

The archival turn to carry out research

[Science](#), [Anthropology](#)



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Buroway's extended case method majorly concentrates on doing research in a more practical manner than the traditional way of using theories that have been laid down in the past, but rather having an experience of what is exactly happening at the ground level. The extended case method has an extensive array of principles of science that are geared at getting the true or real picture of the main objective of the research.

It is in this light that Buroway uses ethnography to explain why as well as how scientific research is needed and how it is done as well as how we ought to think about it. Rather than basing his argument on the fact that there is only one model of science that is best carried out in a reflexive, he prefers an interdependence and coexistence of two models of science that is positive and reflective. Positive strives to separate the subject from the object while reflective mainly concentrates on dialogue as a defining principle, as well as inter-subjectivity between the participant and an observer in the field. In a nutshell, we can say that reflective science enjoins what positive separates; the participant and the observer.

Reflective science employs a number of contexts, key among them intervention that acts as a catalyst to reveal the true state of the interviewee by subjecting him to space and time. The other context effect is that of the process. The interviewer cannot dictate the meaning for the interviewee because it relies on the respondent's interpretation of the question. It is of paramount importance to note that reflective science dictates that the observer should help the participants recall those situational experiences by moving them through space and time. This in turn brings about the

situational knowledge which is the knowledge that is located in a specific time and space.

The third context is the structuration that refers to the external field within which the interview occurs. Reflective science thus insists on studying the world from the standpoint of its structuration by shaping the forces that surround it. The last context is reconstruction that advocates for social organisations as compared to individualism. Though it may seem difficult to carry out sampling in such a case whereby there are social institutions it is always prudent to look for ways to generalize it.

On the other hand, Robert Vitalis, a political scientist described how he used archives and primary sources to conduct his research. Taking the archival turn to carry out research is of paramount importance because it shows the need to be consistent in your study as well as for precision purposes. It also helps in citing records so as to satisfy the requirements of a research study of verifiability and transparency. The use of archives in any study also shows some level of competence that usually seems to be of high regard than the main aim of producing new insights and discovering new phenomena.

In addition to that archives are essential in any study because they bring in the aspect of validity and reliability. Vitalis also points out that, the fact that with the use of archives comes the need to adopt the in-texting making the historical approach of conducting research more scientific hence more reliable than history writing by ‘merely’ telling stories about the past.

Some of the sources of archives that Vitalis highlights are the university’s own archives, special collections as well as getting information from the papers written by professors in one’s profession. In a nut shell, Robert Vitalis

proposes that, for both scholars and social scientists, it is important not only to rely on carrying out research in a more practical manner but also to incorporate the use of archives in making it more authentic and reliable.

Reference

Vitalis, Robert. “ The past is another country.” Archives, (2006): Pp 9-15