
Systematic Mixed Methods Research

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Welcome to Systematic Mixed Methods Research

- Systematic Mixed Methods research has advantages over traditional frequentist statistics and also over qual+qual mixed methods.
- I doubt using the term ‘epistemological paradigm’. That’s because a paradigm is a theoretical framework with substantive coverage. Systematic Mixed Methods is simply a methodological position.

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Plan of the Talk

- I will define SMMR, stressing that we have to acknowledge social structure;
- Raise some ontological issues around 2 fallacies of knowledge claims
- Give examples of research
- Conclude with Q&A

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Some Readings Using Social Ontology

- **Olsen, W.K. (2006), “Pluralism, Poverty and Sharecropping: Cultivating Open-Mindedness in Development Studies”, *Journal of Development Studies*, 42:7, pgs. 1130-1157.**
- **Dow, *JournEconMeth*, 2004 “Structured Pluralism”. Vol. 11 no. 3.**
- **Olsen, W.K., and J. Morgan (2005) “A Critical Epistemology Of Analytical Statistics”, *Journal for the Theory of Social Behaviour*, 35:3, 255-284.**
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A 'systems' approach?

- Defining SMMR requires definitions of open systems and closed systems
 - an OPEN SYSTEM has permeability, organic capacity to change itself, and/or multiple causes
 - a CLOSED SYSTEM (e.g. a set of equations) has routinised workings, has parameters
- The study of systems requires that we realise that social systems are open systems.
- This creates a rationale for trans-disciplinarity. It is also sociological. But water and farming are also open systems! (Lemon)

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SMMR is the study of open systems using a mixture of methods of social research methods, which recognise patterns, but also acknowledging the tendency of patterns to change at different rates.

- The rates of change and the nature of change depend on what factors are causing change and what can cause new changes.
- See Sayer 1992 on durable structures
- See Fay 1987 on embodied habits and rates of change

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Retroduction – how to ask ‘why’

- See Downward and Mearman paper in Cambridge Journal of Economics. See also Sheila Dow writing in ‘Journal of Economic Methodology’. They argue for mixing methods by doing *retroduction* = asking why....
 - Ask why the data look the way they do.
 - Ask why the culture accepts as ‘normal’ what is thought to be normal
 - Ask why something has happened which seems deviant;
 - to some agent, this is ethical or right action?

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Read about Retroduction, Causal Analysis, Causality, and Causes

- Olsen, 2012, *Data Collection*.

Roy Bhaskar's early work is helpful.

Archer, M. et al, eds. 1998 gives snippets and summaries of critical realism.

- **A theoretical approach is good, due to paying close attention to 'ontic nature of things'**

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Ecosocialism – An Approach to the Economy that is Transdisciplinary

- We can look at how the economy can be put to work as a helper and assistant for the ecosocialist project.
- In other words economic success is not seen as an aim in its own right, but as a means to other ends.
- The human capabilities approach

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Economy Before “Economics”

- what economy is: It is not the same as markets. Markets are, in the main, economic but not vice versa
- what is ‘economic’ is the **creation and allocation of resources**, including goods and services, to eventual ends among human actors rooted in their natural world.
- ...does not require shortages or scarcity.
- ...consider the idea of ‘alethia’, or flourishing.

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Preconditions for Alethia

- **Economy should not** create cycles that attack human well-being (Greece)
- As a precondition, we also require nature to flourish in tandem; but there are many forms and ways in which the flourishing can take its shape, always changing over time.
 - NOTE: the identification of the agents of change is crucial, and that is an **ontological enquiry**. **What are the agents like, how do they think or what dialogues and multilogues do they have?**

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Advantages of this Ontology

- One advantage of seeing the economy and society this way is that even while constrained in assets, suffering in labour exploitation, or otherwise inadequately serviced by the 'economy', one can still have other forms of capability, and other forms of abundance.
- Capitalism..its rightful place....There is more than capitalism in this world of ours.

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Define Ecosocialist

- 1. values the social and the natural
- 2. sees socially grounded practices as influential
- 3. Problematizes microclimate crises, climate change, water and pollution problems
- 4. Admires collective action
 - [not just market solutions]
- 5. Has a capabilities theory

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Generalising my ontic approach, which is realist approach amended:

- Transformational Model of Social Action
- (TMSA)
- Structures—Agents—S2—A2—S3—A3
- All grounded in changing cultures

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Applied Example 1

- Women's work
 - Left-behind women?
 - Or caring peasants?

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We hold a project 3 years

- ESRC DFID Funding
- And British Academy funding on the mixed methods side.
- We applied for further funding from Global Challenges Research Fund.

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Labour and Marital Negotiations (and Tensions): Comparing Rural India & Bangladesh

Data Collection By the India Team and Bangladesh Team (ESRC DFID Grant, Gender Norms, see <http://www.cmist.manchester.ac.uk/research/projects/gender-norms/>)

Principal Investigator: Wendy Olsen

India PI: Amaresh Dubey

India CO-PI: Anup K Mishra

India Field Coordinator: Santosh K Singh

Bangladesh PIs: Simeen Mahmud, Sohela Nazneen, and Maheen Sultan

Analysts: Bidisha (Dhaka Univ Dept of Econ) and

Sadiya (BRAC BIGD)

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Detailed Arguments Found in Example 1, Findings, Mixed Methods

- In Bangladesh, rural people negotiate a lot regarding which tasks to carry out. Men help women and time-use surveys show mixed results. Yet formally, 'Roles' are 'rigid'.
- In rural north Central India, purdah applies equally to women, yet again, men are negotiating. Tropes of control vs. discussion.
- Data from time-use surveys
- Attitudes versus time-use patterns.
- In surveys, women said they were 'happy' but in the interviews, low-paid women were not happy.

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People are living on temporary islands



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Time Use of Women in Bangladesh and India – 1st Work on Farms+Crops

- Diary recall method
- 1 day recall for the previous day in 15 minute slots
- We condensed the multinational time-use studies and Hirway's studies in India to 40 codes
- 'Work' is defined here as crop minutes +animal +fish +fruit +rock +build +manuf +trade +service
- 'Domestic work' is defined here as flour +clean +wash +shop +repair +cook +chcare +teach +care

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Findings

- **Women's work in this area is substantial**
- Women dominate livestock work of feeding, milking, watering the animals.
- A peasant economy is hugely flexible with informal labouring

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The Suffering of One Woman in India

The next respondent is Pachiya Devi, who is 32 years old with a migrant husband, hence lives alone. She is a hindu and owns some land (0.5 biswas, hardly any). Her education level is the lowest one. She and her husband report being satisfied with their life in the last 6 months. Her attitudes about women working are average.

Pachiya Devi is very worried about her economic situation. She worries that there are no savings and no way to prepare a dowry. She thinks she will fail to get her daughter married off. She wants to marry the daughter very soon. This eldest daughter is only 12 but it's very much in her mind to sort this one out.

[WO: I think that she struggles because in her community it's impossible for a poor woman without a husband to accumulate any assets. This is structural. The rates paid for her work are too low. She cannot migrate either.]

Her own illness due to an operation on her stomach caused her endless difficulties. She has been made to work by her own poverty. **She says she wanted independence for her kids. Education is the key, she says, to get this achievement.**

She has some bad feelings about the fact that her husband left her. When he left her she had 3 kids already. The neighbours now seem to 'say bad' [criticize] about her working [outside the home]. "Had he been here then I wouldn't have to do work [outside the home]." "I feel more bad.. he left me".

She says anyone who wants to, rebukes her. [this enablement of others to criticize her rests upon the social status ladder. In this ladder the deserted wife is of low ranking.]

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Example 2

- Theorising Labour and Work
- A sustainable labour economy requires respect, dignity, dual burden of caring work to be shared by both genders
 - Angela Dale, Nusrat Saheen, Virinder Kalra, Edward Fieldhouse, *Ethnic & Racial Studies*, 2002, 25:6, 942-968 – ***an example of mixed methods with triangulation using systematic secondary data and interviews & Focus Groups (FGs).***

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Labour and Work Require that we Attend to Regional Differentiation

- Culture of an area affects internalised practices, standards, norms and habits.
 - (Q&A:)
 - GROUP 1
- Do you need theory to do systematic mixed methods?
 - GROUP 2
- Do you value the *systematic* analysis part? Or just do multiple-mode qualitative research?

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Conclusions

- 1. Open Systems led to a role for agency in my theorising
- 2. Culture was brought in, and statistics are useful, without one being deterministic.
- 3. Discovery and retrodution are important logical moves in a research study
- 4. Warranted arguments have real referents, and invoke or express values (Malcolm Williams)

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- Creswell, J. W. (2003). Research Design: Qualitative, Quantitative, and Mixed-Methods Approaches London, Sage.
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- Bryman, A. (1996 (orig. 1988)). Quantity and Quality in Social Research. London, Routledge.

- Also Useful
 - Fisher, A. (1988). The Logic of Real Arguments. Cambridge, NY and Sydney, Cambridge Univ. Press.
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- Flick, U. (1992). "Triangulation Revisited: Strategy of Validation or Alternative?" Journal for the Theory of Social Behaviour **22**(2): 169-197.

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Interpreting the Interviews

- **Most of women's work is invisibilised**, means making something difficult to perceive.
- **The purdah women follow is a set of Doxa.** Doxa are laws of behaviour, or social laws.
- **Social norms** are like laws but are known to be less lawlike.
 - It's hard to change and give up the doxa of purdah; easy to follow norms.
- **Habitus** is the set of social norms given to us for our behaviour, from which we draw, before we talk or act. **Habitus** is a social formation at a given time/place.
- **The women's habitus is to be helpful**
 - and so is the men's now.
- **This men's habitus is a new set of behaviours to be encouraged. But men still own all the assets and have nearly all the urban job opportunities.**

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Interpreting The Situation, pg 2

- **Symbolic violence** is the way a set of symbols, such as a Dictionary, can create and cause structural harm to some people, e.g. tribals.
- In the villages the symbolic violence of the male migration depends upon the agency of the male migrant, the male at home, the women at home and so on. There is a lot of agency around the after-effects.
- We **construe** our data as showing a low structural determination of the resulting division of labour in the villages, in both countries in rural areas.
- To construe means to develop an account of the meaning of something, e.g. to construe the red dot as meaning she's a Hindu and in the fertile years.
- So for Public purposes the work of women is invisibilised but for reality in the villages, both within the home and around the paths and fields, the work is highly evident to everybody.

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