

BETWEEN QUALITATIVE AND QUANTITATIVE METHODOLOGY: GROUNDED THEORY

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Summary: The paper presents the foundations of the grounded theory method, which is one of the orientations of qualitative methodology, which originated in the USA in the 1960s. First of all, it highlights the essentially different meanings of the word “theory” in European (continental) thought and American empirical sociology. The appearance of grounded theory is connected to the crisis of positivist paradigm in social science, particularly with its boiling down to a school pattern: “research question – hypothesis – empirical testing – conclusion, i.e. accepting or rejecting or a hypothesis.” Grounded theory does not start with a hypothesis leading towards facts, but the other way round: researchers observe a research phenomenon intensely, make notes, talk with participants, and then research the empirical materials in order to set assumptions on regularities, conditioning and possible causal effects of the research phenomenon, and finally test the assumptions in the course of a new wave of research.

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