

Sociology Daily Answer Writing

Week 5 - Day 2

Model Structures

1. Differentiate between objectivity and value neutrality in sociological research. 10

Model Structure

Introduction

- Define objectivity and value neutrality

Main Body

- Objectivity means striving as far as possible to reduce or eliminate bias in the conduct of research.
- Value neutrality, as described by Max Weber, is the duty of sociologists to identify and acknowledge their own values and overcome their personal biases when conducting sociological research.
- Objectivity is an imperative of value-free sociology or positivism
- A positivist research has goals such as quantification, containment of social reality as facts, data analysis etc.,
- Invariably there must be objectivity in such research.
- Moreover, quantification in itself is a way to achieve objectivity
- Value neutrality is an imperative of non-positivists
- When using techniques such as observation or interview, there are some preconditions like ideology of the researcher, topic of the research, distance between researcher and researched exist

Conclusion

- Hence, objectivity is not possible. Value contamination is bound to happen
- In order to be value-neutral, sociologists must be aware of their own moral judgments and values, and avoid incorporating them into their research, their conclusions, and their teaching.

2. Critically examine Positivistic approach in sociological studies.

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Model Structure:

(Note: Provide features of Positivist perspective in sociology. Also engage critically with these arguments as the directive in this question is 'Critically Examine')

Introduction

- Definition of Positivistic Approach OR Emergence of Positivistic Approach

Model Framework

- Features of Positivistic Approach -
 - Empiricism and identification of surface reality
 - Cause and Effect analysis
 - Objectivity
 - Use of Scientific Methodology - Direct Observation, Data collection, etc.
 - Uncovering the laws that governs human behaviour
 - Grand theories explaining every phenomenon
- Proponents of Positivistic Approach -
 - Comte (social physics)
 - Durkheim's Social facts
 - Spencer Organismic Analogy - Social Darwinism
- Criticism with EXAMPLES -
 - Neo-Kantians - Problems of Objectivity, Generalisation, Quantification
 - Phenomenologists - Alfred Schutz
 - Ethnomethodologists - Garfinkel
 - Symbolic Interactionism - G H Mead
 - Weber's Interpretativism
 - Method of verstehen, causal pluralist method and Ideal types as an alternatives to positivist methods in sociology
 - Post-modernist like Foucault rejected grand theories in Sociology

- EXAMPLES ARE MUST IN CRITICISM:-
 - Multiple Meanings for Social action like marriage
 - Values may seep in - Marxists, Functionalists.

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