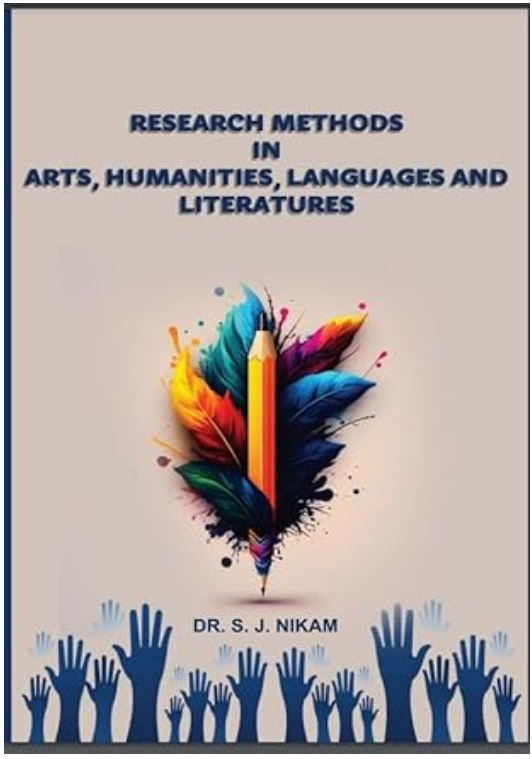
S. J. Nikam. *Research Methods in Arts, Humanities, Languages and Literatures*. Lucknow: Book Rivers, 2023, pp. x+141, Price: ₹ 350, PB, ISBN: 978-93-5842-065-4.

Reviewed by
Amar Nath Kumar*



A researcher ought to know the modus operandi of research and for this it becomes imperative to present his ideas and innovations in a scientific method as per the rules of the book. Thus, it becomes compulsory for every researcher to have an understanding of the methodology of his research according to the discipline. The basics of research remain the same- the identification of the problem, the research questions put forth, their alignment with the objectives of the research, literature review, the data collection methods, methodology, and data interpretation and results. However, the nuances of these steps vary according to the research area, and there comes the need for Research Methodology books in order to undertake a customised research which is specific to the discipline. Research Methodology texts in language and literature are not available in large numbers and often one can't be guaranteed about the quality and relevance of the content, and also that a single book seldom offers help on every possible topic and subject. Thus, in this scenario, a book on research methods in humanities, arts, language and literature is always encouraging and also is of great help for the researchers.

Dr. S. J. Nikam's book *Research Methods in Arts, Humanities, Languages and Literature* boasts of being a text which has dealt specifically with areas pertaining

to language and literature. The book is divided into five main chapters, namely- 1. Introduction to research, 2. Research Methods in Arts and Humanities, 3. Research Methods in Languages, 4. Research methods in Literature, and 5. Conclusion.

The first chapter deals with the basics of research, trying to put research under a precise definition, the characteristics, relevance, limitations of research and also an idea about the research process. In the second chapter on Research Methods in Arts and Humanities, there has been a considerable effort in discussing about the types of research questions, the process of research and also research design. A section on philosophical foundations of research which includes the introduction of concepts of ontology, phenomenology, constructivism, epistemology, etc. is highly relevant and is worth mentioning. This chapter also has a section on future directions in research in Arts and Humanities. The next two chapters deal with research methods in languages and literature. In case of the chapter on languages, special topics of researching language change, historical linguistics, neuro-linguistics and also corpus linguistics have been introduced. The chapter on research methods in literature highlights the data collection methods and also data analyses methods like- Content analysis, Discourse analysis and also Narrative analysis. The last chapter basically sums up the discussion of the four chapters and presents all the key concepts discussed in a capsule form. A good number of pages are devoted to list of topics in research and this includes general topics in Arts and Humanities, and also specific research topics in languages, literature, linguistics, cultural studies and also comparative studies. From this comprehensive list of the topics, the researcher would have the liberty and ease of getting titles related to his research, and also one would get a fair idea on the possible areas where one could work. Also, this would make room and provide scope for inter-disciplinary research.

The book with all its strengths can be recommended to a beginner, where the various concepts have been introduced albeit in a superficial manner. In that sense, it is a best guide which contains the fundamentals of research in the form of very precise notes, and doesn't elaborate the concepts at all. It is more or less a collection of terminologies and their definitions. The book takes one to the point where the forest starts and never takes you to the heart of it which is dense with foliage and has the intricate mysteries to be deciphered. Several topics like Research Problem, Research Statement, Hypothesis, Data collection techniques, types of questions and questionnaire could have been taken up in detail. The writer should have taken up research topics in language or literature as study in cases and should have demonstrated these sub-topics through real examples. A very significant challenge

which comes to the researcher is in writing a research paper and get it published. The same can also be spoken for a thesis and accordingly has its own dos and don'ts to be followed while it is being written. This book should have delved into what, why and how of research in literature, languages and other areas. Even the research topics which are mentioned are very general, they don't relate to specific texts or works of literature, rather the topics indicate the vagueness and lack of earnestness from the part of the author.

Dr. Nikam's *Research Methods in Arts, Humanities, Languages and Literatures* thus falls short of being a panacea for all students pursuing research in humanities, and it is best a compendium of notes and terms without any possible effort paid to give clarity in the unerstanding of these concepts. However, a sincere effort has been made to club different ideas together and to discuss them that the reader makes it a point to go into the heart of these points and terms, and explore further into these areas. The writer has devoted separate chapters for research in language and literature and has tried to indicate the difference in the methodology of both researches, the similarities and also the kind of research taken up in both of them. Yet another point of concern is the repetitive nature of the contents in almost every chapter, and after sometime, the reader fails to discern the nuances of a research in language, literature and also linguistics. Many elements and concepts come again and again, and one fails to find prominent difference in the nature of research in literature, humanities or for that matter cultural studies. This is again tedious, and for the reader it becomes chaotic and jumbled.

In case of research topics, particular texts should have been taken up which are of eminence instead of general ones which look very vague and more or less resemble essay topics rather than research topics. Thus, it is best to recommend the book to a student who is yet to enter into the world of research, and wants to have a nominal know how of research in language and literature.

*****Assistant Professor of English, University of Allahabad, Prayagraj - 211002, UP, India. Email: dramar.nath@allduniv.ac.in

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