



The Evolution of Research Methods in Social Sciences: A Historical Explanation

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Abstract

The development of the social sciences as a field of investigation is a slow but dramatic and historical transformation of the exploratory philosophy into the empirical, interpretive, critical, and computational inquiry. Both methodological transformation indicate larger epistemological arguments concerning knowledge, objectivity and human agency. The given research paper reviews the historical evolution of research methods in social sciences throughout the key periods of intellectual thought: philosophical conjecture, positivist empiricism, interpretive theories, behavioral and quantitative proliferation, critical methodologies, and modern-day digital and interdisciplinary phenomenon.

The present research article profoundly explores that the modern social sciences is characterized by methodological pluralism instead of methodological dominance. Historical trends revealed that the way research is conducted does not just change with the technological advancement but also with the approach towards the society, power and the experiences of a person.

Keywords: Social sciences, research methodology, positivism, interpretivism, quantitative research, qualitative research, digital methods, historiography

Introduction

Social sciences were as a product of the unending human significance to learn the social order, human behavior and institutions from long past. But, as opposed to the natural sciences, the social sciences face a special difficulty the subject of their research is a conscious, interpretive, and historically situated, being a human being. As a result, research approaches to social sciences have undergone development and transition as philosophical presumptions of knowledge, reality, and scientific inquiry transformed.

In early intellectual traditions the social inquiry was incorporated in the form of philosophy, ethics and political thought. As time went by, however, social sciences evolved to have individual methodological frameworks. Positivism was presented in the nineteenth century and focused on scientific rigor and empirical observation. The twentieth century happened to be marked by interpretive, behavioral and critical expansions

of methodologies. The twenty-first century has brought on digital tools, computational analysis and interdisciplinary integration as methodological tool in humanities, social sciences, engineering and other branches of knowledge system.

The present research paper explores the historical development of social science research methodology and shows that the quality of change in the methodology is indicative of the overall epistemological transformation over the period of time. Newer methodologies do not substitute the older approaches but co-exist with them thus lead to methodological pluralism which is valid, acceptable and acknowledged.

I. Philosophical Foundations: Speculative and Normative Inquiry

These two distinct but complementary approaches in humanities and social science research proposed to investigate, examine and reimagining the world in different perspective. While Normative approach emphasize on what should or ought to be proposing to set standards, values and ethical guidelines, on the other Speculative Inquiry or speculative philosophy involves to look at alternative possibilities in humanities and social science research raising questions on assumptions, and delineating the outside pressing apparatus to comprehend the broader, fundamental character of natural reality. However, until the nineteenth century, modern empirical methods of systematic research in humanities and social sciences were not available. Normative social inquiry was more philosophical than practical. The reasoned or rationalistic and the observation of classical philosophers like Plato and Aristotle included the study of political organization, ethics and the nature of human beings. When the *Nicomachean Ethics* came to an end, Aristotle stated that 'the inquiry into ethics leads into a discussion of politics'. The *Politics* of Aristotle discussed constitutions on a comparative basis, one of the earliest efforts to make systematic social observation, albeit in a modern scientific definition.

In the medieval times, social explanations were tended to be theological. Social order was perceived to be divinely guided and research was informed by religious teachings and not empirical observations. Knowledge was considered to be absolute and based on the divine books.¹ They emphasized on medieval world based on the theoretical aspects of social structures, culture, and economy (roughly 5th to 15th century), depending on a combination of conventional historical analysis.. While the people living in the medieval period used scholasticism and religious doctrine as their main "social science" framework. They focused on qualitative analysis, archaeological material cultural studies, quantities analysis and digital humanities (digital medievalism) as historical methods. These commonly combined as well as balancing nature of historical and social science research is found in the work of the *Annales* school. The *Annales* School of researchers focused on rigorous archival study, corroborating with other social science theories as a methodological tool to pursue research²

¹. Benjamin Jowett "Aristotle's, *Politics*" (Trans), Dover Thrift, New York, 2000

². https://www.google.com/search?q=dominant+methods+in+social+science+research++in+medieval+world+&sca_esv=e44a3b63b1b18493&rlz=1C1VDKB_en-GBIN1126IN1126&biw=1366&bih=612&sxsrf=ANbL-n5IoRx3vPonq-XVcC5PDeLsWp4NUw%3A1772691809142&ei=YSGpabGyCMGeseMP8pb1wAI&ved=0ahUKEwjx5tHMj4iTAXVBT2wGHXJLHSGQ4dUDCBM&uact=5&oq=dominant+methods+in+social+science+research++in+medieval+world+&gs_lp=Egxnd3Mtd2l6LXNlcniAIP2RvbWluYW50IG1ldGhvZHMgaW4gc29jaWFsIHNIjaWVvY2UgcmlVzZWfYy2ggIGluG1lZGldmFsIHdvcmxkIEi75wJQ_Q1Y690CcAF4AZABAJgBxAWgAalEqgEOMC4yNC44LjQuMC4xLjG4AQPIAQD4AQGYAhOgAr0kwgIHECMYsAMYJ8ICChAAGLADGNYEGEfCAgcQlxiwAhgnwgIIEAAYgAQYogTCAGUQABjvBcICBBAhGArCAGUQIRigAcICCBAAhGKABGMMEwgIKECEYoaAEYwwQYCpgDAIgGAZAGCZIHCEuNy42LjQuMC4xoAejjgGyBwswLjcuNi40LjAuMbgHniTCBwoyLTEyLjUuMS4xyAfGAYAIAA&scient=gws-wiz-serp

The Enlightenment (17th-18th centuries) era was a very significant point of transformation in social science research and put emphasis on scientificity, empiricism and rationalism to human society giving foundation for modern social science research methodology. The enlightenment philosophers focused on reason, observation and doubt of traditional authority. Rationalism was used to analyze the political authority, social contracts, and individual rights by Thomas Hobbes, John Locke, Jean-Jacques Rousseau and Voltaire. Their works brought in the concept that the social institutions were human and not divine.³

Voltaire (1694–1778) the founder of modern historiography put emphasis on comprehensive cultural, social and economic history rather than focusing on narrow ideas on theology and military narratives. Voltaire pioneered 'philosophical history' and wrote "The Age of Louis XIV (1751)", "Essay on the Customs" and The Spirit of Nations (1756) giving focus on historical evidences, cultural history, critical analysis, universal history, secular perspective and human progress in the society. Voltaire, set the new standard of historical writings with major inquiry into the subject of human conditions.⁴

The Spirit of the Laws (1748) by Montesquieu was a major move in the direction of social science methodology and research. He considered political systems in a comparative way, in which he argued that social institutions were influenced by environmental, cultural, and historical factors.⁵ This method of comparisons formed the basis of later methods of empirical research. Nevertheless, early social inquiry was mainly speculative despite such advances. There was not yet systematic empirical procedure and statistical analysis. Social science was still closely connected with philosophy.

II. Positivism and the Scientific Turn (19th Century)

Positivism as a philosophical and modern social science methods of research were born in the nineteenth century. It emphasis that human knowledge come only scientific, empirical observation, examination and rational or mathematical experimentation to discover universal or casual laws to comprehend the human and natural forces. Such a shift was brought about to a great extent by positivism (focusing on measurable facts rather than speculation), which was a philosophy produced by Auguste Comte, a French Philosopher in 1789. According to Comte, society could be examined scientifically by the methods of natural sciences. He suggested the three steps in knowledge: the theoretical, metaphysical, and positive (scientific).⁶ As tool in sociological research methodology its primary task were to investigate the subject based on facts, scientificity, atomism (fragmentation), naturalism, phenomenalism and nominalism. Positivism as an idea stressed on observation, measurement and empirical justification. The term sociology was coined by Comte and he stated that, 'there were objective laws of social phenomena, which could be found out through scientific knowledge'. There are various forms of positivism and that are; social positivism, logical and critical positivism.

Emile Durkheim, the French philosopher known as father of Sociology, formalized positivism in sociology as fashionable research methodology. In his monograph Le Suicide (1897), an account of suicide in Roman Catholic and Protestant populace is a pioneering modern social science research, accounting to differentiate

³. John Locke, Two Treatises of Government, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1988.

⁴. https://www.google.com/search?q=voltaire+historiography&rlz=1C1VDBK_en-GBIN1126IN1126&oq=&aqs=chrome.3.46i39i362i813j35i39i362i813j35i39i362j35i39i362i813j35i39i362l2j46i39i362j35i39i362.38779202j0j15&sourceid=chrome&ie=UTF-8

⁵. Montesquieu, The Spirit of the Laws (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1989).

⁶. Auguste Comte, Course of Positive Philosophy, Rutledge, London, 1975).

social science from psychology and political philosophy. Durkheim showed that even the most individual acts could be justified by social factors like integration and regulation,⁷ Durkheim applied statistical analysis in order to prove that social facts could be studied objectively. His significant contribution to the field of sociology is understanding structure and functions of society with particular emphasis on social facts and viewing them as objective phenomenon which shape the human behavior.

Durkheim has highlighted such methodological principles as:

1. Objectivity
2. Empirical observation
3. Statistical analysis
4. Systematic data collection

He claimed that social facts could be considered as things and thus could be analyzed without reference to individual subjectivity.⁸ It was also the time when statistical methods were developed. Census data started to be gathered by governments and allowed researchers to examine the trends in population, economic and social setups. The research in social science became quantitative.

III. Interpretive and Qualitative Approaches (Early 20th Century)

The Interpretive and qualitative approaches in sociology and other discipline of social science research was developed by German sociologist **Max Weber** (1864–1920) as a critic to positivism pioneered by Emile Drkheim. Although positivism placed more emphasis on objectivity, critics claimed positivism overlooked the subjective aspects of human experience. According to them, social reality could not be well understood using statistics alone. Max Weber proposed the interpretive sociology, whose most critical point is the necessity to comprehend human meanings and motivations. He came up with the idea of Verstehen, or interpretive understanding, which states that a researcher should perceive social action through the eyes of people. Weber stressed individualism of the methods, stating that the phenomena of the social life are the outcomes of individual actions of meanings. His work proved that social research needed a combination of explanation as well as interpretation. Qualitative research methods were further developed among the anthropologists. Bronislaw Malinowski introduced the participant observation, which involves engaging in an intensive field study with the indigenous peoples.⁹ The approach enabled scholars to learn the social practices of the culture of the people.

Qualitative approaches that were presented in this era involved:

1. Ethnography
2. Interviews
3. Case studies
4. Participant observation

These techniques focused on depth, background and cultural insight.

The Chicago School of Sociology, pioneered by University of Chicago also propelled the qualitative research in 1910's and 1930's. The Social theorists like Robert Park, Robert Thomas, Ernest Burgess, Louis Wirth and

⁷. Émile Durkheim, *Le Suicide*, Free Press, New York, 1951.

⁸. Émile Durkheim, *The Rules of Sociological Method*, Free Press, New York, 1982.

⁹. Max Weber, *Economy and Society*, University of California Press, Berkeley, 1978.

George Herbert Mead examined the city life in terms of the field observation, interviews and case studies.¹⁰

Howard S Becker (labelling theory) and Erving Goffman continued the methodology of field study and internationalism. The studies proved that the studies of social phenomena were possible directly interacting with communities.¹¹

Thus Interpretive and qualitative paradigm in sociology and other discipline of social sciences explores the social context of individuals from the perspective of subjective meanings, and experiences rather than seeking objective, measurable truths. Consequently, the human knowledge and socially constructed reality come from data interpretation and human interaction.

IV. Behavioral Revolution and Quantitative Expansion (Mid-20th Century)

In the mid-twentieth century, more specifically in 1950's and in 1960's the Quantitative Revolution (QR) and the Behavioral Revolution, the two consecutive research methodology surfaced in Geography and other branches in social sciences making a departure from the earlier approaches emphasizing more scientific, nomothetic (law-making) as a critical response to the over-simplification of human nature. The key exponents of these approaches were Fred Kurt Schaefer, Brian Berry, William Garrison, Peter Haggett, Richard Chorley, and David Harvey.¹² The researchers aimed to transform social sciences into a more scientific field with the help of strict empirical research and statistical tests.¹³ A survey research became predominant. Structured questionnaires were also used by researchers to gather the information about large populations. Improvements in the probability sampling enabled researchers to make inferences on whole populations based on the results of the samples.¹⁴ The use of statistical methods like regression analysis helped the authors to find the correlation among variables. Experimental methods were also introduced which enabled the researchers to test causal relations.

Behavioralism emphasized:

1. Measurement
2. Hypothesis testing
3. Statistical modeling
4. Predictive analysis

¹⁰. Bronislaw Malinowski, *Argonauts of the Western Pacific*, Routledge, London, 1922.

11. https://www.google.com/search?q=chicago+school+of+sociology+thinkers&sca_esv=e44a3b63b1b18493&rlz=1C1VDKB_en-GBIN1126IN1126&biw=1366&bih=612&sxsrf=ANbL-n49Pq56-5VKh09VZE6UdCkf8gdUHW%3A1772697517662&ei=4zepadOSKMGwwcsPyJWp4Ag&oq=+Chicago+School+of+Sociology&gs_lp=Egxnd3Mtd2l6LXNlcniAHCBDaGljYWdvIFNjaG9vbCBvZiBtB2Npb2xvZ3kqAggBMgUQABiABDIFEAAyYgAQyBRAAGIAEMgYQABgWGB4yBhAAGBYyHjIGEAAyFhgeMgYQABgWGB4yBhAAGBYyHjIGEAAyFhgeMgYQABgWGB5IkIzQIBVYiBVwAXgBkAEAmAG8AaABvAGqAQMwLjG4AQHIAQD4AQH4AQKYAgKgAoECqAIQwglHECMYJxjqAsICDRAuGNEDGMCBGcY6gLCAGcQLhgnGOoCwgIXEAAyYgAQYkQIYtAIY5wYYigUY6gLYAQHCAhcQLhiABBiRAhi0AhjnBhiKBRjqAtgBAZgDJvEF9Gt4C-8vcLS6BgYIARABGAGSBwUxLjAuMaAHyQayBwMyLTG4B9oBwgcDNC0yyAc3gAgA&sclient=gws-wiz-serp

¹². https://www.google.com/search?q=Behavioral+Revolution+and+Quantitative+Expansion+&sca_esv=ac828fb99d817095&rlz=1C1VDKB_en-GBIN1126IN1126&biw=1366&bih=612&sxsrf=ANbL-n6G_u_g8RawAkjmNRz9ZBIvVUFFYq%3A1772515462847&ei=hnCmaYa8M66bnesPkJPRuAE&ved=0ahUKEwiGl5bU_oKTAxWuTWcHHZBJFBcQ4dUDCBE&oq=Behavioral+Revolution+and+Quantitative+Expansion+&gs_lp=Egxnd3Mtd2l6LXNlcAaIMUJlaGF2aW9yYWwgUmV2b2x1dGlvb2BhbmQgUXVhbnRpdGF0aXZlIEV4cGFuc2l2b2BhYBRAhGKABMGUQIRigAUiaKICS G1iSG3ACeAGQAQCYAYYCoAGGAqoBAzItMbgBDMgBAPgBAfgBAPgCA6AC3wKoAhDCAgcQIxnG0oCwgIHEC4YJxjqAsICDRauGNEDGMcBGCCyY6gLCaHcQABiABBiRAhi0AhjnBhiKBRjqAtgBAZgDGPEFk_3tlyHSyHa6BgYIARABGAGSBwUyLjAuMaAH_wKyBwMyLTG4B6sCwgcFM0xLjLIBzqACAA&scient=gws-wiz-serp

¹³. Robert Park and Ernest Burgess, *Introduction to the Science of Sociology* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1921).

¹⁴. Earl Babbie, *The Practice of Social Research*, Wadsworth, Belmont, 2010.

It was a time when the institutional assistance of quantitative research, especially in the fields of political science, sociology and economics, was more supported.

V. Critical and Reflexive Methodologies (Late 20th Century)

Towards the close of twentieth century, the doubt began to surface amongst the scholars that objectivity exists in a positivist manner. The Critical and Reflective Methodology in social science research emphasized on critical examination of their own biases, values and power dynamics, considering they not separated from the system itself. Therefore continuous critical self-assessment or scrutiny with ethical integrity, transparency, and rigor of qualitative research.¹⁵ The foundational thinkers of these school of thoughts were John Dewey and Donald Schon. Dewey the founder of the reflective-thinking methodology emphasized on active, persistent and more careful consideration of beliefs in light of supportive evidences, whereas Donald Schon emphasized on 'reflection-in action and reflection-on-action', focusing on how professionals learn from their own various experiences. Following their ideals the other thinkers who followed these social science methods were; Jan Fook, Stephen Brookfield, Heather P.F. Cunliffe, Linda Finlay and Pierre Bourdieu. The contributors to these research methodology were Attia Edge (2017) Norman Denzin and Yvonna Lincoln, Carolyn Ellis and Arthur Bochner and Dawn Onishenko, Nob Doran, Rose Ann Torres, and Dionisio Nyaga.¹⁶ These researchers were largely influenced by the Marxists, feminism, and the postcolonial theory and the argument in one of them was that knowledge is a product of power relations. Critical theorists like Jurgen Habermas suggested that 'society could not only be explained but criticized and changed by research'.¹⁷ Feminist scholars pointed out that the ordinary method of research could not take into consideration of women. There were new methods in the introduction of critical methodologies such as:

1. Feminist research methods
2. Participatory research methods
3. Discourse analysis methods
4. Reflexive methodologies

These strategies incorporated the aspect of ethics, responsibility and positionality of the researcher. Another move by postcolonial scholars was against Eurocentric research models, positing that the western paradigms usually distorted the non-western societies.¹⁸

¹⁵. https://www.google.com/search?q=Critical+and+Reflexive+Methodologies+&sca_esv=ac828fb99d817095&rlz=1C1V DKB_en-GBIN1126IN1126&biw=1366&bih=612&sxsrf=ANbL-n51y2Fq7ZdAvIZ2ZEMBMkKWgoAajw%3A1772516453254&ei=ZX SmaZCUD-us4-EPjuaayAQ&ved=0ahUKEwjQ2resgoOTAxVr1jgGHQ6zBkkQ4dUDCBE&oq=Critical+and+Reflexive+Methodologies+&gs_lp=Egxn d3Mtd2l6LXNlcnAiJUNyaXRpY2FsIGFuZCBsZWZsZXhpdmUgTWV0aG9kb2xvZ2llcyAyBRAhGKABSPopUJQUWJQUcAF4AZABAJgB3wGgAd8BqgEDMi0xuAEMyAEA-AEB-AECmAICoAKgAqgCD8ICBxAjGcCvY6gLCAGcQLhgnGOoCwgINEC4Y0QMYxwEYJxjqAsICFxAAAGIAEGJECGLQCGOcG GIOfGOoC2AEBwglAEC4YgAQYkQIYtAIY5wYYyAMYigUY6gLYAQGYAyLxBZTXM0jSAQ0fugYGCAEQARgBkgcFMS4wLjGgB_wBsgcDMi0xuAf9AcIHBzItMS4wLjHIBySACAA&scient=gws-wiz-serp

¹⁶. https://www.google.com/search?q=Critical+and+Reflexive+Methodologies+thinkers&sca_esv=ac828fb99d817095&rlz=1C1V DKB_en-GBIN1126IN1126&biw=1366&bih=612&sxsrf=ANbL-n65OatDhHaUpT0wMQerjg1f7qTS-Q%3A1772518666776&ei=Cn2maY-VKe3ZseMP7_-d2Ag&ved=0ahUKEwiPwwDLioOTAxXtbGwGHe9_B4sQ4dUDCBE&uact=5&oq=Critical+and+Reflexive+Methodologies+thi nkers&gs_lp=Egxn d3Mtd2l6LXNlcnAiLUNyaXRpY2FsIGFuZCBsZWZsZXhpdmUgTWV0aG9kb2xvZ2llcyB0aGlua2VyczhIECEYyAEYyCjIHECEYyAEYyCkjaMFCXCvixJHABeAGQAQCYAesBoAGODaoBBTAuOC4xuAEDyAEA-AEBmAiKoALMDsICChAAGLADGNYEGefCAGUQIRigAcICBBahGBXCAGUQIRifBZgDAIgGAZAGCJIHBTEuNC41oAf wK7IHBTAuNC41uAe-DsIHBtItNC42yAdfgAgA&scient=gws-wiz-serp

¹⁷. Earl Babbie, *The Practice of Social Research*, Wadsworth, Belmont, 2010.

¹⁸. Jürgen Habermas, *Knowledge and Human Interests*, Beacon Press, Boston, 1971.

The most recent development in social science research method is the Mixed Methods Research popularly known as MMR, integrating quantitative and qualitative methods to undertake research on social sciences. MMR emphasizing quantities attempted to integrate survey and experiments methods whereas qualitative methods incorporates individual and group interviews to collect facts or data's in single study to achieve a more comprehensive, holistic understanding. It is crucial for tackling complex, interdisciplinary issues by enabling triangulation, validation, and deeper insights that exceed the capacity of a single approach.¹⁹ Having realized the shortcomings of quantitative and qualitative approaches, scholars started to merge them. Mixed methods study combines both statistical and qualitative research with a mix of statistical analysis. Through this methodology, the researcher can get a generalizability, as well as, contextual depth. Mixed methods studies have gained popularity among sociologists, political scientists, educators, and public health workers in contemporary times.

In 21st century across all discipline; humanities, social science and engineering research and investigations has been further revolutionized by the digital and computational methods. The Researchers or Investigators can now study big data sets with the help of computational tools to undertake research in social sciences and other disciplines. The evolution of these approaches in recent times that includes machine learning and agent-based modeling, facilitate researchers to learn digital information, mechanize analysis, and to create virtual simulations for knowledgeable decision-making.²⁰

1. Big data analysis
2. Social media analytics
3. Network analysis
4. Computational modeling
5. Digital ethnography

19. https://www.google.com/search?q=Mixed+Methods+and+Interdisciplinary+Integration&sca_esv=ac828fb99d817095&rlz=1C1VDKB_en-GBIN1126IN1126&biw=1366&bih=612&sxsrf=ANbL-n4NxxY1jddU49pvzJlgAYg-sX_4ng%3A177252799527&ei=L42maZfnH4yQseMPuvbQoQs&ved=0ahUKEwjXusn-mYOTaXUMSGwGHTo7NLQQ4dUDCBE&oq=Mixed+Methods+and+Interdisciplinary+Integration&gs_lp=Egxnd3Mtd2l6LXNlcuAil01peGVkIE1ldGhvZHMgYW5kIEludGVyZGlzY2lwbGluYXJ5J5EludGVncmF0aW9uMgUQIRigATIFECEYoaEYBRAhGKABSMktUOkZWOkZcAJ4AJABAJgBqAKgAagCqgEDMi0xuAEMyAEA-AEB-AECmAiDoAL3AqgCEMICBxAjGCcY6gLCAG0QLhjRAxjHARgnGOoCwglIHEC4YJxjqAsICFxAuGIAEGJECGLQCGOcGGIoFGOoC2AEBwgIXEAAyGAQYkQIYtAIY5wYYigUY6gLYAQGYAxnxBbLDTf8DQ74-ugYGCAEQARgBkgcFMi4zLTGgB4oEsgcDMY0xuAflAsIHBzItMS4wLjLIBzGACAA&scient=gws-wiz-serp

²⁰.https://www.google.com/search?q=Digital+and+Computational+Methods&sca_esv=ac828fb99d817095&rlz=1C1VDKB_en-GBIN1126IN1126&biw=1366&bih=612&sxsrf=ANbL-n4xfEYW5HVrShoTMUCIil0sm2VI6Q%3A1772522812192&ei=PI2mafS6C7-NseMP9aKe2AU&ved=0ahUKEwj0yM6EmoOTAxW_RmwGHXWRB1sQ4dUDCB&oeq=Digital+and+Computational+Methods&gs_l=Egxd3Mtd2l6LXNlcnAilURPZ2l0YWwgYW5kIENvbXB1dGF0aW9uYWwgTWV0aG9kc0gAUABYAHAAeACQAQCYAQCGAQcQAQC4AQzIAQCYAgCgAgCYAwCSBwCgBwCyBwC4BwDCBwDIBwCACAA&scient=gws-wiz-serp

²¹.https://www.google.com/search?q=Digital+and+Computational+Methods&sca_esv=ac828fb99d817095&rlz=1C1VDKB_en-GBIN1126IN1126&biw=1366&bih=612&sxsrf=ANbL-n4xfEYW5HVrShoTMUCIil0sm2VI6Q%3A1772522812192&ei=PI2mafS6C7-NseMP9aKe2AU&ved=0ahUKEwj0yM6EmoOTAxW_RmwGHXWRB1sQ4dUDCB&oeq=Digital+and+Computational+Methods&gs_l=Egxd3Mtd2l6LXNlcnAilURPZ2l0YWwgYW5kIENvbXB1dGF0aW9uYWwgTWV0aG9kc0gAUABYAHAAeACQAQCYAQCGAQcQAQC4AQzIAQCYAgCgAgCYAwCSBwCgBwCyBwC4BwDCBwDIBwCACAA&scient=gws-wiz-serp

VIII. Methodological Pluralism in Contemporary Social Sciences

Methodological pluralism in contemporary social sciences is the.

The modern and most contemporary social science research is marked with methodological pluralism. It is strategic and combined use of diverse research methods i.e. mixing qualitative referring to in-depth and quantitative or extensive techniques—within a single study to accomplish a more holistic, robust, and validated understanding of complex social realities. There are several ways used by the researchers based on research questions. The Quantitative methods give the statistical accuracy whereas the qualitative methods give the context. Large scale insights are availed by digital approaches. These approaches are complementary as opposed to competing with each other.²²

Concluding Remarks

The history of development of the methods of research in humanities, social sciences and other branches of knowledge is an expression of the intellectual, technological, and philosophical transformation. Since philosophical speculation through the contributions of positivist empiricism, interpretive understanding, and critical methodologies, social scientific research methods have been in constant transition. All methodological steps have brought valuable information in subsequent phases of time and space. In the modern social sciences, methodological pluralism is acceptable and valid, as it is understood that social reality is complex and needs a variety of research methods. Artificial intelligence, digital technologies, and interdisciplinary work will probably influence the methods of future research. Nevertheless, the main problem is the same, and it is precisely associated with, the human society with all its complexity.

Footnotes

.Benjamin Jowett "Aristotle's, Politics" (Trans), Dover Thrift, New York, 2000

².https://www.google.com/search?q=dominant+methods+in+social+science+research++in+medieval+world+&sca_esv=e44a3b63b1b18493&rlz=1C1VDKB_en-GBIN1126IN1126&biw=1366&bih=612&sxsrf=ANbL-n5IoRx3vPonq-XVcC5PDeLsWp4NUw%3A1772691809142&ei=YSGpabGyCMGeseMP8pb1wAI&ved=0ahUKEwjx5tHMj4iTAXVBT2wGHXJLHSGQ4dUDCBM&uact=5&oq=dominant+methods+in+social+science+research++in+medieval+world+&gs_lp=Egxnd3Mtd2l6LXNlcniAiP2RvbWluYW50IG1ldGhvZHMgaW4gc29jaWFsIHJjaWVuY2UgcmlvZzZWfYy2ggIGluIG1lZGllbmFsIHdvcmxkIEi75wJQ_Q1Y690CcAF4AZABAJgBxAWgAalEqgEOMC4yNC44LjQuMC4xLjG4AQPIAQD4AQGYAhOgAr0kwgIHECMYsAMYJ8ICChAAGLADGNYEGEfCagCQixiAhgnwgIIEAAYgAQYogTCAGUQABjvBcICBBaHGArcAGUQIRigAcICCB AhGKABGMMewgIKECEYoAEYwwQYCpgDAIgGAZAGCZIHcZeuNy42LjQuMC4xoAejjgGyBwswLjcuNi40LjAuMbgHniTCBwoyLTEyLjUuMS4xyAfGAYAIAA&scient=gws-wiz-serp

³. John Locke, Two Treatises of Government, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1988.

⁴.https://www.google.com/search?q=voltaire+historiography&rlz=1C1VDKB_en-GBIN1126IN1126&oq=&aqs=chrome.3.46i39i362i813j35i39i362i813j35i39i362j35i39i362i813j35i39i362l2j46i39i362j35i39i362.38779202j0j15&sourceid=chrome&ie=UTF-8

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