

The Philosophy of Science in Social Research

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Abstract

The philosophical study of social research is an important dimension of social science which has been placed to analyze the problems of social science description and its relationship. It describes the social phenomena within natural science as well as is concerned with the intellectual authority of various aspects of social science knowledge of the social world. Social research boils down to a struggle over the legitimate study through philosophical approaches. Philosophy of social science deals with the generalized meaning of the thing and centered on the sharing of experience about the social world in which people's perspective differs from one another. Social science has always been multi-perspective and multi cultural in nature which facilitates in providing various claims about how best to understand the social world. This study aims at unraveling the issues related the key methodologies of philosophical science in social research and depicting a brief sketch of the relationship between philosophy and social research and finally tries to find out how philosophical approaches changes its pattern and take place in social research.

Key Words: Philosophy of science, Social research, knowledge, epistemology and ontology.

Introduction:

A multicultural philosophy of social science possess new techniques and employs new concepts to address issues inherent in the study of human beings; it also puts older questions and concepts in the philosophy of social science in a new light (Fay; 1996:1). The social sciences have been nurtured within the speculative fold of philosophical foundation where philosophy was emerged in the arena of human thoughts about the social world. It starts from where our ideas and concepts are stretched to their limits on social ground. Philosophy analyses the entities of the social world from different aspects: reality, nature of knowledge, mind, matter, truth and logic of abstract phenomena. It finds out the truth first and then logic and cause-effect analysis of the events or things. It is mainly concerned with the construction of whole human knowledge into logically connected systems based on causality and tries to find out how we know the certain things (abstract or concrete) to be true or false. Philosophical foundations of social research have tended to be re-examined during the crises period but afterwards it, philosophers have tried to build cataclysmic changes in fundamentals and to re-evaluate the philosophical ideas and thereby to overcome from previous depressions. The philosophical analysis of scientific explanation starts with the basic concepts such as theory, action, fact and rationality. The various approaches analyze the social research on the basis of three grounds: Thematic analysis, meta-narratives and mini-narratives and lastly, cause-effect analysis. The changing pattern of the philosophical foundations continuously enrich itself with new dimensions and views about social world. The emergence of constitutive conceptions of the relationship form of knowledge bear to the world has opened up new opportunities in the social sciences (Hughes; 187:131-132). The philosophy of science identifies the interminable and circular quality of general things through questioning about fundamental aspects of things.

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Relation between philosophy of science and social research process:

The relationship between philosophy of science and social research process is historical which depends on the logical and conceptual dimensions. Social research is concerned with exploring, describing, and explaining social phenomena involving human behavior (Sufian; 1998:3). It is carried out creating for something new about the world in terms of the basic concepts that characterized the particular discipline. Descartes and Locke have identified three commonplaces for granted: nature was fixed and stable and to be known by principles of understanding equally fixed, stable and universal; there was a dualism between mind and matter and finally, the criterion of knowledge (Hughes; 187:9). All the techniques, methods and tools of social research process should be self-validated and their efficiency or effectiveness is depended on philosophical justification. The relevance of the philosophical issues discussed arises from the fact that every research tool or process is inextricably embedded in commitments to particular version of the world and ways of knowing that world made by the researcher using them (Hughes;187:13). Research methods and concepts cannot be divorced from theory as well as research tools because they are operated within a given set of assumptions about the nature of society, the nature of human behavior and the interactions between these two where philosophy simply aims clarifying the obstacles in obtaining knowledge as true and logical.

Rational of the Study:

The philosophy of science has introduced a unique trend in the field of social research. The point of view possess a very different relationship between social science and it's subject matter from that presupposed by a scientific one. It also gives some insight into why social science theories are, as it were, underdetermined by facts, though constrained by them and suggests that the proposal of a social scientific theory is more a kin to arguing a political or moral case than it is to make scientific one (Hughes,1987:126-127). It helps to reduce barriers in analyzing the views of differences about technical tools of social research. The study facilitates the researchers in adopting perfect knowledge of the social world or phenomenon in their qualitative or quantitative research. It may well become an ideal medium for social scientific research because these approaches are relatively distinctive in nature and purpose to analyze knowledge. In the earlier intellectual period, social science ought to orient itself as visible but in present day world, which questions about cause-effect of particular knowledge as well as general identifications. In the content of social scientific research, it is obligation to introduce the philosophical variation with its different views. But it is the matter of regret that only a small number of books and writings can be found which are not enough to analyze the methodological aspects of social research. So, there is a scope to conduct a study on philosophy of science in social research.

Objectives of the Study:

In order to fulfill the requirements of the study, the objectives of the study will be to:

1. To diagnose how knowledge comes from social world to social research,
2. To generate an overall idea and create differences between truth and reality,
3. To conceptualize the ontological, epistemological and methodological aspects of philosophy in social research,
4. To obtain a comprehensive insight about how approaches will go for operation the techniques or tools of social research,
5. To develop a strategic changing pattern of philosophy of science in social research.

Methodology:

This study is prepared based on the content as well as qualitative analyses. It has been conducted under the auspices of secondary sources. Secondary sources can be split into two different groups: These are printed sources and electronic sources.

1. Secondary data is collected from various printed sources like as publications, newspapers, books, articles etc,
2. Electronic sources are online publications, websites and web portals etc,
3. To make the paper meaningful, internet surfing is continuously done for compiling latest information.

Basis of Philosophical Approaches to Social Research:

Social research contains philosophical analysis of methodologies including realism, empiricism, positivism, idealism, rationalism, functionalism, objectivism, subjectivism, interpretivism, and so on. These approaches can be reviewed and criticized on the basis of ontological and epistemological assumptions. It is important to emphasize that ontological and epistemological questions are not to be answered by empirical inquiry since they are concerned with, among other things, the nature and significance of empirical inquiry (Hughes;1987:7). Regarding this, ontology refers to the theory of reality what reality generally looks like irrespective of our precise knowledge of it, whereas epistemology refers to the theory of knowledge of that reality what particular properties and relations of reality we can describe. No philosophical epistemology can be composed of self-evident truths, firm for all time (Hughes; 1987:9).

Approaches of Philosophy of Science in Social Research:

Philosophy is determined with building the whole of human knowledge through a form of logically inter-connected system. Knowledge is built up on the answers of questions. These research questions assume two forms: a grand tour question or a guiding hypothesis followed by the sub questions (Creswell; 1994:70). The different approaches to social research can be analyzed in terms of questioning. All the approaches make various trends in analysing social research with their distinct characteristics. This paper, here, analyses from modern approaches to post structural approaches briefly in below:

Realism:

Realism is a perspective of social research which represents itself as a dominant indicator on international politics. For its ontology, the ultimate objects of social scientific enquiry (i.e. society, state, self etc) exist and act independently of social scientists and their activities. The social reality is stratified into three domains: the empirical observations are made up of experiences and events through observations; the real events whether observed or not and the reality consists of the existing processes, powers and causal mechanisms that generate events. Through ontology of intransitive structures and mechanisms, theories and social research can be designed on basis of the real sense of things. From epistemological view, reality based on the building of models of such mechanism which constitutes hypothetical description as well as reveals the underlying mechanism of reality. Social reality can be viewed as a socially constructed world in which social elements are the products of social actors or social arrangements are the product of material structures of relations. The main aspects of realism are: constructive realism; entity realism; aesthetic realism; scientific realism; moderate realism; modal realism; mystical realism; organic realism and philosophical realism. Neo-realism, sometimes called 'new' or structural realism, has modified classical realism that it tends to explain events in terms of the structure of the international systems rather than the goals and make-up of individual

states (Heywood; 2000:106). Realism believes that reality exists independently of observers but the critical realists conception emphasizes on the tendencies of things to occur which oppose to regular patterns of events.

Empiricism:

Empiricism is the doctrine that sense experience is the only basis of knowledge, and that therefore all hypotheses and theories should be tested by a process of observation and experience (Heywood; 2000:88). In the philosophy of science, empiricism is a theory of knowledge which emphasizes on those aspects of scientific knowledge that are closely related to evidence, specially as formed through deliberate experimental arrangements. Here, science is considered to be methodologically empirical in nature as well as it has a dual etymology: experiential (Latin) and empiric (Greek and Roman)¹. Empiricism entails ontology of an ordered universe made up of atomistic, discrete and observed events which can be represented by universal prepositions, constant conjunctions or regular patterns of events. In its epistemology, knowledge is derived from sensory experience, concepts and generalizations which are summaries of particular observations. Empirical study of social research makes distinction between the language of observation and the language of theory. All forms of empiricism draw a clear distinction between facts and propositions that have been verified by experience and experiment, and values which as subjective beliefs or opinions are always to be distrusted (Heywood;2000:88). Critical rationalists argue that its impossible to distinguish between observational statements and theoretical statements where feminism argues that empiricism's claim of value-neutrality and objectivity makes the male bias of social scientific knowledge.

Positivism:

Positivism is the doctrine that the social sciences, and, for that matter, all forms of philosophical enquiry, should strictly adhere to the methods of the natural sciences (Heywood;2000:100). Positivism is a philosophy that states the only authentic knowledge is knowledge that is based on actual sense of experience as well as holds monopoly of knowledge in science. In positivism, knowledge only comes from affirmation of theories through strict scientific method where metaphysical speculation is avoided. For positivism, social science is an attempt to gain predictive and explanatory knowledge of the external world and to do this; the researcher must construct theories that consist of highly general statements, expressing the regular relationships. Two specialized figures stand out significantly, Bacon and Descartes. Bacon argued for the value of experience, experiment, induction, and painstaking observation as the way towards providing a reliable basis for scientific ideas rather than the prior method of medieval scholasticism; Descartes, on the other hand, put his faith in the certainties of mathematics as the fundamental instrument of scientific knowledge (Hughes; 1987:17-18). According to Giddens, in its widest sense 'positivist philosophy' covers those perspectives which have made some or all of the following claims: first, the thesis asserts that reality consists essentially in what is available to the senses; second, philosophy while a separable discipline is parasitic upon the findings of science; third, the natural and social sciences share a common logical and methodological foundation; fourth, there is a fundamental distinction between fact and value (Hughes;1987:20). Positivism also denies the perspective which states that all human qualities are beyond the reach of scientific understanding. Positivism has been criticized for its universalism and also fails to prove that there are no abstract ideas, laws and principles, beyond particular observable facts and relationships and necessary principles. The interpretive critique has focused on positivism's inadequate view of the nature of social reality and it can't make the way in which social reality will be constructed or maintained. It entails the authentic view to every tool of social research.

¹ Two types of meaning come from Latin and Roman word

Post-positivism:

Post-positivism is the neo positivist's view to social research process in using new techniques or tools where the philosophers used the logical reasoning process. In the system of logic, it will discuss how two major logical systems, the inductive and deductive methods of reasoning are related to modern research. All research is based on assumptions about how the world is perceived and how we can best come to understand it, post-positivism deals with the quality of social research to know about social world. To ensure the quality of the research process, it takes on two different but interrelated instruments: validity and reliability. Validity, mainly, is just something abstract and philosophical which is the principle of post-positivism and reality.

Idealism:

Idealism is understood in one of two senses, metaphysical and political, metaphysical idealism is the belief that, in the final analysis, only ideas exist (Heywood; 2000:91-92). Idealism entails ontology in which social reality is the product of processes through which social actors negotiate the meaning of and for actions and situations. Within the sense of idealism, social reality is pre-interpreted. In its epistemology, knowledge is derived from everyday concepts and meanings. The social researcher enters into day to day social world in order to get socially constructed meanings and then reconstructs these meanings in a scientific knowledge. It holds that meaning is not lied in the outside social world but it gets from the knowing subjections as well as concerned to discover the meaningful nature of social life by people's placement in particular situations. It also in criticism from various ways such as the central concepts of idealism are the potentially misleading in that competent social actors engaged in a continuous monitoring to reasons. Idealism fails to acknowledge the role of institutional structures, particularly division of interest and relations of power, moreover, not able to deal with the conditions which give rise to the meaning, interpretations, the actions, rules and beliefs.

Rationalism:

Rationalism makes the proper use of axiomatic presuppositions in order to analyze social reality, which approaches research data with logical and mathematical modeling and also believes that everything has a rational structure. As a philosophical theory, rationalism is the belief that knowledge flows from reason rather than experience (Heywood; 2000:104). It believes in the ability of human beings to explain and understand their social world and finds out the solutions of the respective problems as well as provides the basis for both liberalism and socialism. Rationalism shares some aspects of empiricism or positivism's ontology but rejects its epistemology. Rationalism does not make any difference between observational and theoretical statements whereas all observations are theory dependent.

Functionalism:

Functionalism is the metaphysical theory of mind and human behaviorism which suggests that mental status (beliefs, desires etc) are constructed solely through their functional role. Functionalism is the doctrine that social institutions and practices can be understood in term of functions they carry out in sustaining the larger social system (Heywood; 2000:89). Functionalists analysis is the view that the whole is more than the collection of its parts. And it is also concerned with the theme that social and political researchable phenomena can be understood in terms of the consequences rather than causes. Some critiques claim that it does have sufficient analytical capacity to state about mind. Functionalism has been criticized in two major ways: first, it has been accused of reductionism; secondly, functionalism is implicitly conservative (Heywood; 2000:90).

Structuralism:

Structuralism has emerged in the second half of the twentieth century in academic arena which concerned with the analysis of language, culture and society from structural perspective. The basic principles of structuralism consist of analyzing social events to discover the synchronic structures which makes possible hierarchical pattern and these are typically broken down into various units such as codes, rules of combinations etc. The essential theory underlying this method is that these structures are fully autonomous and their units are independent because they are constructed through contrast with one another. Here, knowledge is derived from the structural views towards anything which should be seen as structure.

Utilitarianism:

Utilitarianism is a moral philosophy that suggests that the rightness of action, policy or institution can be established by its tendency to promote happiness (Heywood; 2000:108). It is the idea that the moral worth of an action is solely determined through maximized happiness or pleasure of all persons. Social reality is found from the person's positive expectations from the social world and behavioral pattern continuously changes based on the fulfillment of the individual demand. It is thus a form of consequentialism which means the moral worth of action is determined by its income and the ends justify the means. In social research process, it acts as a quantitative and reductionist approach to ethics, mainly contrasted with deontological ethics (which disregards the consequences of performing an act, when determining its moral worth) and virtue ethics (which focuses on character). Utilitarianism has been criticized for endorsing acts that are widely considered wrong.

Instrumentalism:

In the philosophy of social science, the instrumentalism approach views that concepts and theories are merely useful equipments whose worth is measured not by whether the concepts and theories are true or false, but by how effective they are in explaining and predicting phenomena. Instrumentalism is related closely with pragmatism which sometimes contrasts with scientific realism in which theories are to be proved more or less true. In social research process, instrumentalist morality resembles utilitarianism in defining moral values as well as knowledge which derives from information and theories. Instrumentalism denies that theories are evaluated through truth and its justification depends on observed data through observable predictions come out from social research.

Feminism:

Feminist ideology is therefore characterized by two basic beliefs: first, Women and men are treated differently because of their sex; secondly, The unequal treatment can and should be overturned (Heywood;2000:58). The ontological claims of feminism are that both natural and social worlds are made up of differently constructed people who are from different social location also. Feminists argue that it is necessary to counter the dominant forms of science that have been constructed from male point of view. Women are different from men in nature which causes women view to phenomenon and society as active and emotional rather than passive and rational, and also believes in feelings rather than control. But its epistemological view substitutes women experience from men experience on the basis of ability to understand knowledge of social world. In this approach, theorists argue that women have a privileged epistemic position in the society. They reject the conventional dualisms of subjective or objective; reason or motion; facts or value; logical capacities or intuition etc.

Materialism:

Materialism was the trend of the early twentieth century which explains social, historical and cultural development in terms of material and class factor. It has emerged with considerable significance of philosophical foundations of Marxism and therefore as the basis of social and political analysis. The one portion of materialists believes that mind is simply an epiphenomenon of matter but it is always analyzing the social facts from the ground of superstructure. In materialism, knowledge comes from materialistic analysis of facts and values of the social world.

Phenomenological Approach:

Phenomenological approach has been analyzed from three different grounds in the philosophy of social research: dialectical phenomenology; transcendental phenomenology and subjective and objective phenomenology. These different views to philosophical science are briefly described below:

- Phenomenology is that approach to philosophy of science which begins with an exploration of phenomenon (what represents itself to research process in conscious experience). Besides this, it means to finally grasp the absolute, logical, ontological and metaphysical spirit but it occurs behind phenomena which are called dialectical phenomenology.
- Phenomenology is the reflective study of the essence of consciousness as experienced from the first person point of view. It takes the intuitive experience of phenomenon (which represents itself phenomenological reflexion). When someone tried to generalize the essential features of experience, this has been called transcendental phenomenology.
- The other perspective to phenomenology overlooked basic structural features of both subject and object of experience which expanded phenomenological enquiry to encompasses our understanding and experience and thus makes the method of ontology.

Skepticism:

Skepticism, as an epistemological argument, poses the question of whether knowledge is possible or not within the fold of social research. For knowledge, it is not necessary to believe something strongly but to justify an assertion of knowledge. Philosophical skepticism begins with the claim that it has no foundation of knowledge though some theorists believe that knowledge is possible as well as it can be analyzed from either total view or particular areas. The global skeptic argues that one person can't absolutely know nothing to be either true or false.

Nomothetic and Ideographic:

Nomothetic and ideographic are two basic philosophical ideas to describe two different approaches to knowledge where each is responsible for different intellectual tendency as well as corresponding to a different branch of academic world. Nomothetic states the tendency of generalization which is expressed in natural sciences. Whereas, the ideographic is based on a tendency to specify and express in humanities that describes the effort to understand the meaning of contingent, accidental and sometimes subjective phenomena. In social research process, nomothetic approach is quantitative and ideographic approach is qualitative. The nomothetic approach tries to find out independent variables and also explanations are probabilistic and incomplete. The ideographic approach focuses on a complete and in-depth understanding of a thing.

Solipsism:

Solipsism (literally one-self-ism) is the doctrine of individualistic perspectives where its general philosophical position can be viewed as one can know only about oneself. Solipsism believes that one doesn't know nothing except one's own experiences, states and acts. This thesis consists of the claim that in order to understand another person or group one must be (or be like) this person or a member of this group (Fay; 1996:9). The main theme of the approach is that 'you have to be one to know one'. Solipsism has great influence in present social research process where the philosophical foundations are derived from the multicultural nature of present social, political, economic and cultural life. Knowledge derives from certain beliefs about experience and seems unproblematic. In that approach, the term 'know' holds an influential position which means the ability to identify or able to explain and describe the thing. Knowing an experience doesn't mean just having it: it means being able to say what it is (in some broad sense which includes both discursive and non-discursive expressions, knowledge consists not in the experience itself but in grasping the sense of these experiences (Fay; 1996:9).

Atomism:

The atomism approach states that the primary units of social world are self-reliable, self-contained, independent and separate entities. It describes that person's experiences are his own unique states of consciousness in which he has optimum privilege to access. Atomists, insisting on the idea that individuals are self-directing agents, focus on properties and activities of individuals (including their desires, motives and choices) to explain human behavior (Fay; 1996:30). It believes in the composition of the individuals who constitute the social world, that's why, social wholes can be analyzed in terms of the comprised activities of individuals. According to ontological atomism, basic human needs, capacities, and motivations arise in each individual with regard to any specific feature of social groups or social interactions (Fay; 1996:31). Atomism pictures the in-depth relationship between self and other. It finally asserts that the entities of social world come out as a result of activities of its members where individuals are self-conscious and self-directing.

Holism:

Holism is the doctrine that properties of individuals are solely a function of their place in society or some broad system of meanings; specially, it is the doctrine that people's identities are determined by their group membership because identity is produced by social and cultural forces (Fay; 1996:50). Holism claims that peoples are simply vehicles of knowledge through which society and culture express themselves. Methodological holism believes that social and cultural phenomena can be studied from own autonomous macroscopic level of analysis. Holism has a special appeal in the social sciences for two reasons taken together. In the first place, science by its very nature focuses not on individuals but on a member of class, secondly, holism is not simply a matter of focusing on the traits of most individuals or of typical specimens (Fay; 1996:52). Holism believes in totality or aggregated view rather than individual view to social world where individuals are the products of cultural and social forces.

Perspectivism:

Perspectivism approach has a great influence in present social scientific research where knowledge is perspectival in character. According to perspectivism, knower never view reality directly as it is in itself; rather they approach it from their own slant, with their own assumptions and preconceptions (Fay; 1996:72). It believes that positivism has already been replaced by perspectivism. It is the view in which the assessment and claims of knowledge take place within a framework through which the social world can be described as well as explained. Perspectivism says that knowledge of the world is a function of the linguistic and conceptual framework within which particular knowers and agents live and operate (Fay; 1996:76).

Relativism:

Relativism is the latest doctrine in philosophy of science which uses either experiences (in case of epistemological relativism) or reality (in case of ontological relativism) within a particular conceptual scheme. According to epistemological relativism, the content, meaning, truth, rightness, ethical and aesthetical beliefs can be determined in specific scheme and no cross-framework judgments are permissible. In case of ontological relativism relatively itself is thought to be determined by the particular conceptual scheme of those living within it (Fay; 1996:31).

Changing Pattern of Philosophy of Science to Social Research:

The philosophical pattern of social research has been changing through historical antecedents and exploring the advent of new approaches of methodological analysis. During the crises period of philosophical foundations, social science have tended to reexamine its basis of logical and real foundation. New approaches came into operations after it and changed the traditional view to exist methodologies and always waved with contemporary issues. This paper has been identifying the three major changing patterns in the history of philosophy which are briefly discussed in following manner.

Changing Pattern (Modernity to Modernism):

Modernity and modernism are interdependent as well as interconnected where optimism, reason and progress became the dominant discourses and establishes the foundation of knowledge in an era of modernity. Modernity is the term applied to a period of time which can be traced from the end of the middle ages and is differentiated by particular philosophical underpinnings. Modernism, which became dominant during the twentieth century, involves the critical assessment of the limitations of the philosophies of the period of modernity (Grbich; 2004:3). In this regard, modernity believes in the accessible knowledge to challenge or support established myths through the process of reason. Philosophers were interested to explore the ideas of reason and process as well as the causality, individuality, natural laws, power, democracy and principles of social mobility. Modernism emerged to change the traditional myths of social world through the question of ability of science in providing finite answers and discovering the real truth. The foundations of knowledge were mainly based on human natural habit rather than the absolute truth and knowledge was started with the senses and then proceeds to the understanding and lastly to reasons in modernity but modernism was started with thematic basis where facts were coming into the sight and proceeds to meta-narratives of the foundations of knowledge and scientific rationalism. Modernity analyses the truth and reality focusing on scientific proof, logical deduction and physical laws through observation and experiences (where truth and reality are viewed as multiplied construction in modernism). Further changes in philosophical thought suggest that 'reality' is not only constructed from both internal and external sources, but also change continually and that what had previously been constructed as externally and objectively 'real' is also closely linked to the maintenance of power (Grbich; 2004:10). Modernity was concerned with empirical research to analyze the reality; besides this, modernism predicts on the basis of cause and effect analysis. Though modernism emerged as responses to growing limitations of values and practices based on rationalism, reason and logic, it is under criticisms from different aspects. The individual of this era is characterized by alienation- an internal seeking and a loss of certainty as the coherence and security provided by previous forms of organization and worldviews became fragmented (Grbich; 2004:16). Modernist elements confused the continuum of the research process which is an indicator to shift post modernity and postmodernism.

Changing Pattern (Postmodernity to Postmodernism):

Postmodernity literally means the time following modernity or the modern era, while postmodernism is the identifiable ideological position that developed from modernism, including further development of the

ideas, stylistic communications and the perceptions and beliefs which began to dominate this era (Grbich; 2004:17). The previous assumptions believe on observation to knowable things but postmodernism concerned with absolute knowledge which becomes relative and subject to negotiation. In that era, there were mainly two forms of knowledge came into screen: global thinking (social, political and cultural knowledge) came from individual needs to survive on daily basis and knowledge skills (specific training, decision making) are traced in the workforce. The grand narrative has lost its credibility and analytical presence in postmodernism. Postmodernism favors 'mini-narratives', which provides explanation for small scale situations located within particular context where no pretensions of abstract theory, universality or generalisability are involved (Grbich; 2004:26). It was concerned with multiple realities of nature and truth, reason and logic are identified as constructed within particular societies and culture where realities are subject to construction and reconstruction. In both style of research, such modern terminology as 'validity' and 'reliability' will give way to indicating how individually constructed views, which are relative to context, match or vary from others in the cultural /social group under investigation (Grbich; 2004:28). The qualitative researcher must become a part of experiments, hypothesis, controlled or manipulated variables through scientifically valid truth and reality where the implications of the quantitative research impacts on the settings as well as research design and question selections through participatory process. Multicultural philosophy of social science should attune us to other values which have often been ignored when discussing social science: ambiguity, tension, change, difference and particularity (Fay; 1996:238). The optimistic view of the postmodernism constructs realities on the basis of pluralism where the pessimists believe in cultural construction but lack of certainty.

Changing Pattern (Structuralism to Poststructuralism):

Structuralism was a fashionable movement in the 1950s and 60s, which studies the underlying structures inherent in cultural products (such as texts) and utilizes analytical concepts from linguistics, psychology, anthropology and other fields to understand and interpret those structures. The ideas that can be termed structuralist sought to describe the world in terms of systems of centralized logic and formal structures that could be accessed through process of scientific reason (Grbich; 2004:32). In structuralism, individual objects are clearly viewed as a part a greater whole and language is an important device in the creation of meaning. Poststructuralism encompasses the intellectual developments of continental philosophers and critical theorists that wrote with the tendencies of twentieth century philosophy. The general assumptions of poststructuralism derive from critique of structuralist premises which hold that the study of underlying structures is itself culturally conditioned and therefore subject to myriad biases and misinterpretations. To understand an object , it is necessary to study both the objects itself and the systems of knowledge which were coordinated to produce the object, in this way, poststructuralism positions itself as a study of how knowledge is produced. There are two arenas of present poststructuralism pattern: discourses of Michael Foucault and Jacques Derrida. These discourses are mainly spoken or written particles or visual representation through which its possible to characterize a specific topic, an era or socio cultural practice. The major aspect of poststructuralism is deconstruction which itself has been subjected to various forms of interpretation. Deconstruction is less a method or stage- by- stage approach and more a natural unraveling which the text invites by presenting this opportunity within its own structure (Grbich; 2004:43). Poststructuralism is concerned with the following basic concepts: language, truth and meaning. Language is an acceptable mode for internal and external communication but not a stable or close one. Knowledge is viewed as unreliable that comes solely from language, history and the discourses they have been a part of influence meaning (Grbich; 2004:47). But there is no absolute truth where reality is fragmented and diverse. Poststructuralism has been criticized regarding its complexities because it emphasizes on uninterpretability in the evaluation process of social research.

Conclusion:

Philosophy of science is treated as the fundamental basis of scientific social research which analyses the research techniques from analytical view point of truth and reality of the social world. There are two major persistent themes in the philosophy of the social sciences which directly affect social studies: the structure-agency debate and the related arguments over determinism and free will. Philosophy claims that what exist in the social world almost inevitably lead to the issues of that can be known. All the approaches are tried to examine the truth and reality of the knowledge of the social world from different aspects. Their ontological view describes the real condition of the society as well as any phenomenon of the thing. Apart from that, ontological study of the approaches interlink identity and differences of the meanings of the things. On the other hand, epistemological view analyses the knowledge of the phenomenon from which methodological issues come from. The approaches of modernism analysis the social research process on the ground of observation and experience gathered from the social views. But the postmodernism suggests a dualistic way of thinking in the philosophy of social science through transformation of dualistic way of thinking into questions. The last stage (i.e.poststructuralism) tries to describe the cause and effect view to philosophical study of social and natural science. The basic similarities of all the patterns are searching the truth and application of empirical knowledge in social research operations. Epistemologically all understandings are comparative: there is no understanding if no other understanding (Fay; 1996:229). Philosophy dedicates itself in exploration of ideas with the spirit of science as well as issues lying behind these different positions which have led to cause-effect analysis and philosophical justification of certain kinds of methodologies in research processes.

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