Interview in Ethnographic Study: Issues and Challenges

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Abstract

This paper aims to discuss about interview as data gathering method for qualitative research particularly ethnographic research considering different challenges and issues. Analysis of the related document, review of the literature and my field experiences as research students conducting interviews are the key basis of the information for this paper. The discussion has been organized under nine sub topics including introduction, interview as informal conversation, interview as contextualized knowledge generation, interview as gaining insight into key issues, interview as interaction, interview as social and cultural performance, interview typologies, issues and challenges and conclusion and way forward. Study result reveals that interview is the popular method for ethnographic research to obtain credible and trustworthy data if the interviewer is more competent to employ data generating tool properly and effectively. Similarly, informal conversational and interactive interview to generate trustworthy data generation is appropriate for ethnographic research. Furthermore, sound rapport and orientation program for research participants also are the key aspects to carry out this research method for trustworthy, thicker and richer information with in depth interaction between interviewer and interviewee to maintain quality standard of ethnographic research. Moreover, it also requires considering issues and challenges while selecting the context and employing the methods.

Keywords: ethnographic research, interview, participants, credible, trustworthy

1. Introduction

As I know ethnographic research is cultural account of people or groups of people and organization and interview is one data generation methods. The quality of research works particularly ethnographic research depends upon the credible and trustworthy field note which is one major method and tool in the field to generate data. In ethnographic research perceiving and understanding the reality of the field is crucial part it plays noticeable and key role for cultural understanding. Accomplishing ethnographic research works according to the central intent of the research project researchers need to consider to choose appropriate data generation methods. This paper discusses about interview as practicable method of data generation for research works particularly for ethnographic research. Interview in ethnographic study requires cultural settings to generate trustworthy data understanding the context and culture. Understanding culture itself a great challenge employing long period of time in the field. Furthermore, interviewer meets and conduct interview anywhere of interviewee context including working place, resident, on the way, tea shop/canteen, meeting/training hall, during breakfast and lunch and so forth.

In this paper I have identified following different themes including introduction, interview as informal conversation, interview as contextualized knowledge generation, interview as gaining insight into key issues, interview as interaction, interview as social and cultural performance, interview typologies, issues and challenges and conclusion and way forward. This paper is the product of available literature and my field experiences as research student conducting research works. This paper will be helpful for those who are enthusiastic to employ interview to accomplish research project especially ethnographic research.

2. Interview as Informal Conversation

According to my field experiences in connection to qualitative and ethnographic research and study of available literature on ethnographic interview, I conceptualized interview as a friendly informal conversation between researcher and research participants primarily in a natural setting. For the clarity to this statement on interview, three terms including friendly, informal conversation and primarily in a natural setting need to be discussed further. The term friendly is related to good rapport between interviewer and interviewee which lays foundation of rich and thick field note. Furthermore, interviewer needs to establish good rapport with gatekeeper for smoothly conduction of data generation activities including interview, observation

and document study. Developing good rapport interviewer should conduct introduction and orientation program with interviewee focusing informal approach before conducting interview. Conducting introduction and orientation program researcher need to consider time of participants and venue for their convenience. Similarly, during orientation program it is necessary to clarify the contribution of ongoing research project for participants' respective field that energizes them to provide trustworthy and credible data and information. Likewise, researchers need to be aware to choose familiar place as research context that could be helpful to establish good rapport between researcher, gate keeper and participants.

Informal conversation refers to discourse between researcher and research participants in informal way which requires long period of time for rich field note. Interviewer in this interview needs to start conversation in informal way from the context of state of health and status and progress of personal and family members of interviewee. On the one hand informal conversation works as the way of build and sound good rapport between researchers and to be researched and on the other it is also the way of data generation in informal conversational and interactive way. Conducting informal conversational interview researcher need to face the challenge of consuming long period of time from busy and emotionally instable participants.

Conducting interview for qualitative research particularly for ethnographic research in natural setting (Fetterman, 2010) is also primary requirement. In this context, the term natural settings also need to clarify. Field research is the synonyms of ethnographic research (Vnderstoep & Jonhnston, 2009) which indicates the compulsion to reach researchers at the working place or resident of research participants. With regard to ethnographic research natural setting refers to the working place and permanent residents or the whole surrounding of research participants for cultural understanding and mapping.

In the context of educational institutions particularly in universities, colleges and schools the term natural setting for conducting interview, researchers need to consider some issues and challenges. For example, if our participants are teachers teaching in schools natural settings refers to the whole school environment, school building, play ground, classroom, staff room, his/her residents and route between school and home too. Further, majority of our schools have been running without compound wall, no spacious play ground and extra rooms. In our context majority of schools have been using staff room for multiple purpose including head teacher's

office, common room, meeting room and counseling room too. Due to packed space the noise from different classes may disturb for interview. In this context one needs to find which place is suitable for us as natural setting to conduct interview? However, Creswell (2012) suggests locating a quiet and suitable place for interview. Regarding the issue of peaceful natural setting to conduct interview I would like to share some episodes of conducting interview in school environment and associated issues.

Scenario 1

Gosaikunda school was my field school for M. Phil. research that is located in ethnic Tamang community in mountainous region. This school was with narrow space in terms of school compound, play ground and class rooms. There was only one extra room that was used as head teacher's office, common room, meeting room and counseling room too. I was conducting interview with one female teacher in common room during school time because her resident was not near to school and no any peaceful place. There were limited teaching staffs in the school. Other teachers were packed up to lunch time to engage in classroom activities. Our interview was smoothly running on. During interview one guardian came into that room. He was asking for the head teacher. After guardian's entrance we could not continue our interview smoothly. There was no other place to shift and continue our interview in terms of venue. In this situation we negotiated to continue our interview after school hour in the school and I accomplish interview accordingly.

Scenario 2

It was May 22, 2015 I was interviewing with one male teacher in Lotus school for ethnographic study. This school was located at the midpoint of district headquarter city. Our venue was a shady platform located at noisy play ground. Class rooms were damaged due to the earthquake and resident of the teacher was 20 kilometer far from the school. Classroom activities of the school were running in temporary learning center. When our interview was running smoothly one student came hurriedly to call teacher for classroom activities due to absent of regular teacher though my interviewee was in leisure time. Teacher went to the classroom and we continued our interaction later on.

Scenario 3

As I was planning to conduct interview with teachers and the head teacher to accomplish my research work for M. Phil program, there was one community lower secondary school as my research field that was located in Kathmandu metropolitan city. I entered my selected school to conduct interview with my coworker. After informed consent from gatekeeper, I conducted introduction and orientation program in staff room. Completing orientation program we planned to conduct interview. While the literature and our experience suggest managing peaceful place but there was no extra room to conduct interview separately and peacefully in the school. I seek the alternative ways consulting with my participants and compel to schedule interview after school time. However, it was inconvenience for my participants to participate in interview after school time but there was no alternative and they helped me by contributing additional time.

Above mentioned three scenarios of interview at three different locations including mountainous village, hilly district headquarter city and capital city of country, schools have been suffering from the same challenge associated with extra rooms and space for peaceful venue to conduct interview in natural setting.

After discussion of my concept about interview with these lived experiences I would like to state and discuss about some definitions, remarks and statements from some scholars' regarding conceptualizing interview in general and relating to them to the ethnographic research with inherited issues and challenges.

3. Interview as Contextualized Knowledge Generation

Research works need to be associated with generating new knowledge for further development in respective field. Generating new knowledge data production process particularly interview need to concentrate focusing on seeking contextual practices, experiences, knowledge and information. With respect to knowledge construction Given (2008) explains that interviewing is a conversational practice where knowledge is produced through the interaction between an interviewer and interviewee or a group of interviewees. Terms used in this statement 'interviewee and a group of interviewees' indicates individual interview and focused group interview or discussion. With respect to this statement identification of appropriate interviewees in new site could be a challenge for researcher that requires efforts and consumes much more time to build rapport and conduct interview. Similarly, fixation of the appropriate number of participations for focused group discussion/interview could be another challenge. In this respect

Lichtman (2013) said that there should be minimum six to maximum twelve participants in focused group discussion. Likewise, active participation of all participants in focused group discussion/interview could be another issue and challenge due to domination of extrovert natured participants. In this context researcher need to identify introvert nature of participants they could be key participants for thick and rich data. Considering this reality researcher need to conduct individual face to face interview participating introvert and key participants.

Conceptualizing interview, Kvale as cited in Hobson and Townsend (2010) defines research interviews that are construction sites for knowledge in which the outcome is a coproduction of the interviewer and the subject/research participants. In this definition the word 'coproduction' indicates on active participation of interviewee and interviewer or two way of communication between interviewer and interviewee in interview to construct new knowledge. By nature introvert participants could be challenge for researcher to dig out his/her views, knowledge, practices and lived experiences in focused group discussion and individual interview too that requires much more time and effort. Similarly, extrovert nature of participants in focused group discussion compels interviewer to mainstream them into the intent of research area from unnecessary informations.

Furthermore, Kvale (1996) offers the following stages for interview conduction for qualitative research in chronological order which indicates structural interview. Those stages include thematizing, designing, interviewing, transcribing, analyzing, verifying and reporting could be key guideline for interview conduction. With respect to ethnographic research following mentioned stages in chronological order is more structured. Considering flexible nature of ethnographic research mentioned stages may be guideline for data generation with this revised versions of knowledge generation stages including identifying research site and participants, entering into the field, designing research, interviewing, transcribing, thematizing, analyzing and reporting.

4. Interview as Gaining Insight into Key Issues

Basically interviews are also called the medium of gaining insight from respective people in informal and interactive way to construct new knowledge and accomplishing research project. In this respect May (2001) said that interviews yield rich insights into people's biographies, experiences, opinions, values, aspirations, attitudes and feelings. According to the writer

ethnographic interview is the means to obtain insight of the people for trustworthy knowledge generation but gaining inherited human insight itself is great challenge. Similarly, interviewing with the intent of mentioned statement it consumes long period of time that also great issue for people with different business. Further, the term 'attitude' used in mentioned statement is relative in terms of value, culture and context and gaining attitude of people itself a big challenge.

With regards to interview in qualitative research, Opie (2004) said that interviews should encourage respondents to develop their own ideas, feelings, insights, expectations or attitudes and in so doing allowing the respondents to say what they think and to do so with greater richness and naturalness. Mentioned statement also hints for good rapport between interviewer and interviewee and competency of interviewer to inspire participants to flash out their feelings, understanding and experiences. Defining interview Kvale as cited in Barbour and Schostak (2006) said that interview is the way of bringing together the multiple views of people. This statement argues to gain different views from one participant with multiple responsibilities conducting individual interview on the one and on the other hand there is a group of people involving in focused group interview where the researcher need to be well aware to gain different views from all people participated in discussion and interaction. In this context probability of not mentioning the views of introvert and shy natured participant's could be high.

Seidman (2006) said that recounting narratives of experience has been the major way throughout recorded history that humans have made sense of their experience. The term 'recorded history' indicates conduction of retrospective interview (Fetterman, 2010) for ethnographic research which requires much more time for recording and transcribing data. Talking about recording data it requires recording devices which makes participants more sensitive to flow trustworthy and credible data generation.

Gaining insight of people through interview also is associated with emotional aspect of participants and researcher that requires long period of time and effort for researcher to develop sound relationship. Similarly, research participants also always remain engaged in their day to day livelihood activities and professional career. In this circumstance engaging participants for a long period of time could be great challenge for researchers to dig out their multiple feelings, views, attitudes and experiences to enrich ethnographic research. In this context the question, what is the limitation of long period of time and depth of data?; could be prominent.

5. Interview as Interaction

Generally speaking interview is also taken a kind of interaction between interviewer and interviewee and in academic term it is interaction between researcher and research participants for knowledge generation. Interaction is closely related to two way of communication for data generation in ethnographic study. Garton and Copland as cited in Lichtman (2013) said that interview is a form of interaction jointly constructed by the interviewer and the person being interviewed. The meaning of word 'jointly' used in the statement suggests researcher to schedule for interview with the meaningful participation of interviewee. Jointly scheduling for interview helps interviewer to minimize the dropout of participants while interviewing.

Goode and Hatt (2006) stated that interviewing has gained of greater importance in contemporary research because of the reassessment of the qualitative interview. Social scientists of the turn of the century used this type of interview almost exclusively. This statement argued that there was overview of contribution and appropriateness of interview in the field of research among practitioners. Likewise, Taylor and Bogdan, as cited in Darlington and Scott (2002) explained that in-depth interviewing is the most commonly used data generation approach in qualitative research. The writer further clarified that in-depth interviews are particularly useful when the phenomena under investigation cannot be observed directly. Moreover, Yin, (2014) said that interview is the most important source of case study evidence which seems guided conversation. This statement concentrated with case study research which is one of the popular qualitative research approaches. The writer further identified two considerations while conducting interview including following line of inquiry as reflected by study protocol and to ask questions in an unbiased manner. Writer also suggests not to use recording devices in interview when interviewee appears uncomfortable in its presence while there is no specific plan for transcribing, creates distractions during interview. Creswell (2011) noted that the researchers need to conduct face to face interaction over time in natural setting.

The discussion so far inform that there are mainly two areas of tensions for researchers including using voice recorder and identification of natural setting for interview conduction. Voice recorder needs to use as interview device for generating thick and rich data but due to this device some data may be readymade as a result of participants' emotional aspect that will raise the question of credibility and trustworthiness of generated data. Similarly, the more appropriate

natural setting is also another tension for interviewer. For example, if participants are farmer, the natural setting could be his/her home, farming field, market, cooperative buildings, training hall and shed and pasturage of cattle. In this context the researcher needs to decide on which one could be an appropriate context as natural setting for trustworthy data? With respect to ethnographic study researchers need to use anywhere among mentioned settings conducting informal interaction however, convenience of participants need to consider.

6. Interview as Social and Cultural Performance

Berg (2001) defines interviewing simply as a conversation with a purpose of information gathering as a "social performance". In social performance the role of interviewer for asking questions as the intent of research project, identification of level of understanding and perception of participants could be crucial. Furthermore, asking probing questions, concentrating interviewee to the major intent of research project and identifying the emotion of interviewee including happiness, anger, calmness, hurry, enthusiasm and helpfulness also plays vital role as social performance. Similarly, speaking from interviewee side, providing adequate data and information with the intent of research; perceiving the intent of research project; providing trustworthy and credible data; providing adequate time for researcher, helping researcher as coworker and maintaining emotional stability while interviewing could be major issues and challenges with respect to social performance which need to consider. With respect to social performance that is also associated with cultural activities including greetings with different terms i e. good morning, namaskar, namaste, how are you, nice to meet you, shaking hands and respecting and responding with formal language.

Kerlinger (2004, 2008) viewed that interview is perhaps the most everywhere method of obtaining information from people which has been and is still used in all kinds of practical situations. Writer further added that the interview is a face to face interpersonal role situation in which one person ask a person being interviewed questions designed to obtain answers pertinent to the research problem. This statement is mainly associated with quantitative research but the term used in this statement as 'the most everywhere method of obtaining information' is also associates with qualitative research. Further, this statement also argued for social and cultural performance of interviewer and interviewee within the intent of 'interpersonal role situation'. Similarly, with respect to social performance of interviewer and interviewee, Cohen and Manion

(1994) mentioned that if the interviewer does his job well (establishes rapport, asks question in an acceptable manner, etc) and if the respondent is sincere and well-motivated, accurate data may be obtained. Moreover, Morgan as cited in Bogdan and Biklen (1992) defines that an interview is purposeful conversation usually between two people but sometimes involving more, that is directed by one in order to get information from the other. Englander (2012) concluded that interviewing in descriptive phenomenological human scientific research should be seen as a specific mode of data gathering that is associated with both social and cultural performance.

Perceiving interview as social performance with respect to ethnographic research there could be a great challenge for researcher to convert participants into good social performer to generate rich, thick, credible and trustworthy data by responding interviewer's queries properly. Similarly, he/she need to concentrate for developing good rapport with interviewee through greeting with respect, conducting orientation program, involving in informal talks, scheduling for interview collaboratively, jointly solving emergent problems during interview, respecting and inspiring participants for response while interviewing and offering words for gratitude as cultural performance summing up interview as social performance.

Among above mentioned definitions, statements, opinions and views regarding interview some are associated with quantitative research and rest of them are associated with qualitative research particularly ethnographic research. Ethnographer needs to contextualize them as informal conversation, knowledge generation and social and cultural performance to generate thick and rich data. Besides these informal conversational interview could be more appropriate for ethnographic research.

7. Interview Typologies

Being a popular and easiest method interview can be used differently from different researchers according to diverse context to accomplish research project. Based on the purpose of the study, number and nature of participants, nature of interview questions and the competencies of researchers, interviews can be used differently with typologies. As per the objectives of interview Timilsina (2005) identified three types of interviews as research interview, diagnostic/clinical interview and selection interview. In this context I will be discussing about research interview.

King and Horrocks as cited in Lichtman (2013) recommended three types of interview as realist, contextual and constructionist. They further clarify that objectivity; detachment and neutrality are characters of realist interview that could be more appropriate for quantitative research. Similarly, consideration of particular time, events and context are associated with contextual interview whereas researchers need to be reflexive and co constructionist in third category of interview. Later two typologies of interviews are associated with qualitative research to generate data. With respect to ethnographic research constructionist category of interview could be more appropriate for credible data generation.

Regarding interview types Creswell (2012) identified these interview types on the basis of number of participants and use of media including one-on-one interviews, focused group interviews, telephone interviews and email interviews. Regarding one-on-one interview the writer clarified that this is a data collection process in which the researcher asks questions to and records answers from only one participant in the study at a time. Similarly, writer explains about focused group interview consisting maximum six participants in face to face mode. In this interview typology identification of key participant, ensuring active participation of all interviewees and generating data from introvert participant are tensions and challenges for interviewer. Furthermore, in the context of school education with congested space, arrangement of separate room to conduct focused group interview during school time is also a challenge.

Telephone interview is the process of gathering data using communication devices and asking a small number of general question which requires that the researcher use a telephone adaptor that plugs into both the phone and a tape recorder. Poor networking is major issue to conduct telephone interview in our context. With respect to ethnographic research telephone interview could be beneficial only for obtaining general information before interview and supplementary data generation means after field based face to face interview. Defining email interview author said "email interviews consist of collecting open ended data through interviews with individuals using computers and the internet to do so". Email interview can not address the intent of field research of ethnographic study but it could be helpful for additional information.

According to Vanderstoep and Johnston (2009) there are three types of interviews including informal, guided and structured. Clarifying informal interview they further said that this interview allows the researcher to go with the flow and create impromptus questions as the

interview progress. This typology of interview is closely associated with ethnographic research. Similarly, they defined guided interview as a compromise technique that has some of the benefits of both informal and structured interviews. Likewise, the structured interview is written with probes, transitions and follows up questions they further explains. This interview is closely associated with quantitative research. Bogdan and Biklen, (1992) categories interview into two forms as structured and unstructured.

Considering mentioned interview typology informal interview seems more effective for ethnography with some challenges associated with time, venue and active participation of interviewee. In terms of thick and rich data generation, guided interview and structured types of interview could be foundation of informal conversational interview to go depth of the culture and the context for ethnographic study.

Gall, Gall, and Borg as cited in Turner (2010) states informal conversational interview, general interview guide approach, and standardized open-ended interview whereas Giorgi as cited in Englander (2012) states two types of interview including the traditional face-to-face interview where one can ask for a written (or recorded) account of the experience. Giorgi adds the adjective 'traditional' for face to face interview. In our context majority of common people has been using the word 'traditional' as the synonym of old, out dated, not functional, not scientific, less effective and useless. On the other hand it is also known as well established, historical, popular, trustworthy, habitual and matured data generation tool. According to my field experience the later one is actual meaning and intent of the word 'traditional' and more practical for field study particularly for ethnographic research.

Fetterman (2010) identified four general interview types including structured, semi structured, informal and retrospective interviews. He defined structured and semi structured interviews are verbal approximations of a questionnaire with research goals. These interviews generally serve comparative and representative purpose. Defining informal interview Fetterman (2010) explains that it seems to be the easiest to conduct, do not involve any specific type of questions because questions are typically emerge from the conversation and can progress much as a conversation does. He further clarifies that retrospective interview associates with past experiences to reconstruct the past experiences by asking participants to recall personal historical information for ethnographic study.

From the mentioned Fetterman's typology, informal and retrospective could be best for ethnographic study. With respect to them getting long period of participants' time for interview and concentrating participants in line with major intent of research project could be the major challenges. In this connection particularly concentrating participants with his/her past experiences in line with major intent of research I would like to share my experiences as follow;

It was February 2012. I was on the process of completing ethnographic assignment for PhD program. During interviewing I asked participant to flash back his experiences relating my research area but he flew very far by expressing his unlimited remembrances in nonstop manner. However, I was facilitating him to track for pin point the research area. Gathering participants' past experiences, it took two fold times to complete interview and three fold times to seek the gist of expected data from the field note to analyze.

Identifying the types of interview for research work depends on the types of question to be asked in interview, purpose of research, and number of participants and modality of conducting interview. Mentioned types of interview are sufficient for quantitative and qualitative research. With respect to ethnographic study informal conversational interview could be most important method to generate trustworthy and credible data but field based practical lived insight and experiences also need to consider.

With regard to the types of interview I would like to state some my lived experiences. In qualitative research and ethnographic study body language including smiling, gloomy and anxiety facial expression, node of head and movement of hands plays vital role to probe additional questions and interpret and analyze data. Taking this advantage we need to give first priority to face to face interview for which Creswewell (2012), Fontana and Frey (1994) and Englander suggested whether there are single or group of participants. This model of interview also helps to promote good rapport between researchers and to be researched. Furthermore, now a days using multimedia we can conduct face to face interview but in this context I would like to remind researchers to consider face to face interview in natural setting for ethnographic research to understand culture. Additionally good rapport with interviewee helps researchers to obtain additional information through telephone, SMS and email as per the necessity while transcribing and analyzing generated data. In ethnographic research face to face interview serve as the heart of data generation due to the alternative name of ethnographic research as field work.

Based on my field experiences with respect to the ethnographic research I would like to prescribe individual face to face interview, focused group interview, telephone interview and retrospective interview in informal, conversational and interactive way for richer, thicker, credible and trustworthy data generation. Additionally, to conduct any types of interview I found self administrated questionnaire as structured written interview could be helpful to conduct interview in dept based on participants' written form of views.

Focusing interview for ethnographic research I would like state my additional arguments with respect to informal conversational interview (Vanderstoep and Johnston, 2009; Fetterman, 2010). Based on my field experience and review of literature I came to exemplify that informal conversational interview looks like trekking route using only foot, semi structured interview looks like road ways using wheeler vehicles whereas structured interview looks like airways. In this context the term 'trekking route' represents in depth understanding, maximum time consuming and rigorous effort to generate thicker, and richer, trustworthy and credible data for ethnographic study.

Informal conversational interview can be categorized based on the nature of questions asked during interview. Following this interview, interviewer needs to ask question according to emergent context during informal discourse. I experienced that among above mentioned interview typologies informal conversational interview is one of the best source to generate trustworthy and credible data for cultural understanding but it requires much more time, efforts, calmness and resources than others. The term trustworthy and credible needs to be clarified here. In research works two words 'trustworthy and credible' cams as synonyms with the meaning of reliable, truthful, constant, believable, convincing and probable. Ultimately, research works are for further betterment of society and the result of research works need to be believable and convincing to the community people that depend upon trustworthy and credible data. Generating trustworthy and credible data through informal conversational interview researcher needs to consider making stronger relationship with interviewee.

Employing informal conversational interview as trekking route for ethnographic study researcher need to develop sound relationship with participants through informal talks concentrating status of health, progress of family members, contemporary issues in the society, his/her hobbies, remarkable past events, journey of academic and professional career, support

from family members and colleagues for existing academic and professional career, innovations and contribution of interviewee in related field and his/her status and prestige in the community. Mentioned activities are also parts of informal conversational interview for data generation which consumes much more time and effort. In this context I would like to remind the need to postpone and continuation of interview due to time constant and emergent urgency of participants and researcher too that happens in easiest manner with mutual negotiation. Furthermore, postpone and re continuation of interview depends upon informal and good rapport between researcher and participants. Similarly, researchers need to internalize whole intent of research project particularly on the research questions to conduct interview in informal way.

How, more busy participants can provides their time to conduct this category of interview as trekking route? This prominent question can rise according to the engagement of participants for their daily livelihood and professional works. Similarly, conducting informal conversational interview in group of participants as focused group discussion/interview by consuming prolong period of time could be another challenge. Converting these challenges into opportunity researcher need to choose familiar study site and acquainted participants. Likewise, calmness of researcher to listen participants' views, arguments, assumptions and experiences with tactful competency to maintain attention of participant in line with the major intent of research project is also prominent. Furthermore, other considerations for interview conduction with informal conversation are venue as per the convenience of participant, experience and expertise of researcher and offered guideline from scholars.

Informal conversational interview helps ethnographic researcher to obtain rich, thick and credible data to understand the people in depth and to reflect the cultural past and to map out the cultural present of group of people (Vanderstoep & Johnsion, 2009). The term rich and thick data refers to available data to understand the context, events, people, group of people, organization and culture from different angle and viewpoint through rigorous and accurate data generation but one important question, what is the limitation of rich and thick data for ethnographic study? is also need to consider. With respect to ethnographic research, Fitterman (2010) suggested that researchers use informal approach of interview to discover the categories of meaning. Similarly, retrospective type of interview seems integral part of ethnography which plays pivotal role to reflect the cultural past of the participants and the group of people to support maintaining

credibility and quality standard of ethnographic research. To some extent retrospective interview could also be the part and form of informal conversational interview.

As tourist on trekking routs researchers have opportunity to observe the whole scenarios including narrow and widening path and river, beautiful natural scene, vertiginous rocky hills, flood, voices of birds and wild animals, lifestyles of people in different places during travelling. Similarly, ethnographer using informal conversational interview has also opportunities to understand people and culture in different ways considering and overcoming different issues and challenges as discussed earlier.

8. Issues and Challenges

I have earlier discussed about issues and challenges in respective context. In this section I summarize them in brief. Interview in general and particularly informal conversational interview is popular method for data generation for ethnographic research however, there are different issues and challenges to employ properly. Researchers in research works particularly in ethnographic research need to consider and survive some issues and challenges including selecting familiar site/context and participants; establishing sound rapport with participants and gatekeeper and selecting natural setting/context and peaceful venue for interview with respect to our educational sector. Similarly, identification of key participants, ensuring active participation of all participants in focused group discussion and controlling extrovert participants in focused group discussion in line with the intent of research are also challenges. With respect to thick and rich field note, use of recording devices and transcribing them; screening useful data from the jungle of generated data; identifying limitation of thick and rich data; consuming long period of time and identification of context for probing questions are also additional challenges in the context of conducting interview for ethnographic research.

With respect to conducting interview power relation between researcher and participants could also be challenge for thick, rich and trustworthy data by providing long period of time. For example if researcher is the personnel and interviewer is vice chairperson of National Planning Commission how much time will provide the interviewee for interview? could be a critical question. In this context researcher need to behave with respectfully and participants also need to know the importance of research works for further development and response properly with trustworthy data and information.

9. Conclusion and Way Forward

Major intent of ethnographic research is cultural understanding of people, group of people and organization as well that depends upon data generation methods. With regard to ethnographic study interview is friendly informal conversation and interaction between researcher and research participants primarily in a natural setting. Different scholars offer different typologies of interview for qualitative research particularly ethnographic research. This study concluded that informal conversational interview is appropriate method for ethnographic research to generate trustworthy, credible, thick and rich data. Employing interview as more trustworthy method for data generation there are different issues and challenges to minimize. It is a critical need to make interviewer more competent to perceive and internalize the process of using data gathering tool properly and whole intent of respective research project. In this context intuition of the interviewer and supportive attitude of participants also play vital role to address emerging issues to carry out this method empirically. Similarly, good rapport is vital and the need to orient/educate interviewee/participants about the major intent of the research project that could helps to minimize the problems related to hierarchy between interviewer and interviewee for generating more credible and trustworthy data is also critical.

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