sun appears to move
round the earth, but the matter is essentially the reverse, and we need a natural science, astronomy, in order to find this out" [Marx(1965); P-316]. Bhandarkar expresses this concept of Science differently when he says, "Science is the attempt of the human mind to find a connection between the world of ideas and world of phenomenon" [Bhandarkar(1979); P-1]. Popper, in a way to distinguish appearance and reality, says "Appearance (say a reflection in a looking glass) have a sort of reality; or in other words, there can be a surface reality that is an appearance—and a depth reality" [Popper(1971)].

All the above reasons, independently or together, creates problems for the subject in understanding the object. Some of the problems the subject overcomes by improving the techniques of observation such as invention of telescope and microscope which made it possible for the subject to study the object which is until now, non-amenable, or improve the concepts by computation techniques, theories for better understanding of the object. With the help of observations about the object, subject attempts speculating about the object i.e., subject describes the object.

Summary:

One can summarise the problems in research methodology into three categories: firstly, an object has, instead of a unique description, has number of descriptions depending on the different entry points. The number of descriptions are not unrelated, they are related as well as variable. The existence of number of
descriptions for an object and its variability, the relation between variability and motion is detailed in chapter two and three. Secondly, the subject encounters problems in understanding the object which are discussed in chapter four. The object creates problems for the subject which are discussed in chapter five. Implications of the above problems for research methodology are consolidated in chapter six, and the methodology is illustrated with three examples.

In this context, questions such as, what exactly is the discription? What are the causes for the existence of multiple descriptions for an object? now occupy the centre stage which requires a satisfactory answer and the following chapters are an attempt in this direction.