

A Global Strategy for Human Development as an Example of Second Order Science

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Overview

- My goal is to explain a way of doing social science research that is compatible with an expanded conception of science
- First, I shall describe the work of the Institute of Cultural Affairs
- Second, I shall describe a widely held view of social science research
- Third, I shall compare the two approaches
- Fourth, I shall place the comparison in the context of an expanded conception of science

Designing a strategy for human development

- A group of people trained in the ministry had been working with people in suburbs
- They decided to work with people in poor communities
- The financing came from Head Start
- After M.L. King, Jr. was assassinated in 1968, they started again
- A planning conference with people from the community was very successful
- Would the method work in a Third World country?

Testing a strategy for human development

- They tried the method in the Marshall Islands
- Again success, so they set up demonstration projects in each of the 24 time zones around the world
- Model villages served as examples of what could be achieved

Locations of the first projects

- The first 24 projects were established in the 1960s and early 1970s in Chicago, USA; Marshall Islands; northern Australia; India; Indonesia; Washington, DC; Venezuela; Kenya; Zambia; London, UK; Egypt; North Dakota, USA; Mississippi, USA; Taiwan; Nigeria; Berlin, Germany; South Korea; a Maritime Province, Canada; Hong Kong; Japan; Philippines; Malaysia; Italy, central Canada
- Some slides from the start of the project in Jamaica in 1978

























































Other projects

- A second set of 24 Human Development Projects was created in the 1970s and early 1980s
- Human Development Training Schools in India and Kenya
- Town Meeting, a one day event, one in each county in the country in each country having a Human Development Project
- Global Women's Forum
- "Sharing Approaches that Work" in New Delhi, India, in 1983, supported by UNESCO

Other non-governmental organizations

- Dig water wells
- Build churches
- Build schools
- Improve housing
- ICA taught participatory methods so people would learn how to work together to define their needs and create relationships with people with resources

How ICA operated

- Each summer they would gather in Chicago to define the programs for the coming year
- They would then go to communities around the world to implement the programs they had created
- Their global network was created through the World Council of Churches
- The next summer they would meet again in Chicago to reflect on what worked and what did not and to design the next year's programs

The financial model

- In each project there were 2 or 3 couples. One person in a couple would teach in an embassy school; the other would work full time on community development
- So, they were largely self-supporting, though at a very low income level
- Donations to ICA paid for international travel
- They organized expert help and sought in-kind contributions

How social science research is done now

- Test a theory by collecting and analyzing data
- Experiments should be replicable by others
- The researcher tries to be objective
- Research is an effort to find causal relationships between variables at a high level of statistical significance
- The goal is reliable knowledge, not social change directly
- Success is measured by number of papers in leading academic journals

How ICA did research

- Read widely. Start with current knowledge. Learn by doing. Change methods as needed. Use methods with additional communities
- The researchers established personal relationships with local people
- The goal was to improve the quality of life (health, income, education) as quickly as possible by using available knowledge and expertise
- Success was measured by higher standards of living and the spread of participatory methods to nearby communities
- Reflection and redesign were done annually
- Networks of supportive people were created and maintained

Why is current social science so abstract?

- An attempt to imitate physics
- A desire to be quantitative, not merely qualitative
- A preference for general knowledge, not culture-specific knowledge
- The observer is assumed to be outside the system observed
- A theory of a system is assumed not to alter the behavior of the system

What the Institute was doing

- The ICA staff were deeply involved in communities, trying to improve the lives of villagers. They worked to resolve conflicts
- Because they were trained in the ministry, rather than science, they were concerned with emotions, spiritual feelings, and cultural beliefs and practices
- They tried to create a shared mentality of concern for the community not just individual advancement.

The basic idea of second order science

- First order science is exploring the world. Second order science is reflecting on those explorations. Any critique of first order science would qualify as second order science
- Science can be expanded by focusing on purposeful behavior
- We could shift our thinking from viewing science as creating descriptions of systems to viewing science as an active part of social systems
- We would think about the co-evolution of theories and society

Why do we create scientific knowledge?

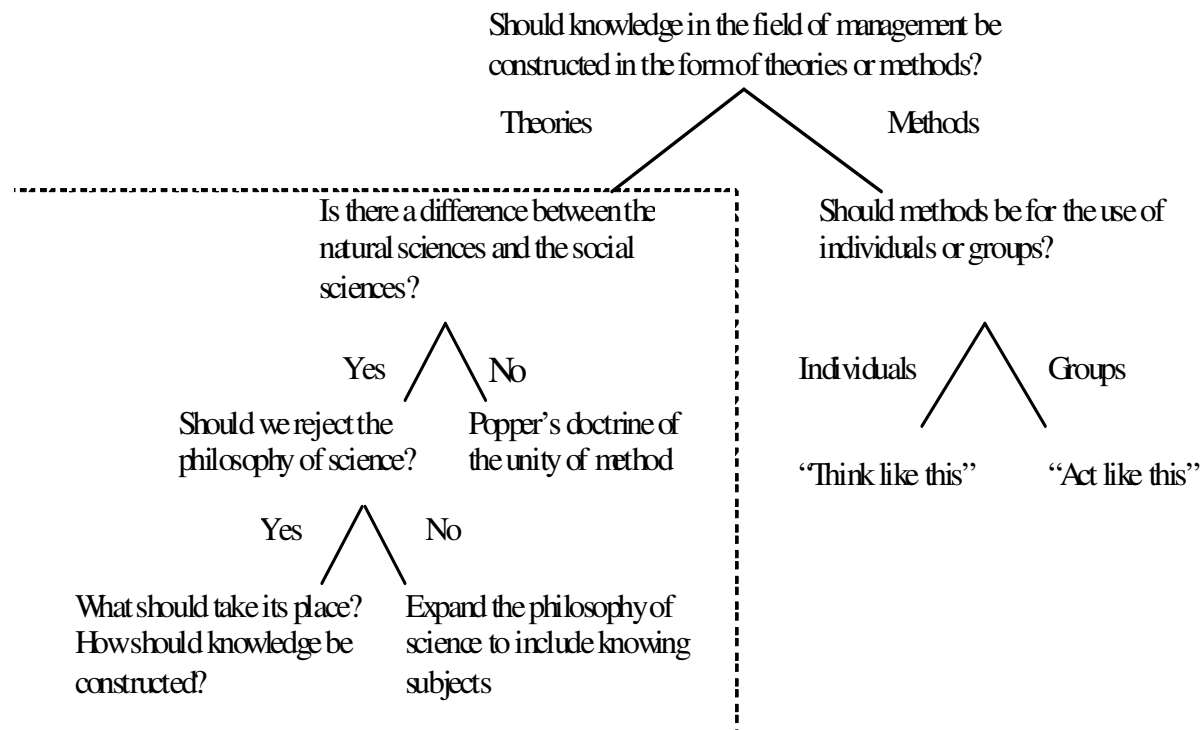
- We want to understand how the world works
- Also, we want to act effectively -- to achieve our goals with minimum effort
- Knowledge from science is used to achieve our purposes (both individuals and organizations)
- Hence, 1st order knowledge (how the world works) is used by purposeful systems

How we think about social science

- It is easy to accept that theories affect society
- We create theories because we hope that people will accept them, act on them and society will perhaps operate better
- However, in the natural sciences we assume that theories do not affect what is studied
- We carry over these assumptions to the social sciences because we think this is the way to do science
- But we can remove our self-imposed blinders and expand our conception of science

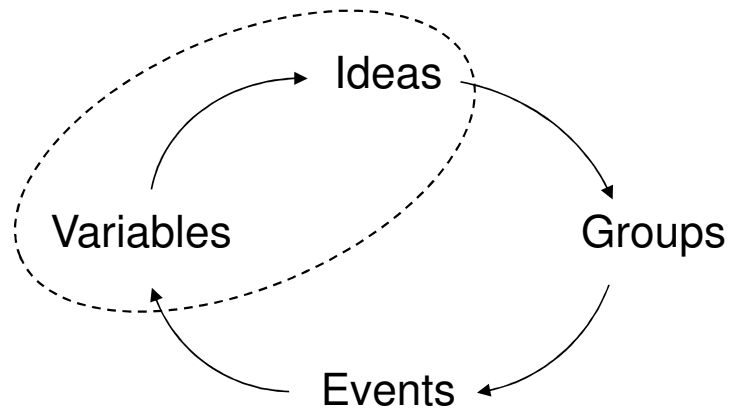
Reflexivity in social systems

- The field of management is largely a collection of methods
 - How to improve a manufacturing process
 - How to conduct a strategic planning exercise
- But little attention has been paid to connecting this form of knowledge to philosophy of science
- Reflexivity theory makes this possible



The Interaction Between Ideas and Society

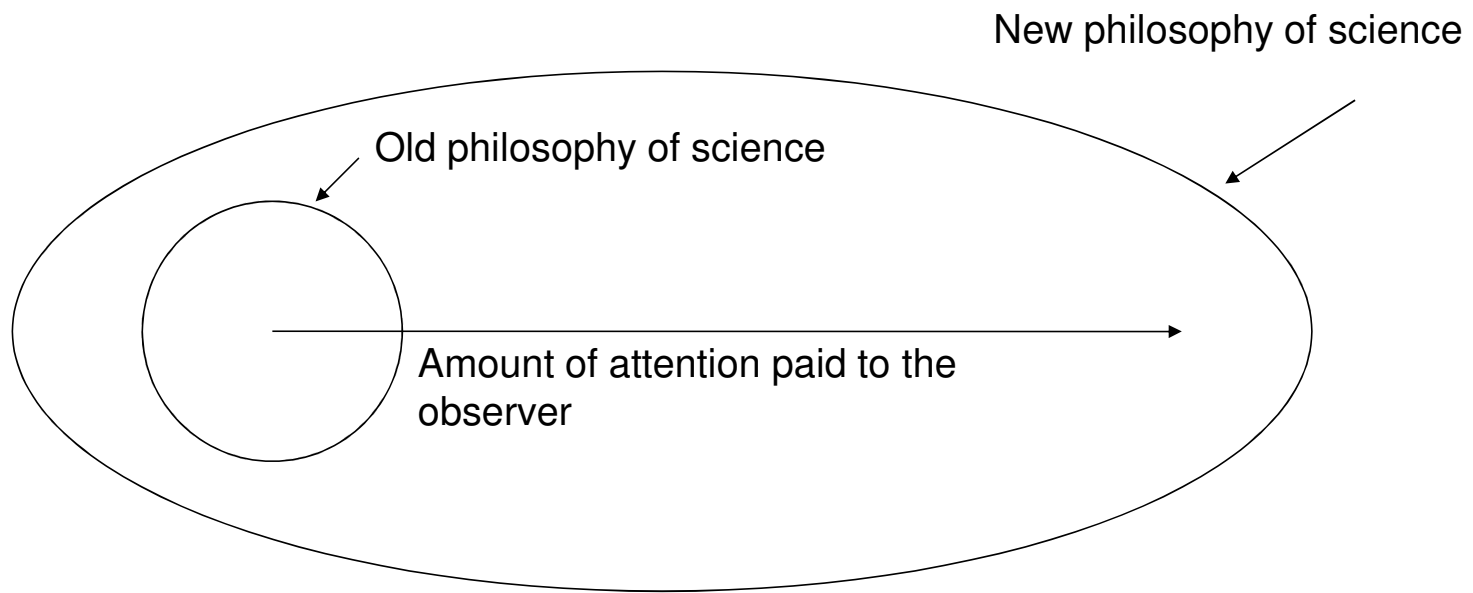
Ideas	Events
Interest in trade and in ancient learning	1096 First Crusade
Science and technology stimulated by desire to improve trade	Marco Polo's trip to China
	Traders accumulate wealth, nation-states develop and protect trade routes
The idea of progress, people strive to produce more than mere subsistence	Industrial Revolution in England
Adam Smith's <i>The Wealth of Nations</i> , 1776	Capital accumulation, urbanization, growing gap between rich and poor
Marx and Engles, <i>The Communist Manifesto</i> , 1848	Revolutions in Europe, demands for more equal distribution of wealth
Social reform movements in industrializing countries	World War I and the Great Depression
Keynes's theory justifying government intervention in the economy	World War II, World Bank and IMF established, decolonialization of the Third World
Friedman's monetary policy	Oil crisis in 1973 leads to abandonment of gold standard and fluctuating exchange rates
Environmental movement and futures research movement, many conferences on the "world problematique"	Economic progress in Asia, liberalization of communist regimes



A reflexive theory operates at two levels

The Correspondence Principle

- Proposed by Niels Bohr when developing the quantum theory
- Any new theory should reduce to the old theory to which it corresponds for those cases in which the old theory is known to hold
- A new dimension is required
- By applying the correspondence principle to philosophy of science, we change not just one theory or one field but all of science



An Application of the Correspondence Principle

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