Wacquant’s Research

Name

Affiliation

Date

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Ethnography is a comparatively new form of the qualitative research method, in which the researchers study some specific culture or society, in order to get a deeper understanding of the research problem. In order to get a deeper detail and understanding of the topic, re researcher observe, as well as interact with the participants of the research study in their specific setting or the real-life environment. Ethnography is actually the systematic study of the cultures and their followers. The researchers are required to explore the different elements of the specific culture or the research problem through the perspective of the subjects of the study. They have to know how the people think, feel and behave about the issue, in order to get a better understating as well as explain their experiences, and make amendments to resolve the problem. In order to get the deeper understanding of some culture or the society, it is important for the researcher to become part of it, in a natural way, so the people do not hesitate to show themselves to the researcher openly. Moreover, the ethnographic study cannot be completed in few days or months, so most of the researchers spend at least a year with the participants of the research study, in order to get awareness of each and every aspect of their life. Loïc Wacquant is a French sociologist, who is also an ethnographic researcher. He became a professional boxer while conducting his research study over the African American ghetto boxers of Chicago. He spent three years in that setting and fought at the professional level as well, in order to develop an understanding of the suffering, pain, and prizefighting of the boxers. Ethnographic research method may take a long period of time to finalize the research; however, it provides a deeper understanding of the different aspects of the problem, in addition to shedding light on their occurrence and impact on the research participants, culture or society.

The researcher has to play the most important role in the quantitative as well as a qualitative research study. He/she has to conduct the research while keeping in view all the aspects which can impact the problem of research. In addition to it, the researcher has to take care of the fact that they do not let their biases impact the research process. Moreover, they have to complete the process through an objective point of view while studying the unit of research from a subjective perspective. The role of the researcher in a general qualitative research study is a little bit different from the role of research conducting an ethnographic research study. In the case of general qualitative research, the researcher is the instrument of the collecting the data, so, he has to make sure to consider all the points and analyze them in a scientific manner, in order to get the perfect results of the research. On the other hand, in the case of the ethnographic research study, the researcher has to become a part of the society or culture, which he or she is studying for the purpose of the research (Eakin, 2003).

The researcher has a greater responsibility of not letting his feeling, ideology or experience impact the research process. He or she has to make the effort of studying the people or culture from their perspective while paying attention to their words, actions, feelings and behavior of the people. In addition to it, the researcher also has to consider the views of the people about the problem and analyze the situation from a subjective point of view. The unique issue that researchers should be concerned about in qualitative research is to not miss the assumptions and expectations from the research study. The researchers should keep a separate account of their reflection while conducting the study, in order to not miss the point of analysis. The greatest challenge a researcher face in ethnographical research is to avoid including his personal feelings and ideology about the culture of the problem of study, in order to avoid biases in the research. Moreover, the researcher can hurt the people under study by depicting insensitivity towards some aspect of culture, due to their lack of knowledge about it. The specific actions that the researchers can take to ensure they retain their ethical and neutral stance in performing qualitative research and reporting their qualitative research results is to develop the trust of the people under study, as well as do not share any harsh or negative comments about any issue. The researcher should let the people speak on their own, instead of compelling or triggering them to speak.

Loïc Wacquant’s research focused on studying the African American boxers of the ghetto of Chicago. He was interested in the issues of race, racial discrimination and the limitation of the minority groups of the society to the ghettos of Chicago. While researching about the race issues and limiting the minority races to the ghettos of the city, he started to research about the boxers who suffered the pain for the sake of getting power and prizefighting. He was of the view that the boxers were being treated as prostitutes, plantation, and cattle. They were forced to take part in the boxing matches, in order to earn for their living by their managers. Moreover, in the ring, they had to attack their opponent in order to keep their supremacy, and at times, they also became the point of the violence and frustration of the other player. They had to go through the suffering and point of practice and the fight in the ring as well, in order to win the prize (Wacquant, 2001).

The researcher used the ethnographic research approach in order to study the problem from a deeper perspective while observing the actual conditions. He became the professional boxer, in order to get an experience about the feelings and suffering of the boxers. Wacquant maintained an ethical and neutral stance in his research, as he got the first-hand experience by fighting in the ring. The research approach Wacquant chose to take is the most suitable because interviewing the boxers was not enough to conduct the research study and entering the ring, provided him the opportunity of knowing the life, feelings, and sufferings of the unit of study. Moreover, it would not have been possible to get such details through the qualitative research study (Wacquant, 2011).

The qualitative and ethnographic research, in particular, can inform our understanding of unique social worlds by helping to know about the maters, which are not evident for the general society, however, are an important part of the life of research participants. The potential impact of research in supporting positive social change through public policy is that it highlights the otherwise hidden aspects of the problem and attract the attention of the policy makers towards its resolution.

Ethnographic research method holds great importance in conducting research about the matters related to culture, society, and history. It provides the opportunity of understanding the problem form a deeper perspective, by knowing the experiences and attitude of the people. It requires the objectivity of the researcher to study the participants subjectively. The research conducted by Wacquant has highlighted the importance of the ethnographic research by providing a detailed insight into the life of the boxers of ghettos of Chicago.

References

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