The **ethical questions** related to doing research and intervening in society and other people's worlds are in focus in ***Chapter 8***. They should concern all who participate as 'agents of change' in the process, whether as planners, practitioners and researchers, and whether expatriates or indigenous participants. It has been an age-old discussion since missionaries first paved the way for imperialist interests and anthropologists laid open the saliencies of 'primitive man and his culture'. When anthropology joined the applied sciences, the concern about ethics expressed itself in codes of conduct. Such codes may help the development practitioner to reflect on what s/he is doing to whom, but cannot solve all ethical questions. The forms of intervention are different today—some may think they are more civilized, others that they are more subtle and dangerous. At the root of our behaviour lie images of 'the others' and of 'ourselves'. The concept 'participation' itself raises the suspicion of an unequal relationship—i.e., who participates on whose conditions is not always clear. Interpretation by whom, about whom, with whom, for whom and why, are basic ethical questions in development cooperation. 'Dialogue' has the connotation of an equal relationship, but even the dialogue may be defined by the party who controls knowledge and resources.

Participation in Development—The Concept and Critical Perspectives

CHAPTER 2

Development work is riddled with paradoxes. 'Participation' in development work is a particularly contested concept and approach. On the one hand participation has been taken on board in the mainstream development discourse and appears as a mandatory approach in strategies for development cooperation globally. On the other, participation has been crowned 'the new tyranny'. And in the midst of different positions practitioners are struggling with better practices for development cooperation, for example testing participatory methods and tools. The situation calls for a critical assessment of participation—how it has been used and interpreted over the last few decades. Perspectives of practitioners and of the critics as well as those of people on the ground who are involved in participatory development resound in this chapter with more concrete illustrations provided in Chapter 3. This is based on a review of different meanings of participation and strategic considerations for using participatory methods. Critical positions notwithstanding, it is maintained that 'participation is here to stay', not least because it constitutes a potential democratic mechanism where others may be weak.

2.1 Perceptions of Participation

2.1.1 Participation—A Contested Concept

The concept of participation has been subject to lengthy debates regarding its historical origin, its theoretical grounding and practical applicability, and its critical connotations. The more experienced development worker and researcher will know that 'participation' is so widely and so loosely used (like many other catchwords in development jargon), that the meaning of the concept has become blurred. Yet participation is one of the most important concepts in development cooperation because it is potentially a vehicle for different stakeholders to influence development strategies and interventions. Rather than dismissing participation for being blurred, the challenge for the development researcher and practitioner is to define what s/he means.

Some of the common meanings attached to 'participation' and 'participatory' are:

- Participation is the voluntary contribution by people in projects, but without their taking part in decision-making.
- Participation is the sensitization of people to increase their receptivity and ability to respond to development projects.

- Participation is an active process, meaning that the person or group in question takes initiatives and asserts the autonomy to do so.
- Participation is the fostering of a dialogue between the local people and the project or programme preparation, implementation, monitoring and evaluation staff in order to obtain information on the local context and on social impacts.
- Participation is the voluntary involvement of people in self-determined change.
- Participation is involvement in people's development of themselves, their lives, their environment.

This conceptual diversity indicates that 'participation' may amount to little more than a catchword devoid of real content. 'Genuine' participation, initiated and managed by people themselves, is a goal in the democratic process. But few societies rely on voluntary approaches alone to activate people for major development activities. *Coercion* and *positive motivation* are very different approaches, yet in the literature both concepts are used to designate participatory methods.

Participatory development is a relatively new frontier. Different interpretations can be expected. A precise, global definition may not emerge, nor may one even be desirable. Some clarification of the different meanings can, nevertheless, help the practitioners towards 'optimal' participation in development (see Section 2.1.4), and is necessary to justify the claim of participatory development. In other words, 'seeking clarity through specificity' helps to distinguish more or less successful participatory frameworks (Cohen and Uphoff, 1980; Uphoff et al., 1998).

The language of development rhetoric changes fast. Sometimes words prevail, regardless of whatever happens to the field reality. 'Participation' is one such word which has remained in the development discourse, perhaps because 'participation' conveniently takes on a variety of meanings (see Boxes 2.1 and 2.2).

Box 2.1 Three Main Uses of 'Participation'

There are three main ways in which 'participation' is used.

First, it is used as a *cosmetic label,* to make whatever is proposed appear good. Donor agencies and governments require participatory approaches and consultants and managers say that they will be used, and then later that they have been used, while the reality has often been top-down in a traditional style.

Second, it describes a *co-opting practice,* to mobilize local labour and reduce costs. Communities contribute their time and effort to self-help projects with some outside assistance. Often this means 'they' (local people) participate in 'our' project.

Third, it is used to describe an *empowering process* which enables local people to do their own analysis, to take command, to gain in confidence, and to make their own decisions. In theory, this means that 'we' participate in 'their' project, not 'they' in 'ours'. [It implies] a commitment to equity, empowering those who are marginalized, excluded and deprived, often especially women.

After R. Chambers, 2002b and 1995: 30.

Development practitioners generally agree that participation is inevitable in order to get nearer to lasting development results or sustainability. Consequently most development agencies and NGOs today have

incorporated a participatory approach in their strategies for development cooperation. But there is no consensus on what this implies. So contested is the concept that after the first decade of practising participation, 'participation as tyranny' has been crowned as one of the recent standpoints in the discourse. What may sound as a devastating critique covers a set of legitimate challenges of the theoretical, political, conceptual and technical limitations of participation. For the proponents of participation, it seems absolutely necessary to reflect on the critique if participation is to obtain a lasting and fruitful role in development cooperation. We shall return to some of the arguments in Section 2.4 in this chapter.

2.1.2 Participation in Development—The New Mainstream 'Paradigm'?

The practical implications of a participatory approach have been expressed as follows:

> It will have to begin with the people who know most about their own livelihood systems. It will have to value and develop their knowledge and skills, and put into their hands the means to achieve self-development. This will require a reshaping of all practices and thinking associated with development assistance. In short, it will require the adoption of a new paradigm (Pretty and Guijt, 1992: 23).

What, then, has come of 'the new paradigm'? And what is in the words and the discourse 'participation in development'?

'Participation' had a renaissance in the 1990s when a whole new set of participatory methods mushroomed under the name Participatory Rural Appraisal, PRA. So widespread was the use of PRA methods with villagers that some, like Pretty and Guijt above, talked of a paradigm shift to participatory development, moving from 'things' to 'people' and reversing power relations from 'uppers' to 'lowers' (Chambers, 1995). Many put their finger on the need for a shift from top-down, blueprint development planning towards bottom-up, participatory processes led by active partners, while at the same time pointing to the pitfalls and problems in achieving participation.

While many development practitioners engaged in 'community participation', 'popular participation', 'people's participation', and similar names for involving partners and users of development interventions, others were busy sharpening the arguments *against* participation, which they saw as a populist, manipulative approach to development. Conflicting trajectories have crystallized—captured in the following quote from perspectives on participation for poverty reduction:

> For some, the proliferation of the language of *'participation' and 'empowerment'* within the mainstream is heralded as the realisation of a long-awaited *paradigm shift* in development thinking. For others, however, there is less cause for celebration. Their concerns centre on the use of participation as a legitimating device that draws on the moral authority of claims to involve the poor to place the pursuit of other agendas beyond reproach. According to this perspective, much of what is hailed as 'participation' is a mere *technical fix* that leaves inequitable global and local relations of power, and with it the root causes of poverty, unchallenged (Cornwall, 2000: 15, my emphasis).

By the turn of the millennium *participation, partnership* and *empowerment* had become central concepts in the *mainstream* development discourse (e.g., MFA/Danida, 2000; Sida, 2002; UNDP, 2003; World Bank, 2002). From constituting an alternative development approach focusing on the **micro level**—the people, the community, the grassroots—and mainly promoted by NGOs, participation and partnership are now central at the **macro level** in mainstream development policy.

In conjunction with the focus on poverty reduction over the last decade, and with it the status of development orthodoxy, participation in development has gained a new respectability and legitimacy. Participation has, so to speak, been *mainstreamed into the development policies* of many development agencies—public or private.

In practice *mainstreaming participation* puts a lot of demands on development agencies and their partners in terms of institutional reforms and methodological approaches:

> **Mainstreaming participation** means adopting the 'institutional reforms and innovations necessary to enable full and systematic incorporation of participatory methodologies into the work of the institution so that meaningful primary stakeholder participation becomes a regular part of a project and policy development, implementation and evaluation' (Long, 1999: 11 in Blackburn et al., 2000).

The assumption seems to be that if development cooperation takes place in a participatory partnership at a state to state level, then the external donor partner can assume that the 'recipient' government will also incorporate the local level, the civil society and the poor and marginalized groups in a participatory manner, promoting democratization and sustainable development (Buch-Hansen, 2002). This assumption is translated into an explicit approach in the most recent omnipresent policy for international development cooperation, the Poverty Reduction Strategy Papers, PRSPs.[1]

The centrality which participation has acquired in the mainstream development discourse prompts a number of questions: What is actually meant by participation? Have the perceptions changed? What are the benefits—and for whom—of a participatory approach? How can 'quality' participation be practised? Which costs and constraints are involved, not only in terms of resources but also in terms of people's dignity, independence, etc.? Such questions are behind the following sections with the intention to help development practitioners reflect on the justifications, precautions and possible approaches to take when engaging in development work and research.

2.1.3 Perspectives Over Time of Participation in Development Cooperation

A series of changing perceptions of participation in the development discourse can be identified over the decades. They mirror the fact that participation is perceived by some as a paradigm shift and by others as a technical fix (Box 2.2).

[1] Countries that are involved in the World Bank and IMF-initiated Poverty Reduction Strategy Paper, PRSP, process (World Bank, 2002) or relate to its forerunner, the UNDP-led Poverty Strategies Initiative, PSI, have adopted participation in various ways, e.g., as Participatory Poverty Assessments (see Chapter 3).

Box 2.2 Changing Perceptions of Participation in Development Cooperation

1960s: Sharing of technologies transferred from outside was considered participation. 'Self-help' groups attract attention.

1970s: 'Popular participation' of the poor and excluded to gain access to and control over development resources and benefits. There are three major perspectives:

1. People participate as the 'beneficiaries' of development and are called upon to help make contributions to interventions so as to increase the effectiveness. Participation is done *for* people: it often consists in people being invited to take part in consultative processes and enjoined to play a role in shouldering costs for their own good.
2. Participation is seen as a process owned and controlled *by* those whom development is supposed to benefit. As such, it can be associated with broader struggles for democracy and equity, in which the otherwise excluded participate in order to gain rights over and entitlements to resources.
3. Participation involves working *with* people, rather than for them. This perspective emphasizes the need for a closer relationship between those who work in development and those whom it is intended to benefit.

1980s: 'Projects with people' and a rapid rise in popularity of the use of participatory approaches in projects and programmes. The perspective entails significant methodological innovations to promote the concept and practice of participation. There are two 'schools':

1. *Methods promoted by official agencies:* Stakeholder analysis, social analysis, beneficiary assessment, logical framework analysis. Essentially toolkits applied by planners and implementers to promote participation by primary or secondary stakeholders in pre-identified initiatives.
2. *Methods promoted by the 'participatory development' school:* The Participatory Rural Appraisal (PRA) family of methods: RRA, PRA, PLA, PALM, etc. Essentially tools to enable people to share, enhance and analyse their knowledge of life and conditions, to plan and to act.

1990s: Participation is viewed more as a partnership, coordination or ownership of programmes leading towards people's control over their resources. Significant shifts of emphasis in mainstream discourses on participation move participation debates beyond the bounds of 'the community', from beneficiary to stakeholder and customer. 'Empowerment' is recast to also mean liberation from an interventionist state, providing a link between 'popular participation' and economic liberalization. 'Scaling out' and 'scaling up' of participation suggest a growing acceptance of an alternative approach to development. Examples from the wide spectrum of perspectives on participation are:

1. Participation is a process through which stakeholders influence and share control over development initiatives, decisions and resources which affect them (World Bank).
2. Participation is intimately bound up with politicized questions of exclusion, rights and control, and with relations of power (ODA/DFID).
3. Participation is a democratic right—personal and cultural dimensions are central for democratic change (Sida).

(Box 2.2 contd)

(Box 2.2 contd)

2000–present: With the move away from projects towards sector programmes and macro policy environments, participation also moves from the micro towards the meso (sector) and macro levels. Forms of 'invited participation' multiply, expanding into spheres—such as policy reform—once virtually closed off to legitimate public involvement. 'Participation *in* the project cycle' is contested by 'participation *outside* the project cycle'—for advocacy. Participation is being *mainstreamed* and institutionalized.

Author's Extension of Cornwall, 2000.

Looking at these changes over time, attention is called to a compelling emerging storyline: One in which consensus on the importance of participation gradually grew and spread from the margins of development practice to the very heart of the development mainstream (Cornwall, 2000). From being linked to projects, and focused mainly on rural development, participation is now linked to larger issues of policy and governance. Tracing discourses of participation reveals both the striking *similarities* (e.g., participation for efficiency and effectiveness) and just as striking *differences* (e.g., participation as a right to inclusion and to counter inequalities) that emerge in the way key terms and concepts of participation have come to be redefined. Participation interpreted as a right, for example, is a perspective forcefully advocated by Ferguson (1999). She argues that people cannot realize things like the right to health unless they can also exercise their democratic right to participate in decision-making processes about service provision. Participation becomes a prerequisite for other claims, and is seen as a basic human right (see also Chapter 6, Section 6. 1).

Efforts in the past decade to bring participation into the development mainstream have yielded a rich harvest of learning. However, a closer inspection of the uses and understanding of participation and associated terms such as 'empowerment' reveals that there is no one a priori strategy for *who* participates in the development mainstream, in *what, why* they participate, and *how,* and on *which conditions*. But quite a bit is known about the opportunities and constraints of participatory approaches to development, some of which are related to how participatory methods are being used.

2.1.4 Different Strategies and Interests in Participation

Before turning to the more specific uses of participatory methods it should be recalled that participatory approaches are used for many purposes. Clarification of purpose is a must to decide on a relevant approach to a given development activity and to foresee possible conflicts of interest. A few analytical tools on different types of participation and interests in participation may assist the practitioner in clarifying the relevance of applying a participatory approach (Boxes 2.3 and 2.4).

It has been common practice to make a distinction between participation as a *means* (*instrumental participation*) to improve development activities, making development interventions more effective and sustainable by involving the users, or participation as an *end* in itself (*transformational participation*), ensuring people's influence on their own situation as *empowerment* (Oakley and Marsden, 1991). As an analytical distinction this may be useful, but in practice the distinction between instrumental and transformational

participation often turns out to be less relevant since participation as a goal of democratic involvement and as a means to enhance effective development can be pursued at the same time (e.g., MFA, 1999/11).

More elaborate typologies have been developed, most of them building on the instrumental–transformational dichotomy. Thus, Pretty et al. (1995) developed a 'scale' of seven stages based on experience with participation in rural development projects and research, each stage describing varying levels of involvement of the community. If at all different types of participation are made explicit in specific studies, exercises or programmes, reference is very often to Pretty's seven 'stages' (e.g., Mikkelsen et al., 2002). Lessons from concrete cases show, however, that the 'scale' can usefully be supplemented with other categories, i.e., participation as 'Catalysing change', 'Optimum participation' and 'participation as manipulation' (Box 2.3):

Box 2.3 A Typology of People's 'Participation' in Development

1. Passive participation
People participate by being told what is going to happen or has already happened, with no ability to change it. The information being shared belongs only to external professionals.

2. Participation in information giving
People participate by answering questions posed by extractive researchers and developers. People do not have the opportunity to influence proceedings, as the findings of the research are neither shared nor checked for accuracy.

3. Participation by consultation
People participate by being consulted, and external people listen to views. External professionals define both problems and solutions, and may modify these in the light of people's responses. The consultative process does not concede any share in decision-making, and professionals are under no obligation to take on board people's views.

4. Participation for material incentives
People participate by providing resources such as labour and land, in return for food, cash or other material incentives. People have no stake in prolonging activities when the incentives end.

5. Functional participation
People participate by forming groups or committees which are externally initiated. Groups/committees are seen as means to achieve predetermined goals. The groups tend to be dependent on external initiations and facilitators, but may eventually become self-dependent.

6. Interactive participation
People participate by being involved in analysis and development of action plans, for example. Participation is seen as a right and not just as a mechanical function. Groups may be formed and together with partners (donor agencies) make use of systematic and structured learning processes. Groups take control over local decisions, and so people have a stake in maintaining structures or practices.

(Box 2.3 contd)

(Box 2.3 contd)

7. Self-mobilization
People participate by taking initiatives to change systems independent of external institutions, although the latter can help with an enabling framework. They retain control over how resources are used. Such self-initiated mobilization and collective action may or may not challenge existing inequitable distribution of wealth and power.
After Pretty et al., 1995.

To the above types of participation the following 'categories' can be added:

8. Catalysing change
The involvement and stakes of community members in influencing others in the environment to participate and initiate change.
After IFAD, 2001.

9. 'Optimum' participation
'Optimum' participation indicates the need to focus closer attention on the different contexts and purposes in order to determine what form of participation makes sense. Paying closer attention to who actually participates in 'participatory' initiatives and who does not, either through exclusion or self-exclusion, may also help determine strategies to optimize the difference externally-initiated participation can make to the lives of the poor and excluded.
After Cornwall, 2000.

10. Manipulation
A pretence of involvement, but no real power, e.g., to 'people's representatives on a board or committee, who are outnumbered by external agents'. 'Participation is a new and more subtle form of manipulation.'
After Rahnema, 1992.

The typology of participation can function as a useful analytical tool as long as it is taken for no more than a description of ideal types. The 7-stage 'scale' of participation has been criticized for attaching values to the different types of participation—with self-mobilization indicating the best form of participation—forgetting that in real life situations there are a number of constraints on who participates and on what type of participation is possible. It is not always possible to choose between such ideal types. The focus, theory and questions of a particular study, for example, influence which categories of participation are relevant (see Chapter 5). Thus the 'Best Practice' study on Community-Driven Rural Development for the Inter-American Development Bank, used four participation categories: (*i*) Eliciting or *gathering information;* (*ii*) *consultation;* (*iii*) *active participation;* (*iv*) *empowerment* (Dahl-Østergaard et al., 2003). The scope and context of a particular intervention likewise influence what is 'optimum' participation. The categories signal different levels of participation, but level is different from quality of participation.

A point to remember when using categories of participation as those included in Box 2.3 is that the categories are not discrete stages or 'degrees' of participation. For example, in the evaluation of Mainstreaming Gender Equality in Swedish development cooperation in Nicaragua, South Africa and

Bangladesh (Mikkelsen et al., 2002), the evaluation team found that participation was rarely implemented as a conscious strategy. By default it happens that many interventions apply 'participation in information giving' and as 'consultations', while 'functional participation' is registered where an intervention-design requires the formation of user groups. This was, for example, the case in the non-formal literacy programme for urban working children in Bangladesh, which requires that parents or guardians participate in 'functional' groups. Participation initiated by the parents and guardians themselves in such groups was rare. When the guardians did participate in 'functional' groups, it fulfilled the expectation on the part of the external agency, Sida, that guardian groups were to be formed. At the same time participation also contributed to the guardians having influence on decisions and resulted in more satisfaction and better quality of the non-formal education centres.

Like this example of 'functional' participation in guardian groups, development cooperation during the 1980s and 1990s bear witness to much externally-initiated participation. With the concern for *sustainability* starting in the 1980s grew the concern for local institutional development and resulted in the formation of user groups around natural resources management, health care services, water supply, etc. Scores of new informal 'institutions' were created: From sector specific user groups to village development committees to ad hoc groups for appraisals or evaluations—each sector and each donor establishing its own groups. For many communities the expectations of their participation in many different groups has been overwhelming. In positive cases participation has contributed to opening up avenues for influence over development interventions for men and women who were previously excluded from participating in decisions. On the other hand, externally initiated participation in many cases resulted in token participation only, not least of women committee members. Box 2.4 points to different—and sometimes conflicting—interests in participation:

Box 2.4 A Typology of Interests in Participation

Form of participation	What 'participation' means to the implementing agency	What 'participation' means for those on the receiving end	What 'participation' is for (the purpose)
Nominal	Legitimization—to show they are doing something	Inclusion—to retain some access to potential benefits	Display
Instrumental	Efficiency—to limit funders' input and make projects more cost-effective	Cost—of time spent on project-related labour and on other activities	As a means to achieving cost-effectiveness and local facilities
Representative	Sustainability—to avoid creating dependency	Leverage—to influence the shape of the project and its management	To give people a voice in determining their own development
Transformative	Empowerment—to enable people to make their own decisions, work out what to do and take action	Empowerment—to be able to decide and act for themselves	Both as a means and an end, a continuing dynamic

After Nilsson and Woodford-Berger, 2000.

In development cooperation, participation has come to be seen as both a central project tool and a key outcome of the wider process of social and political transformation. Some have developed guidelines (e.g., World Bank, 1996). It is more surprising that some development agencies which advocate a participatory approach have little to say on *how* they interpret and intend to promote participation in sector programming and partnership cooperation (MFA, 2000, 2003). Participatory planning, research and evaluation have become part of the standard vocabulary in several governmental as well as non-governmental organizations. But often it remains a declared approach which is left to ad hoc measures. A minimum requirement for development planners to decide on optimal approaches and for practitioners to support implementation is to have knowledge of different participatory methods.

2.2 Participatory Methods, Techniques and Tools

2.2.1 Multiple Terminology and Sources

Many names have been coined by individual practitioners and organizations for the participatory methods and activities in which they engage.[2] More than 20 phrases and acronyms were already counted for these related concepts in IIED sources a decade ago (Cornwall et al., 1992; RRA Notes, 13). Some have been abandoned, and new ones adopted. NGOs in particular have developed a certain pietism around such concepts when they represent the organization's ideological stance.

However reluctant one is to be accused of using blurred and imprecise development jargon and ambiguous concepts, the lack of imagination in creating and naming new concepts forces one to adopt a language which is understood by colleagues and others in the 'development community' (but not necessarily by other people). Participatory rural appraisal, PRA, is one such unavoidable concept in development language. Ironically, PRA need not be **rural;** PRA need not be **appraisal**—the 'A' may equally well refer to **assessment, analysis** or **activity.** And 'participatory' covers different forms.

Participatory Rural Appraisal **(PRA)** (Chambers, 1994, 1997), now more commonly known as Participatory Learning and Action **(PLA)**, is a set of tools and techniques for gathering, sharing, and analysing information, and for planning and action. They are 'participatory' as they involve a number of people other than the researcher him-or-herself in the research process. These other participants can be different 'stakeholders' (see Section 2.3.3) in the outcome of the research and actions. Analysis of difference is an

[2] There were the previously popular 'rapid' approaches, e.g., Rapid Rural Appraisal (RRA) and Rapid Assessment Procedures (RAP). There are community-based decision making techniques—Participatory Rural Appraisal (PRA), Participatory Appraisal and Learning Methods (PALM), Participatory Learning and Action (PLA), Self-esteem, Associative Strengths, Resourcefulness, Action Planning and Responsibility (SARAR), and Participatory Assessment Monitoring and Education (PAME). Workshop-based methods include Appreciation-Influence-Control (AIC), Logical Framework Analysis (LFA), Appreciative Inquiry (AI), Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities and Threats (SWOT) workshops. Acronyms have also been given to different stakeholder consultation methods—Beneficiary Assessment (BA) and Systematic Client Consultation (SCC), and supplementary techniques of Social Assessment (SA) and Gender Analysis (GA).

important underlying theme of participatory learning and action. For the same reason PRA/PLA methods are particularly relevant to the study of social differentiation—exclusion/inclusion and access, deprivation/entitlement, poverty reduction, gender *in*equality and empowerment, human rights, conflict prevention and resolution, to mention a few areas.

Sources of information about participation and development and participatory methods are many,[3] judging by the multiplicity of terms in the participation discourse. The flexibility associated with participatory learning and action has led to the invention and further development of a variety of participatory methods, techniques and tools, of which the core methods are captured in the 'Catalogue' of PRA methods (Box 2.5).

Though many names exist, PRA is the best-known acronym for participatory methods, and is used throughout this book as a generic term, except when specification of particular techniques and tools are vital.

2.2.2 'Catalogue' of Participatory PRA Methods

PRA (Participatory Rural Appraisal) techniques have proved to be of much use in diagnosing specific problems and highlighting possible solutions. Little by little they have come to fill the PRA 'tool-box'. Some methods and techniques have been successfully applied in so many contexts that their persistence justifies their inclusion in a 'catalogue' of PRA methods (see Box 2.5).

Box 2.5 'Catalogue' of Selected PRA Methods, Techniques and Tools

Participatory Data Collection, Data Analyses and Communication Techniques:

1. **Review of secondary sources**
   - Documents, statistics, reports, books, files, aerial photos, maps
2. **Direct observation**
3. **Key indicators**
   - Local, national and global indicators
   - Objectives, performance, outcome and process indicators
4. **Semi-structured interviews**
   - Key individuals
   - Focus groups, homogeneous or mixed groups
   - Chain of interviews, probing questions

(Box 2.5 contd)

[3] (1) Lessons from applying participation in practice are reflected in a mushrooming range of publications and recorded in bibliographies, articles and on websites (Andreassen and Mikkelsen, 2003); (2) Written and visual documentation is extensive in the South and North—e.g., at IDS Participation Group, Sussex, and the Participation Resource Centre at the International Institute for Environment and Development, London and Dakar; and (3) Debates on participation are kept alive in large electronic fora (Learning Participation Network, IDS, 2002–ongoing).

(Box 2.5 contd)

5. **Ranking and scoring**
   - Scoring and ranking of options
   - Matrix scoring and ranking
   - Well-being or wealth ranking
6. **Construction and analysis of maps, models and diagrams**
   - Social and resource maps
   - Topic and theme maps
   - Census maps and models
   - GIS-based aerial maps
   - Transects
7. **Diagramming**
   - Causal, linkage and flow diagrams
   - Force field analysis
   - Time lines, trend analysis
   - Seasonal diagrams
   - Activity profiles
   - Daily routines
   - Venn diagrams
8. **Case stories**
   - Life histories, oral or written stories by key people, e.g., school children
   - Narrative
9. **Drama, games and role plays**
10. **Workshops**
    - SWOT, Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities, Threats—Workshops
    - AIC—Appreciation Influence Control
    - AI—Appreciative Inquiry
    - Possible future and scenario workshops
    - Consensus workshops and conferences
    - Public hearings
11. **Triangulation**
    - Data triangulation
    - Investigator triangulation
    - Discipline triangulation
    - Theory triangulation
    - Methodological triangulation
12. **Continuous analysis and reporting**
    - With or without software for analysis of quantitative and qualitative data

(Box 2.5 contd)

(Box 2.5 contd)

13. **Participatory planning, budgeting, monitoring, evaluation and self-surveys**
    - Participation in all project cycle activities
14. **Do-it-yourself**
    - Outsiders being taught by insiders

The methods included in the 'catalogue' Box 2.5 can be seen as the core of participatory PRA methods that have been tried out in practice on many occasions. They are neither exhaustive, exclusive, nor discrete. New variants are continuously developed, some of which are illustrated in Chapter 3. And several of the methods can be applied in the same study or project. Analysis of the utilization illustrates that although many of these methods are not exactly new, they have been adjusted to become more participatory than they formerly were.

2.2.3 Classification and Typologies of Participatory Methods

Participatory PRA methods serve several purposes: There are PRA methods for (*i*) collecting data and information; (*ii*) analysing information, (*iii*) both collecting and analysing data, e.g., diagrams and workshops; and (*iv*) for communication. In spite of innovations in participatory methods, they seem to appear within certain standard categories. For example, Neela Mukherjee (2002), in her book *Participatory Learning and Action—With 100 Field Methods*, presents the 100 participatory methods in eight groups, based on criteria of direct and indirect support for field participation, and accompanied with notes from her own field experience. These groups are:

- Personal attributes and approaches
- Fostering team spirit and analytical skills
- Building rapport and holding conversations
- Walking together
- Visual portrayal—mapping and sketching
- Revealing priorities—ranking and scoring
- Seasonal calendars
- Visual depiction—diagrams and flow charts

There are those methods, which help us in doing the background work, in preparing our mind-sets and body language as individuals and there are those which help us to organise ourselves and improve our analytical abilities as facilitators ... there are 'verbal' methods, which help in building rapport and holding conversation ... and 'visual' methods of mapping and diagramming ... and methods which help in revealing priorities and preferences such as ranking/scoring, those, which portray seasonality and those, which involve walking together with local women and men (Mukherjee 2002: 10).

Space, time and *relations* are core parameters used by many to categorize PRA/PLA methods, each oup—and each method—containing a variety of techniques and tools (Box 2.6).

Box 2.6 Classification of PRA Methods by Space, Time and Relations

Space related PRA Methods
- Social maps
- Resource maps
- Participatory modelling methods
- Mobility maps
- Services and opportunities maps
- Transects
- Participatory Census Methods

Time-related PRA Methods
- Time line
- Trend analysis
- Historical transect
- Seasonal diagram
- Daily activity schedule
- Participatory genealogy method
- Dream map

PRA Relational Methods—incl. Ranking and Prioritizing
- Cause-effect diagram
- Impact diagram
- Systems diagram
- Network diagram
- Process map
- Well-being ranking methods
- Venn diagram
- Pair-wise ranking method
- Matrix ranking/scoring method
- Force field analysis
- Pie diagram
- Livelihood analysis
- Spider diagram
- Body mapping

After Kumar, 2002.

pecific participatory studies and situations may suggest the application of methods and tools mentioned n Boxes 2.5 and 2.6. The challenge for the practitioner, who should also have the capacity to apply and ritically analyse the results, is to choose methods which are relevant in a particular situation and for a articular group.

Kumar provides assistance in this direction. He systematically describes each of the PRA methods vith lots of illustrations, some of which are included in Chapter 3. Kumar presents each PRA method, echnique or tool along the following lines:

- Introduction to the method/tool—its origin, distinction from other tools, etc.
- Applications—variety of situations in which the method can be used
- Illustration of how the method can typically be used, and illustrative findings
- Process—*steps* proposed to apply the method/tool, and *sequencing*, i.e., when in the project/programme the method is optimally used
- Materials required—e.g., cards, colours, seeds, chalks, large paper, etc.
- Time required—varies considerably for and between each method
- Scope for improvisation and complementarity with other methods—e.g., gender and socio-economic group perspectives
- Whether the methods can be used as monitoring and evaluation tools
- Advantages and limitations of each method/tool

In addition to this thorough and systematic presentation, Kumar provides a 'ready reckoner' for each method under the three groups listed in Box 2.6. The ready reckoner contains a brief statement of characteristics for the particular method; it distinguishes between people's involvement and scope for improvisation as *high, moderate* or *low;* and advice is given on when in the project/programme cycle each PRA method could best be used. Practitioners will find these novel 'ready reckoners' of PRA methods useful.

Kumar has provided a far more detailed presentation of a variety of PRA methods in use than this book can. What follows is a brief description of the three categories—space, time and relational PRA methods—as discussed by him.

Space-related PRA Methods

Space-related PRA methods are useful for exploring the spatial dimensions of people's reality. These methods deal with mapping and the focus is on how people perceive and relate to space rather than just to the physical aspects, as they exist. The commonly used space-related methods are the social map, resource map, participatory modelling methods, mobility map, services and opportunities map and transect.

The social map is used to depict the habitation pattern while the resource map is focused on the natural resources. Participatory modelling is a three-dimensional depiction of an area. Mobility mapping is used to depict and analyse the mobility patterns of the local people while services and opportunities maps help in presentation of the availability of various services and opportunities in the locality. Transect provides a cross-section of an area and is particularly useful in natural resource management.

Time-related Methods

Time-related PRA methods are used to explore temporal dimensions of people's realities. What is unique about these PRA methods is that they allow people to use their own concept of time. The commonly used time-related methods include time-line, trend analysis, historical transect, seasonal diagram, daily activity schedule, participatory genealogy and dream map.

Time-line is commonly used to depict an aggregate of the various landmark events as perceived by the local people while trend analysis focuses on changes that have taken place across certain time landmarks. Historical transect, 'then and now' and 'past, present and future' methods are variants of trend analysis. The daily activity schedule depicts how the people spend their day from the time they get up till they go to bed. Seasonal diagrams depict the changes in people's lives across the annual cycle and across seasons or months. The participatory genealogy method is helpful in pinpointing the various generations, descent and the changes that have taken place over the generations. A dream map depicts the future vision and aspirations of the people.

Relational Methods

This category of PRA methods includes flow diagrams like cause-effect diagrams, impact diagrams, system diagrams, network diagrams, and process maps; as also well-being ranking method, Venn diagram, pair-wise ranking method, matrix scoring/ranking method, force field analysis, pie diagram, livelihood analysis, spider diagram and body mapping. These methods have been commonly used to study the relationships between various items or various aspects of the same item (Kumar, 2002: 40).

Besides space, time and relational methods, other generic categories are *sampling related methods* and *discussion methods for groups*. These methods are dealt with in Chapter 7 on Monitoring and Evaluation, e.g., Box 7.13 which classifies a large number of Monitoring and Evaluation methods. Many of these are used not only for monitoring and evaluation, but in diagnostic and planning studies as well.

If one tries to summarize some more important developments of participation and participatory methods, a well situated source and frequent PRA practitioner is Robert Chambers, who observes:

Box 2.7 What Has Changed with Participation and PRA over the Past Five Years? (ca. 1997–2002)

- Scale. PRA/PLA-labelled activities in 2002 will probably have been at least ten-fold those of 1997. Participatory methodologies more generally have gained acceptance.
- Participatory language has become obligatory donor-speak. The World Bank, for example, has mainstreamed participation and others are seeking to move in the same direction, but with so far rather disappointing results.
- Boundaries between participatory methodologies have increasingly dissolved.
- PRA-type mapping is very widespread indeed. (Well over a million maps must have been made by local people now.)
- PRA has become required by many donors, projects and programmes. The issue increasingly is not whether it will be used, but how badly or well it will be used. There is lots of bad practice.
- PRA fatigue in some communities. (Some communities have been 'carpet-bombed' with PRA.)
- Applications have multiplied and diversified into many new fields—e.g. drug probations, HIV/AIDS information, institutional analysis ...
- PRA and related approaches have spread extensively in the North.
- Networks have multiplied and on the whole strengthened.
- Relationships have changed between North and South, to become more equal.
- Gender and participation has been opened up.
- Participatory Poverty Assessments, PPAs, have evolved and spread. Participation is now linked with Poverty Reduction Strategy Papers, PRSPs.
- Participatory Monitoring and Evaluation, PM&E has spread with huge potentials.[4]
- Children have come into their own PRA.
- Universities and university staff have begun to take PRA seriously and adopt PRA methods (including some enthusiastic and creative social anthropologists).
- Academic critics, mostly without practical PRA or participatory methodology field experience, are describing participation as a new orthodoxy.[5] At the level of rhetoric they have a point. Much of the reality falls short of the words. But critics often point to weaknesses of which PRA practitioners themselves are quite widely aware (e.g., the inherent bias against the participation of busy women). They also tend not to understand some strengths (e.g. democracy of the ground, representations and analysis of complexity, Attitudes and Behaviour Change, ABC, impacts of facilitation, etc.).

After Chambers, 2002b.

[4] See Chapter 7.
[5] See Section 2.4.

Among the changes in participation listed in Box 2.5, *scaling up* participation has been pointed out as a major challenge (e.g., Estrella and Gaventa, 1998). *Scaling up participation* means increasing the number of participants or places that participate or expanding people's participation in one activity, such as appraisal, to many types of activities, e.g., to increase civil society's participation in policy dialogue and in 'upwards' accountability measures towards those in power, in programmes or in government. It means involving people throughout the development process in a way that empowers (Pretty and Scoones 1995; Gaventa et al., 2002). A major challenge has been to widen the impact beyond isolated local successes in community-based, participatory and adaptive planning on a scale which goes beyond simply replicating successful projects and moves towards strategic policy changes. The integration of participatory perspectives into *poverty reduction strategies* and into *safeguard policies* (WB/ESSD web) are indications of such strategic changes. But then the challenge is also to increase numbers and uses without undermining the *quality* of participation!

2.3 Considerations for Using Participatory Methods

2.3.1 Overall Principles

Practitioners have long been aware of the many threats to quality and personal integrity in the use of participatory methods (see Section 2.4). For the same reason practitioners are supposed to respect a set of principles for using participatory methods (Box 2.8).

Failing to put *behaviour* and *attitudes* before *methods* is a major threat to the quality of participation. This is often highlighted as the most important of the principles. On the other hand, 'handing over the stick', which Chambers includes in this principle, is used by several critics (Cooke and Kothari, 2000) to pinpoint the rhetoric which they maintain riddles the participation discourse. Indeed, they are right in that the many principles can rarely be honoured in practice, and in pointing to the many paradoxes riddling participation (see Section 2.4). Does this mean that missing out on some principles results in bad participation? Hopefully not, as we are also continuously reminded that *there is no one a priori participatory strategy.*

There is scope for imagination, and the overarching principle for using participatory methods has become mnemonic:

Use your own best judgement at all times!

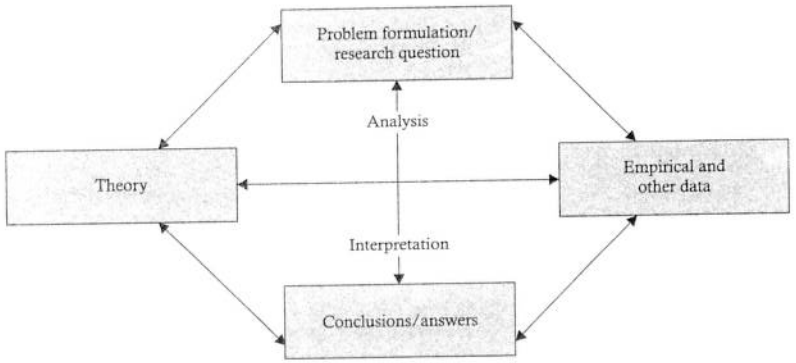
Lessons from specific situations where participatory methods have been applied prompts the addition of new principles which Rasmussen calls **The right *not* to participate** and **the right to direct representation** (Rasmussen, 2004), i.e., the right to represent your own views only and not to speak on behalf of others or have others speak on your behalf.

4.4 Research Process and Research Plan

4.4.1 Basic Elements in the Research Process

The research process is basically a contribution to knowledge production. It may be argued that research results become knowledge only when they are applied. The element of application is not always seen as an outcome of research, e.g., basic research may contribute to knowledge production by feeding into other researchers' work. Figure 4.1 is a graphical illustration of the elements in the research process. The figure does not include the element of application, which would be an addition to the box 'conclusions/answers'.

Figure 4.1 Main Elements in the Research Process



After Enderud (in I. Andersen, 2002).

The arrows in the illustrated research process indicate that the links between the elements are various analyses, interpretations and synthesis. Research purposes and foci differ, but in general the figure captures the basic elements in the research process. Development studies, however, pose a special challenge as they often require the participation of professionals from different disciplines—i.e., interdisciplinary or cross-disciplinary perspectives.

4.4.2 Methodological and Logic Considerations in the Research Process

Methodological Considerations

A variety of considerations enter into the process of doing social research and development studies. Our choices when carrying out a project or study are expressions of values and 'codes of conduct', first and foremost as professionals, but also as persons.

The choices affect

- how we work inductively, deductively or both (see Chapter 5);
- how we think scientifically, epistemologically and ontologically;
- what kind of data we are using, quantitative and/or qualitative data/information;
- what our values are; what we think about other people; and
- how we deal with ethical and practical problems and the context as a whole.

(*After* Boolsen, 2004).

The claim for methodological pluralism does not mean that research methodologies, designs, research methods, etc., can be combined in all ways. There should be an internal logic in any study. The message is that development studies should avoid the signal that 'anything goes'. Unfortunately this is not always the case and may lead to strategies being proposed that do not follow from the study questions—or worse, the implication may be that time and money have been wasted on examining and pursuing questions that do not lead to acceptable or usable solutions.

Internal project logic is what research strives for, but lessons gained in the research process may deem changes in the focus of the study necessary as the next two sections illustrate.

Internal Logic

Internal logic in a study is a key criteria to ensure higher quality not only in terms of standard criteria for good research practice, but also with regard to the relevance and use of the research results. The participatory research process described in Box 4.9 illustrates the point.

Changes in Research Focus and Purpose

A very important point in the research process is when you start to ask the basic questions: What am I going to do? What is the purpose of the study, and how exactly am I going to do it? This may sound self-evident, but to the practitioner, the project-manager or the researcher, these questions are very fundamental, because when they are answered many other questions fall into place. To answer them adequately requires a fair amount of knowledge about the topic of the study, but not least about its

Box 4.9 Internal Logic in a Participatory Study of School Environment -

Hard-core data do not suffice to explore complex issues

A group of teachers had experienced growing frustrations in their schools for some time. All of them wanted changes to take place in their institutions. But what exactly the problems were was not clear. The teachers knew that a 'convincing study' of the problems would be important evidence to present to the authorities in an appeal for their support for change. They decided to undertake a study of the situation, but just didn't know how to produce material or evidence that would make it clear what the fundamental issue was, and how it could be addressed. In other words, it was realized from the beginning that an inquiry—(an exploratory, interpretative or explanatory study)—might produce evidence that could be used for initiating changes. This was a great motivating factor. Each teacher would produce a study plan from his or her perspective.

When their initial study plans and designs were produced, none of them could deliver information and/or analysis that eventually could support changes; they all dealt with *descriptions* of their schools and institutions. A common situation was that they would provide hard quantitative information in the form of 'number of students', 'number of teachers', 'number of class-rooms', 'type of facilities', 'size of location', 'number of subjects offered', etc. Considering that some teachers wanted to change the educational practice in the classroom, introduce experiments with delinquents, consider other ways of using the teachers' meetings, stimulate youngsters' interest in sports, and the like, it was obvious there was a huge distance between the goal and the suggested research activities.

When this picture became clear—that most of the 'would-be knowers' had proposed collection of 'hard' data—they argued as a kind of 'defence' that they (as inquirers) had left the ordinary teacher's role and were still *developing* the new role—that of the observing and critical practitioner/researcher. In the latter role, they had learned that 'How you ask questions determines the answers', 'Questions produce answers'—and other similar well-known statements in the methodology classes.[6] However, it takes knowledge, empathy and practice to formulate interesting and relevant questions and problems. To collect hard-core quantitative data is tempting, but is not sufficient to explore complex issues.

A new round of research questions had to be formulated to identify what the problems were in the schools. The initial experience was useful for preparing a better research strategy.

After Boolsen, 1997—unpublished material.

context, i.e., the conditions, related problems, practical possibilities, power relationships, and so on. Experience shows that the micro-level conditions for a development project or programme—e.g., intra- and inter-household power relations, aging, etc., and the macro-level conditions of sector policies, decentralization, etc., are constantly changing.

Precisely because we cannot know everything from the beginning and since we are working in an ever changing environment, it is often necessary to work with an iterative process between basic purposes, issues, aims, etc., and methodology, research strategies, choice of data, and analysis.

[6] This is also the title of a Scandinavian methodology book, Bengt-Erik Andersson, 1992: Som man frågar får man svar—en introduction i intervju- og enkätteknik. Raben & Sjögren. Tema Nova.

It is not uncommon to reflect on and change the research purpose throughout the whole process. In a study Boolsen finds that social science researchers modify, change and re-formulate their problem under investigation almost all the way through the research process. In most cases the reason is that the necessary data-material is not available, and they end up researching a problem which is different from the one they set out to study (see examples below).

Basically this means that knowledge is increased, differentiation is introduced, etc.—but to the practitioner the ultimate need is for data, analysis and information that can be *applied*. Consequently, increased opportunities for applying knowledge are not necessarily the same as increased knowledge (Boolsen, 1977).

Example 1
The Non-existent Research Problem Prompts a Necessary Change of Focus

Changes in focus may have different reasons, one being that getting into a field often means that new angles and perspectives are identified. Sometimes the original problem turns out to be a non-problem as illustrated in the following case:

> A research institution in Copenhagen was asked to identify *advantages and disadvantages* of foster homes compared to other institutional settings that are used when children are taken away from their biological parents who do not manage to cope with the role as parents. The empirical foundation was institutionalisation patterns of children during a 5-year period followed by qualitative interviews with some of these children. When the data was analysed, it turned out that the institutionalisation models which were expected to be investigated, compared and analysed in the study were not represented in the data (Boolsen et al., 1986).

Example 2
Non-representative Sample may Require Change of Focus

The Evaluation of Swedish support for the Promotion of Gender Equality was based on a pre-selected sample of interventions representing four different sectors. It was anticipated that each intervention represented a considerable change in gender equality due to the gender mainstreaming strategy supposedly pursued in the interventions. When the evaluation team had inquired into the changes in gender equality, it appeared that only a few of the interventions had pursued a clear gender equality goal and mainstreaming strategy. Consequently, the focus of the evaluation study turned more towards reasons as to why the gender equality goal had not been pursued to the degree anticipated, and towards a focus on conditions and opportunities for strengthening a gender equality perspective in the evaluated interventions and in new interventions (Mikkelsen et al., 2002).

Designing a research plan needs to incorporate considerations on the research process and possible adjustments like the above.

4.4.3 Designing a Research Plan

Which research design is best? Which methods of investigation and data collection will provide the most useful information—and for whom? For the decision maker? For the people concerned and affected?

There is no simple, immediate and universal answer to these questions, but this does not preclude discussion and debate regarding the relative usefulness of different methods for the study of specific problems or types of problems. The answer in each case will depend on what intended users want to know, the purpose of the study, the funds available, the political context, and the intentions of the researchers. This precludes the assertion of the general superiority of one method over another.

Box 4.10 lists a number of issues that are typically necessary to address in designing a study and from which the most appropriate mix of methods can be achieved.

Box 4.10 Design Issues and Methodological Considerations for a Research Plan

Issues	Sample Options and Considerations
1. What is the primary purpose of the study?	Basic research, applied research, summative evaluation, formative evaluation, action research
2. What is the focus of study?	Breadth versus depth trade-offs
3. What are the units of analysis?	Individuals, groups, programme components, whole programmes, organizations, communities, critical incidents, time periods, and so on
4. What will be the sampling strategy or strategies?	Purposeful sampling; probability sampling; variations in sample size from a single case study to a generalizable sample
5. What types of data will be collected?	Qualitative, quantitative, or both
6. What controls will be exercised?	Naturalistic inquiry, experimental design, quasi-experimental options
7. What analytical approach or approaches will be used?	Inductive, deductive, content analysis, statistical analysis, combinations
8. How will validity of and confidence in the findings be addressed?	Triangulation options, multiple data sources, multiple methods, multiple perspectives, and multiple investigators
9. Time issues: When will the study occur? How will the study be sequenced or phased?	Long-term field work, rapid reconnaissance, exploratory phase to confirmatory phase, fixed times versus open time lines
10. How will logistics and practicalities be handled?	Gaining entry to the setting, access to people and records, contracts, training, endurance, and so on
11. How will ethical issues and matters of confidentiality be handled?	Informed consent, protection of human subjects, reactivity, presentation of self, and so on
12. What resources will be available? What will the study cost?	Personnel, supplies, data collection, materials, analysis time and costs, reporting/publishing costs

After Patton, 1990: 197 (in *Qualitative Evaluation Methods*). Reprinted by permission of Sage Publications, Inc.

While there are no strict rules for the choice of research strategy and methods, there are nevertheless a number of general steps to be taken in designing a research plan (cf. Box 4.11).

These steps and the broad approach to a research inquiry are similar for many disciplines, which is the premise of Kumar's useful step-by-step guide (Kumar, 1999). Amongst the steps, field work may be a longer step in development studies.

Box 4.11 Steps in Designing a Research Plan

STEPS AND TASKS AND FINDINGS THROUGHOUT

Identify and define the research problem
↓
Review theory and undertake initial documentary studies
↓
Clarify goals, objectives and expectations of the study in consultation with others
↓
Choose main topics
↓
Prepare list of sub-topics, indicators, and key questions
↓
Identify sources of information for each sub-topic
↓
Select tools to collect and analyse information
↓
Design research tools
↓
Outline field work tasks
↓
Obtain research permission
↓
Test and adjust research tools
↓
Collect field data
↓
Start analysing data in the field
↓
Adjust objectives and reschedule data collection if required
↓
Complete data analysis and reporting
↓
Disseminate results

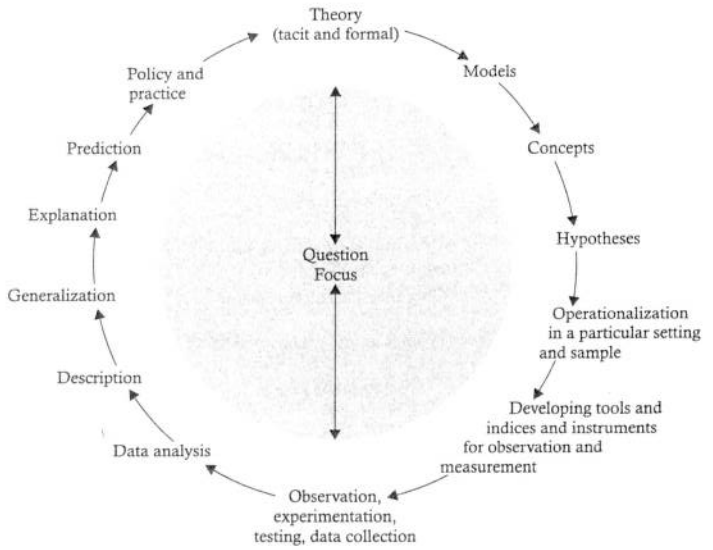
An illustrative model of the 'research cycle' appears in Figure 4.2.

Figure 4.2 Illustrative Model of the 'Research Cycle'

The model of the research cycle presented in the figure serves to illustrate how the researcher determines whether the question being pursued is significant or not. Reviewing formal theory and literature may demonstrate that the curiosity or problem has already been satisfied or solved; in this case, no knowledge is needed. Research is worth doing only if it explores some part of the research cycle that is still unknown, that has not been explained well before. The researcher may test hypotheses, develop better descriptions and indicators or concepts, expand generalizations, or challenge extant theory; whatever the focus, the researcher must demonstrate that the research contributes new information. The research proposal is a written demonstration of the means by which the research will add to knowledge. The proposal tells the reader just how the research fits into the model of the research cycle.

A research proposal demonstrates a link with the research model in general, but it must also answer the following questions:

- Who might care about this research? To whom will it be significant?
- How will the researcher conduct this research?
- Is the researcher capable of doing his/her research?



After Marshall and Rossman, 1989: 22–23 (in *Designing Qualitative Research*). Reprinted by permission of Sage Publications, Inc.

There is no rule on the weight to be given to each phase in the process of a study. However, the time required for preparation of a study, for processing, analysis and write-up of data must not be underestimated. Overlaps between the phases will also occur. Today, when portable computers are available, many researchers find it convenient to start entering data while in the field, if possible do the preliminary analysis in the field. However, all too often research proposals tilt towards home-based studies. The convenience of doing field research during holidays only, as seen in some research proposals, cannot match more ambitious plans for researching complex issues. A reasonable balance between tasks and time requirements ought to have equal relevance for practitioners who become involved in field studies.

Summary Guidelines for Field Work

Let us close this section with a few guides on field work. The message is as clear as this: 'What you do in the field—it all depends—but don't lose direction!' (Patton, 1990). Field studies are a continuous learning process. It may assist the bewildered analyst to be reminded: 'When theory is silent, concentrate on methods', and 'When in doubt, collect facts'.

Below are some **guidelines for field work** inspired by Patton:

1. Be descriptive in taking field notes—write field notes as early as possible after observations, interviews, other encounters. Keep a diary.
2. Gather a variety of information from different perspectives.
3. Cross-validate and triangulate by gathering different kinds of data—observations, interviews, programme documentation, recordings and photographs—and using multiple methods.
4. Use quotations; represent programme participants in their own terms. Capture participants' views of their experiences in their own words.
5. Select key informants wisely and use them carefully. Draw on the wisdom of their informed perspectives, but keep in mind that their perspectives are limited.
6. Be aware of and sensitive to the different stages of field work.
   (a) Build trust and rapport at the entry stage. Remember that the researcher-evaluator-observer is also being observed and evaluated.
   (b) Stay alert and disciplined during the more routine, middle phase of field work.
   (c) Focus on pulling together a useful synthesis as field work draws to a close.
   (d) Be disciplined and conscientious in taking detailed field notes at all stages of field work.
7. Be as involved as possible in experiencing the programme as fully as possible while maintaining an analytical perspective grounded in the purpose of the field work.
8. Clearly separate description from interpretation and judgement.
9. Provide informative feedback as part of the verification process of field work. Time that feedback carefully. Observe its impact.
10. Include in your field notes and research/evaluation report your own experiences, thoughts and feelings. These are also field data.

Beyond these prescriptions, the point remains that what one does depends on the situation, the nature of the subject, the nature of the programme or intervention under study, and the skills, interests, needs and point of view of the investigator (*after* Patton, 1990, 2002).