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New Approaches in Social Sciences Field

Marius - Costel EȘI¹

Abstract

The relevance of social sciences in a deeply complex informational society underlines the possibilities of assertion specific for scientific environments, in accordance with the contemporary society's needs and requirements. Otherwise, a proper interpretation of the theories and proposed models that relate with the social sciences domain implies firstly a relational clarification concerning a series of components as the epistemic analysis degree, the value sequences, or the benefits acquired through an actual research. The premises of this assumption that we take into account include accustomed and recent scientific research and approaches, validated in the knowledge area of social sciences.

Keywords: *Scientific research, social sciences, social action, theological function.*

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1. Theoretical and practical constructs in social sciences

The structural dimension of social sciences concentrates different research areas and classification patterns whose theoretical grounding can be explained through the teleological function that an assumed scientific research acquires. Even if they are explained by reference to natural sciences (Popper, 1996, p. 103) or to human sciences (Foucault, 1996, p. 415), explanation assured through conceptual synonymy or opposition, social sciences endorse the knowledge objectivity issue in behalf of the fact that the empirical datum can be consistently correlated to the idea of cognitive value (Weber, 2001, p. 65).

Irrespective of the theoretical and conceptual status of the social sciences area, its unity must be sustained to the extent that this process becomes possible for particular domains of science (Bunge, 1984, p. 342). Theoretical constructs sustain scientific research based on certain arguments and counter-arguments that enforce the interaction between concepts, laws, theories or patterns. In this manner, the rational valuation of the results that are outlined through this kind of correlation state the teleological function of knowledge for the social sciences sphere. Such an example consists in inter-, pluri- and transdisciplinary approaches focused on social-related themes. Therefore, we question the imperative nature of this scientific endeavor compared to a significant focus on the genuine ability of understanding the acquired contents, ability associated to cognitive-affective attitudes.

In this context we notice that accepting the validity of each of the two approaches mostly depends on the environment in which the scientific activity takes place. In other words, a categorization of scientific research builds itself through the acceptance and the admission of paradigms that are practically/theoretically based on the idea of social action, idea that can be understood and postulated through terms like interaction and organization (Heritage and Maxwell, 1984, p. 1). In this manner, we can admit the evidence and the necessity of conceptual connection, but also the transfer of methods between various disciplinary fields. Moreover, the learning experiences accumulated along the way allow us to correlate personal experience with our own social actions. However, the analysis and the reflection on the social action concept - from the scientific knowledge perspective - bring into question the objective-subjective relation issue concerning the epistemological explanations that can be outlined, but also debate on the neutrality of social sciences (Hollis, 2001, pp. 195-197).

2. Reassessment of social sciences field

Nowadays, we witness the re-shaping of “social space” (Bourdieu, 1989, pp. 14-25), process concretized in relation with new needs and requirements, specific for the contemporary society. Taking into account the idea according to which the nature and not the environment in which a research process takes place determines its scientific character (Singer, 1979, pp. 49-56), we can assert that, re-shaping of the social space, may imply a reassessment of the significances encountered in social sciences area and of the social research results. Beyond a critique of the utilitarian model of applied social sciences (Smelser, 1996, pp. 275-290), the inquiries on research methodology (Blanche, Durrheim & Painter, 2006, p. 7) corroborated with the qualitative - quantitative methods in social sciences fields (Jayaratne & Stewart, 1991, pp. 85-106; Berg, 2001) or feminist demeanor (Campbell & Wasco, 2000, pp. 773-791), we can distinguish between the new social approaches those that particularly reflect inter-, pluri- and trans-disciplinary pursuits (Lamprianou, 2011, pp. 152-164).

On the one hand, many studies are focused on educational approaches (professionalizing teaching career; teaching communication, playing, learning and games in education), correlated with psychological and economical issues (Lindenberg, 1985, pp. 99-114), and on the other hand these inquiries are based on *the convergences between social science and medical approach* (Michalak, 2012, pp. 159-169; Brosnan, 2013, pp. 3-17). Therefore, various researches that aim to outline the importance of social and legal aspects (Rublin, 2011, pp. 179-222; Mertz, 2010), educational perspectives (McLean, Abbas & Ashwin, 2013, pp. 32-44), economic (Farmer, 2012, pp. 105-120), backgrounds of (bio) technological policy and development (Havlicek, 1990, pp. 69-72) are singled out.

Conclusions

In these conditions, the system of social values appears as different from the previous (classic/ traditional) image and this mutation is generated by new, multiple inquiries and applications within the reality field. Extrapolating this idea in the social sciences researches we can state that the significances of theoretical assumptions and values can be decrypted as far as the benefits obtained through scientific analysis are socially projected. In conclusion, the delineation of specific rational behavior and the designation of pragmatic connections between the processes and phenomena that characterize the social dynamics constitute, in our opinion, recognition

criteria for the flexible knowledge models applicable to social sciences sphere.

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Biodata

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