

**Department of Political Science**

**Course Name: Research Methodology**

**Course Code: PS 401**

**Course Teacher: Mr. Siddhartha Mukerji**

**Credits: 4**

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**Course description**

Explaining various research techniques, including quantitative and qualitative methods employed in social science research in general and political science in particular. This will set groundwork for undertaking research in the emerging issues and contemporary trends in political science.

The course is divided into two sections- Philosophy of Social Sciences and Applications of Research. Each section has two units.

**Course Objectives**

1. To familiarize the students with the theoretical ideas of some prominent thinkers of philosophy of science
2. To introduce the debate on the research methodology of natural sciences and social sciences
3. To illustrate different types of research methods in social science with the help of examples from the current research areas of political science

**Mode of Evaluation**

Mid-Semester Examination- 20%

Class Presentation- 10%

End-Semester Examination- 70%

## **Section I: Philosophy of Social Sciences**

### **Unit I- Introduction**

- Nature and Significance of Philosophy of Science
- Is Politics a Science?

### **Unit II- Ideas and Methods**

- Empiricism in Social Science
- The method of falsification by Karl Popper
- Thomas Kuhn on Paradigm Shift and History of Science
- Causal and Intentional Explanation in Social Sciences
- Value Neutrality in Social Sciences

#### **Essential Readings:**

Samir Okasha, *Philosophy of Science: A Very Short Introduction*, (New Delhi: Oxford University Press, 2002), **Chapters 1,3, 5 and 7**

K.R. Popper, *Conjectures and Refutations*, (Routledge, 2002)

Thomas Kuhn, *The Structure of Scientific Revolutions*, (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1962)

Gurpreet Mahajan, *Explanation and Understanding in Human Sciences*, New Delhi: Oxford University Press, 1997) **Chapters 1 and 3**

Len Doyal and Roger Harris (1986), *Empiricism, Explanation and Rationality*, (London: Routledge), **Chapters 1 and 2**

Rogger Trigg, *Understanding Social Science: A Philosophical Introduction to Social Sciences*, (Blackwell Publishing, 2005) **Chapters 1, 2 and 6**

## **Section II: Applications of research**

### **Unit III: Research techniques**

Quantitative Methods:

Data Collection- observation, questionnaires and interviews

Types of Sampling- random and non-random sampling methods

Introductory Statistics- mean, median, mode and standard deviation; pie-charts

Qualitative Methods: Ethnography, Participant Observation, In-depth Interviews

**Unit IV: Basics of research**

Preparing a synopsis

Review of Literature

Hypothesis formulation

Research questions

Research Report

**Essential Readings:**

P. Sapsford R., *Survey Research*, New Delhi: Sage Publications, 1999

Nicholas Walliman, *Social Research Methods*, London: Sage Publications, 2006

Ranjit Kumar, *Research Methodology*, New Delhi: Pearson Publications, 2009

**SUGGESTED READINGS:**

C.G. Hempel (1962), *Explanation in Science and History*, London: Allen and Urwin

W.H. Newton Smith (2001), *Explanation*, Blackwell Publications

L.Doyal and R. Harris (1986), *Empiricism, Explanation and Rationality*, London: Routledge

Lakatos and A. Musgrave (1970), *Criticism and Growth of Knowledge*, Cambridge University Press

P. Sapsford R., *Survey Research*, New Delhi: Sage Publications, 1999

Seale, Clive, *Social Research Method*, Routledge, 2008