

*English summaries**

(in alphabetical order)

M. Bonolis, *Per una critica della «razionalità assiologica» (A Contribution to the Critique of «Axiological Rationality»)*

The purpose of the article is to question about the foundation of the concept of *axiological rationality*. As the concept belongs to realm of the wider theme of *subjective rationality*, and to that of the relationship between this model and the field of *objective rationality*, the reflection comes from an analysis of the boundaries between these two conceptual areas. Particular attention is devoted to two arguments nearly: that of social Darwinism and the Aristotelian «practical inference». Subsequently, after a reconstruction of Raymond Boudon's position on *consequentialism* and *axiological rationality*, the work shows three critical subjects in this regard: a) the weakness of the interpretation of the moral sentiments in terms of *evolutionary universals*; b) a critical analysis of the concept of «sense of objectivity», based on Pareto's *derivations theory*; c) the discussion about the axiom of *reasons* as *causes* of action.

A. Decataldo, O. Giancola, *Essere più istruiti vuol dire essere più competenti? Analisi dei risultati Piac in quattro coorti di italiani (Does Having an Education Mean Having Greater Competence? Analysis of the PIAAC Results in four Italian Cohorts)*

This paper presents, a two-step analysis based on the new Piac data (Programme for the International Assesment of Adult Population). Specifically: a) a study of the effects of ascriptive variables (as gender, parents' education, etc.) on educational attainment in four age cohorts (born from 1946 to 1955, from 1956 to 1965, from 1966 to 1975 and from 1976 to 1985) aimed to produce an overview of the structure of educational inequalities over time; b) an analysis of the effect of the educational level when testing proficiency in reading skills

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(controlled by ascriptive variables and educational attainment). Thanks to the Piac data features (which not only include background variables and the educational level, but also cognitive skills), this study aims to explore the advantage linked to the different educational levels on reading skills in the four age cohorts. Another goal of this essay is to analyse the influence of the ascriptive variables over the relationship between educational level and cognitive skills, in particular evaluating the effect of each of these independent variables and their dynamic over time.

A. Fasanella, A. Di Benedetto, *Luci e ombre nella Vqr 2004-2010: un focus sulla scheda di valutazione peer nell'Area 14 (Lights and Shadows in the Latest Italian Research Evaluation Exercise 2004-2010: A Focus on the Evaluation Form for the Peer Reviews in the Political and Social Science's Area)*

Research evaluation is a political priority in Italy, there is nothing to say on its merit. The intent of this work is to focus on its method, by analysing from a methodological point of view, some aspects of the research products' evaluation procedure used during the VQR. The main focus will be the evaluation procedure utilised in the Area of Political and Social Science. In the reporting of VQR, despite several efforts in the direction of the accountability, some decisive procedural steps remained in the shade, including the operational definition of the research quality for the gathering of the peer's judgments through the evaluation forms. Therefore, the ways in which the concept of research quality has been translated into variables will be analysed. Furthermore, the analysis will concern procedure used to summarize this information up to the allocation of the final level of merit.

M. Fraire, S. Stasi, *La misurazione degli aspetti non cognitivi nell'apprendimento degli studenti tramite indici sintetici. Risultati di un'indagine svolta nell'Università Sapienza di Roma (Assessment of Students' Non Cognitive Factors in Learning by Index)*

After a brief introduction on the evolution of measuring instruments for cognitive and non-cognitive factors in students' learning, the 28-item Survey Attitudes Towards Statistics (SATS) scale is applied on a sample of 135 students attending introductory statistics in the Sociology and Social Service courses at «Sapienza» University of Rome. In the survey two different 28-item format responses have been compared: five-point and 0-5 cm. segment. Both sets of data have been analysed and compared by Principal Component Analysis. The factorial structure resulting suggests that the components are not clearly separated; therefore a different composite indicator (index) is suggested, instead of the classic indexes based on the single factor solutions. The new index shows the multidimensionality of the phenomenon, has different requisites, a simplified measurement and interpretation, and reliability coefficient theta is 100%.

J.I. Piovani, *La formazione metodologica dei ricercatori sociali in America Latina (Methodological Training of Social Scientists in Latin America)*

This article discusses some problems related to methodological training in the social sciences and the ways in which they are «solved» in the university teaching of methodology in Argentina and Brazil. The ideas presented here are based on empirical research focused on: a) the analysis of curricula and syllabuses (objectives, contents, theoretical and epistemological orientations, instructional strategies and bibliography), b) the investigation into the conceptions of professors and students about methodology, the processes of teaching and learning methods and their use in specific research projects, c) the comparison of the teaching strategies of methodology – and related issues – in the countries analyzed.

V. Romania, *W.I. Thomas and Robert K. Merton e la definizione di un comune approccio situazionale (W.I. Thomas, Robert K. Merton, and the Definition of a Common Situational Approach)*

This article aims to demonstrate how it is possible to compare the sociologies of William Isaac Thomas and Robert K. Merton, defining a common *situational approach*. This would result in a third alternative between symbolic interactionism and functionalism, that tries to go beyond the limits of the two approaches in terms of: abstractness, scarce attention to power dynamics, implicit or explicit acceptance of status quo, weak operationalization. The author focused on the biographical and intellectual contacts between the two scholars and on analogies at an epistemological, methodological and theoretical level. Finally, the *situational approach* is connected with the more recent developments in sociological theory.