

Encounter of Muslim World with Western Social Sciences: Reception, Indigenization, Islamization

Authors : Mohammad Hossein Panahi

Abstract : Modern social sciences developed in Western Europe, and from there, it disseminated to the rest of the world, including Muslim World. Within the hierarchical world social science system that emerged in the 19th and 20th centuries, the West occupied the center, and the Third and Muslim Worlds fell into its periphery. Many social scientists, especially sociologists, in the Third and Muslim World since the 1970s have criticized this worldwide unequal division of scientific labor and have called for the development of independent/indigenous social sciences relevant to their own social conditions. Based on the conceptual framework of the World Social Science System, this paper studied the encounter of Muslim social scientists/sociologists with the Western social sciences. Using inductive thematic content analysis as the method of research, the author analyzed 32 purposefully selected articles from among over 500 collected articles from the 1970s to 2018 and categorized the obtained themes. The findings revealed three main types of encounters: reception, indigenization, and Islamization. 'Reception' refers to the encounter of those Muslim social scientists who embrace the positivist approach and believe that Western social sciences are valid and applicable worldwide, including the Muslim World. 'Indigenization' refers to the approach of those Muslim social scientists who, along with many critical Third World social scientists, reject the universality of Western social sciences and call for the development of indigenous social sciences. 'Islamization' refers to the position of those religious Muslim social scientists who believe that Muslim nations should Islamize social sciences based on the Islamic value and knowledge systems, in order to attain viable social sciences and free themselves from Western domination. Discussing these encounters, their supporters and opponents, the paper concludes that despite various efforts, none of the two alternatives to the Western social sciences have been able to replace it so far.

Keywords : indigenization, Islamization, Muslim world, social sciences, world social science system

Conference Title : ICCSS 2020 : International Conference on Chicago School and Sociology

Conference Location : Dublin, Ireland

Conference Dates : April 24-25, 2020