



Significance of normative research in social sciences

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ABSTRACT

Our day to day life is affected by different socio-political structures and processes. Analytical studies based on scientific methodology are at times inadequate to answer questions of social relevance. Socio-political issues have unavoidable ethical dimensions. Our actions for example are judged to be just or unjust, right or wrong, moral or immoral on the basis of certain norms operative in the society. Issues of human security, sustainable development, poverty, development and hunger are the normative concerns that cannot be answered through consequentialist theories and approaches. When social problems are deontological in nature one is hard pressed to employ moral duties and methods that may not be explained through profit based rational analysis. In this connection, it is significant to understand the relevance of normative approaches to enrich human faculties to deal with common global problems of social existence. This paper provides an introduction to normative approach to social sciences. It maintains that the central concerns and contributions of normative study can be understood as engagements with the hidden ethical assumptions of a range of socio-political issues.