

UNIVERSITY OF COLOMBO – SRI LANKA
FACULTY OF ARTS
SECOND YEAR EXAMINATION IN ARTS – SEMESTER II – 2016/2017
PSC 2226 – METHODOLOGY OF SOCIAL SCIENCE RESEARCH
TIME: TWO (02) HOURS

Answer only three questions.
Each question carries a maximum of twenty (20) marks

- 01.
- a) "Research is about the production of original knowledge". Discuss.
 - b) Explain the importance of the philosophy of science for researchers who are engaged in the production of knowledge.
- 02.
- a) What is the main criticism of positivist social science methodologies?
 - b) Explain the methodological dichotomy of 'Explanation vs. Understanding'.
- 03.
- a) What is 'Hume's problem'?
 - b) Explain how Karl Popper contributed to debate concerning scientific methodology.
- 04.
- a) What are the necessary criteria for the 'scientificity' of knowledge, as proposed by the empiricist/positivist tradition?
 - b) Briefly describe how (a) Auguste Comte, and (b) Emile Durkheim used the empiricist/positivist method to study the social world.
- 05.
- a) Explain Thomas Kuhn's concept of 'Paradigm' with an example
 - b) Explain Thomas Kuhn's concepts of 'Crisis' and 'Scientific Revolution', in terms of the development of modern science.
- 06.
- a) 'Paul Feyerabend questioned the superiority of the rationality of modern science and advocated 'methodological anarchism''. Discuss.
 - b) Explain the concepts of 'fallibilism' and 'relativism' in scientific knowledge.

07.

- a) Explain the Marxist approach to the problems of
 - i. Scientificity of knowledge
 - ii. Reality
- b) On what ground are Marxist epistemological approaches similar/different to empiricist/positivist approaches?

08. Discuss two of the following themes briefly:

- (a) Imre Lakatos's concept of 'scientific research programme'
- (b) Georg Lukes's concept of 'totality'
- (c) Concept of 'ontology' and 'epistemology'
- (d) Concept of 'Every-day World' in Ethnomethodology
- (e) Louis Althusser's concept of 'symptomatic reading'