

CENTRE FOR POLITICAL STUDIES
SCHOOL OF SOCIAL SCIENCES, JNU
MA COMPULSORY COURSE
PO419N: Methods in Social Sciences*

Introduction

The course is intended to prepare students to undertake empirical research in social sciences. It begins by exploring the notion of social science and making a distinction between empiricism and empirical research that is mindful of the role of the subject and values in social inquiry. A central concern of the paper is to introduce students to quantitative and qualitative methods of research. As part of this training students are required to go on a field trip and conduct a survey based research. While students will be exposed to a variety of different methods and taught to use available data sets, the purpose of the field work is to enable them to plan and execute research, interact with respondents, interpret the data and present their findings.

Credits: 4

Mode of Evaluation

Mid Semester Evaluation (50%), End Semester Exam (50%)

Course Structure

1. The Idea of Social Science

- a) Approaching the difference between natural and social science
- b) Conceptions of Science: From verification to falsification
- c) Objectivity and value neutrality

2. Empirical Research in Social Sciences

- a) Identification of research problem, formulation of hypothesis, use of concepts, operationalization of variables
- b) Quantitative and qualitative methods
- c) Research Design
- d) Working with SPSS

3. Quantitative Research Method

- a) Measurement: Issues of Reliability, Validity and levels of measurement
- b) Data collection: methods of data collection/observation, questionnaires and interviews
- c) Sampling techniques: probability and nonprobability techniques
- d) Data processing: establishing categories and coding data

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- e) Data interpretation: Descriptive statistics and inferential statistics
- f) Preparation of research report

4. Qualitative Research

- a) Depth Interviews
- b) Ethnography
- c) Content analysis

5. Combining quantitative and qualitative methods: Working with Mixed Methods