

University of Crete
Faculty of Social Sciences



Department of Sociology
Master Program “Sociology: Theory, Culture, Transformations”
Winter semester 2018-9

Principles and Methods of Social Research

Instructor:

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Office hours: Monday, 16.30 – 17.30 & Tuesday, 10.00-11.00

Description:

This course aims at familiarizing the students with systematic and methodical investigating of social phenomena. By emphasizing the peculiarity of social phenomena as topics of scientific research, it aims at identifying the appropriate ways of examining them through acknowledged approaches, methods and techniques. The course discusses issues such as: what is scientific social research; how does it differ from other ways of viewing and representing social world; how empirical research interacts with social theory and existing knowledge; why are we talking about methodological pluralism in social sciences; what are the basic principles in social research and on what ontological and epistemological assumptions are they based; what are the methodological implications of choosing one or the other of the research approaches. Ethics and politics in social research as well as the criteria for assessing the quality of social research will be also discussed. The course prepares students to specify a research purpose, to formulate research questions or hypothesis, to plan a research process and to design its steps, to collect, organize and analyze (qualitative and quantitative) data, to produce convincing interpretations, to document research results and to write of a scientific report.

Timetable

1st week

- (a) Introduction to course and project
- (b) Assignments
- (c) The nature and process of empirical social research

Recommended Readings: Bryman, (2012: 3-17), Robson, (2016: 3-13), Lawrence Neumann, (2000: 1-19),

2nd week

- (a) Epistemological and ontological issues
- (b) Theory and research (induction, deduction and abduction)

Recommended Readings: Bryman, (2012: 18-43), Lawrence Neumann, (2000: 63-88).

3rd week

Approaches to social research

- (a) Quantitative and qualitative research
- (b) Mixed and combined research approaches

Recommended Readings: Bryman, (2012: 611-652), Lawrence Neumann, (2000: 121-155), Creswell, (2012: 2-56).

4th week

The process of social research

- (a) Research design - Steps
- (b) Reviewing the literature
- (c) Planning a research project and formulating research questions

Recommended Readings: Bryman, (2012: 79-96), Creswell, (2012: 57-139).

5th week

Ethics and politics in social research - criteria for assessing the quality of social research.

- (a) Ethical principles
- (b) Social research as a political practice
- (c) Criteria for assessing the quality of social research.

Recommended Readings: Bryman, (2012: 46-49 & 129 - 155), Babbie, (2012: 31-55).

6th week

Qualitative Research

- (a) The feature of qualitative research
- (b) The main steps in qualitative research
- (c) Producing qualitative data

Recommended Readings: Bryman, (2012: 379-429), Creswell, (2012: 204-235).

7th week

Analyzing and interpreting qualitative data

- (a) Basic operations in qualitative data analysis.
- (b) Thematic analysis
- (c) Computer-assisted qualitative data analysis: using NVivo

Recommended Readings: Bryman, (2012: 564-610), Braun & Clarke (2006), Creswell, (2012: 236-264).

8th week

Research designs of quantitative social research (Stefania Kalogeraki)

- (a) Survey designs

Recommended Readings: Saris & Gallhofer (2007: 1-12), Babbie (2012: 123-161 & 228-269), Walliman (2006: 36-49), Oppenheim (1992).

9th week

Research designs of quantitative social research (Stefania Kalogeraki)

- (b) Basic principles of measurements: From theoretical concepts to variables.
- (c) Questionnaire Construction

Recommended Readings: Saris & Gallhofer (2007: 15-30), Babbie (2012: 197-224), Dillman (2007: 32-78), DeVellis (2003: 60-100).

10th week

Ethnography

- (a) Key characteristics of ethnographic research
- (b) Access to the field, field notes and analyzing ethnographic material

Recommended Readings: Bryman, (2012: 477-512), Creswell, (2012: 461-501), Mason, (2002: 84-102).

11th week

Intersectionality in social sciences research (Alexandra Zavvos)

- (a) Positioning knowledge
- (b) Gender, ethnicity and class as analytical categories in social research

Recommended Readings: Phoenix (2006), Yuval-Davis (2006), Phoenix (2011), Davis & Zarkov (2017).

12th week

Research infrastructure in social sciences

- (a) Secondary analysis and data sharing
- (b) Meta-analysis

Recommended Readings: Bryman, (2012: 310-328), Heaton, (2004).

13th week

Students' presentation in class

Recommended Literature

- Babbie, E. (2012), *The practice of social research* (13th edition). California:Wadsworth, Cengage Learning.
- Braun, V., & Clarke, V. (2006). Using thematic analysis in psychology. *Qualitative Research in Psychology*, 3 (2), pp. 77-101.
- Bryman, A. (2012), *Social research methods* (4th edition). New York: Oxford University Press Inc.
- Creswell, J. (2012). *Educational research : planning, conducting, and evaluating quantitative and qualitative research*. (4th edition) Boston: Pearson Education, Inc..
- Davis, K. & D. Zarkov (2017), EJWS retrospective on intersectionality, *European Journal of Women's Studies*, Vol. 24(4): 313–320.
- DeVellis, R. (2003). Guidelines in scale development. In DeVellis, R. (ed.) *Scale development* (2nd Ed.), pp. 60-100. Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.
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- Lawrence Neuman, W. (2000). *Social Research Methods. Qualitative and Quantitative Approaches*. Boston: Allyn and Bacon.
- Mason, J. (2002). *Qualitative researching*. (2nd edition), London: Sage Publications.
- Oppenheim, A. (1992). Introduction to survey design. In. Oppenheim (ed.) *Questionnaire design, interviewing and attitude measurement*, pp.5-19. London: Pinter.
- Phoenix, A. (2006), Interrogating intersectionality: Productive ways of theorising multiple positioning, *Kvinder, Køn & Forskning*, 2-3 pp. 21-30.
- Phoenix, A. (2011), Psychosocial intersections: contextualising the accounts of adults who grew up in visibly ethnically different households, in H. Lutz, M. T. H. Vivar, L. Supik (Eds.), *Framing intersectionality* (pp. 137-152). Farnham, Surrey: Ashgate Press.
- Robson, C. & K. McCartan (2016). *Real world research* (4th edition), Chichester: John Wiley & Sons Ltd.
- Saris, W. & Gallhofer, I. (2007). Concepts-by-postulation and concepts-by-intuition. In W. Saris, & I. Gallhofer (eds.) *Design, evaluation and analysis of questionnaires for survey research*, pp.15-30. New York: Wiley.

- Saris, W. & Gallhofer, I. (2007). Introduction. In W. Saris, & I. Gallhofer (eds.) Design, evaluation and analysis of questionnaires for survey research, pp.1-12. New York: Wiley
- Walliman, N. (2006). Research strategies and design. In Walliman, N (ed.) Social research methods (SAGE Course Companions series), pp. 36-49. London: Sage.
- Yuval-Davis, N. (2006) Intersectionality and Feminist Politics, *European Journal of Women's Studies*, Vol. 13(3): 193–209.

Literature

- Alvesson, M & Skoldberg, K (2000) *Reflexive Methodology*. London: Sage.
- Babbie E. (2001) *The practice of Social Research*. Wadsworth Publishing Company (9^η έκδ.).
- Basit, T. N. (2003). Manual or Electronic? The role of coding in qualitative data analysis. *Educational Research*, 45(2), 143-154.
- Bazeley, P. (2013). *Qualitative Data Analysis. Practical Strategies*. Thousand Oaks: Sage.
- Bazeley, P., & Jackson, K. (2013). *Qualitative Data Analysis with NVivo*. London: Sage.
- Braun, V., & Clarke, V. (2012). Thematic analysis. Στο H. Cooper (επιμ.) *APA Handbook of Research Methods in Psychology* (σσ. 51-77). American Psychological Association,.
- Bohnsack, R. (1999). *Rekonstruktive Sozialforschung. Einführung in Methodologie und Praxis qualitativer Forschung*. (3^η Έκδοση). Opladen: Leske + Budrich.
- Bryman, A. (2000) *Quantity and Quality in Social Research*. London: Routledge.
- Chamberlayne, P., Bornat, J. & Wengraf, T. (επιμ.) (2000). *The Turn to Biographical Methods in Social Science*. London: Routledge.
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- Charmaz, K. (2006) *Constructing Grounded Theory: a Practice Guide through Qualitative Analysis*. London: Sage.
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- Elliot, J. (2005) *Using narrative social research. Qualitative and Qualitative Approaches*. London: Sage.
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- Glaser, B. G. (2005) *The grounded theory perspective III: Theoretical coding*. Mill Valley, CA: Sociology Press.
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- Kelle, U. (2005). "Emergence" vs. "forcing" of empirical data? A crucial problem of "grounded theory" reconsidered. *Forum Qualitative Sozialforschung / Forum: Qualitative Social Research*, 6(2), Art.27, <http://www.qualitative-research.net/fqs-texte/2-05/05-2-27-e.htm>.
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Journals about methods:

<http://gsociology.icaap.org/methods/resrch.htm>

Forum: Qualitative Social Research <http://www.qualitative-research.net/index.php/fqs>