



UNIVERSITY OF JOHANNESBURG
JUNE EXAM 2016

COURSE: Sociology (Honours)

TIME: 3 HOURS

PAPER: Methodology of the Social Sciences

MARKS: 300

SUBJECT CODE: SOC8X03

EXAMINER: Me Letitia Smuts

SECOND EXAMINER: Dr Martin Mendelsohn

(THIS PAPER CONSISTS OF THREE (3) PAGES)

THIS EXAMINATION PAPER CONSISTS OF ONE SECTION.

THERE ARE THREE QUESTIONS. YOU HAVE TO CHOOSE AND ANSWER TWO OF THE QUESTIONS.

QUESTION 1

Compare positivism (60 marks) and interpretivism (60 marks) and provide a critique of both traditions. In drawing these comparisons, discuss the ontological, epistemological and methodological qualities of each of these traditions.

Conclude your answer by discussing what is meant by the 'Science Wars' and the implications of the 'Science Wars' for the social sciences (30 marks).

[150]

QUESTION 2

Consider the following 2 quotes from the Bless et.al reading and answer the questions accordingly.

Quote number 1:

'The history of science in Africa is characterised by scientists from outside the continent studying and writing about Africans. African people were virtually never included in the design and analysis of the research and so had no control over what questions were asked, and what conclusions were reached' (Bless et.al. 2013: 89).

Based on quote number 1, answer the following questions:

- (a.) What are the implications of what is described above in terms of knowledge production? (10 marks)
- (b.) What responsibilities do social researchers have towards their research participants and the research process, especially within developing countries? (10 marks)

Quote number 2:

'Participatory and action research are one way of giving ordinary people a central role in what research is done, how that research is

conducted, and what results and conclusions are reached' (Bless et.al. 2013: 89).

Quote number 2 proposes approaches which aim to rectify the issues set forth in Quote number 1. Critically discuss the following:

- (c.) Define participatory and action research and briefly discuss the data collection methods used in these approaches (20 marks);
- (d.) Discuss the steps in action research in depth (100 marks);
- (e.) Explain the role that "action" plays in participatory action research, especially in developing countries (10 marks).

[150]

QUESTION 3

Critically discuss the five misunderstandings about case-study research according to Bent Flyvbjerg (100 marks). Thereafter, discuss the arguments that C. Wright Mills presented regarding the sociological imagination and how it can be applied in social scientific research (50 marks).

[150]

TOTAL / TOTAAL: 300

---oOo---