



INTRODUCTION TO THE SOCIOLOGY OF KNOWLEDGE ON FOOD SECURITY

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ABSTRACT

PURPOSE: This study aims to articulate a conceptual framework for a new scientific field: the sociology of knowledge on food security, examined beyond mere food production and consumption.

METHODS: The research employs a culturomic approach, sociocultural analysis, functional analysis, social constructionism, and hermeneutic methods.

RESULTS: The study identifies the necessity for the development of a contemporary conceptual and categorical framework, alongside updated methodologies for the sociology of food security.

CONCLUSIONS: The research confirms a general trend in the evolution of the sociology of food security toward synthesizing knowledge from cultural sociology within a unified domain of post-classical sociologization, intricately connected with philosophical inquiry.

Key words: sociology of food security; intellectual food studies; food processes; socio-humanitarian knowledge; food crisis.

INTRODUCTION

The food crisis stands as one of the paramount global challenges of the 21st century (1). The emerging concept of food security transcends the traditional association with food production and consumption, recognizing food as fundamental to human development and the formation of social communities. Ensuring a sustainable environment for the continual enhancement of quality of life requires systematic improvement of food-related processes. This in turn, presupposes the acquisition of knowledge directly pertinent to building self-sufficient socio-economic systems founded on the relationships between individuals, society, and nature. This triadic model serves as the foundation for the future “partnership society,” which is premised on shared responsibility for shared security, with food self-sufficiency as a central pillar. Developing a novel scientific-theoretical framework for contemporary food studies demands coordinated efforts by researchers engaged in transdisciplinary investigations. The conceptual parameters of

what may be termed “intellectual food studies” are thus actively being delineated (2).

The sociology of knowledge on food security, as situated within the contemporary paradigm of food studies, substantially intersects with core directions of the general sociology of knowledge. Accordingly, a primary research priority is the examination of methodological issues surrounding the food process in studies conducted at national, supranational, and international levels. Research objectives are predominantly situated within the social sphere, serving as a stabilizing factor for civil society (3).

The sociology of knowledge on food security can be defined as a meta-theoretical construct within contemporary sociology. From diverse methodological perspectives, this field analyzes the following key issues:

- the social nature of knowledge about food security, considering the qualitative specifics of its historical development;
- the conceptualization of cognitive systems within concrete socio-cultural contexts and the spheres of societal knowledge relevant to food processes;
- the paradigmatic, syntagmatic, and pragmatic foundations of the sociology of

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food activities, including its place and potential (or constraints) within socio-humanitarian knowledge.

Thus, the sociology of knowledge on food security is not simply a specific subfield or a collection of sociological theories; it is a distinct meta-theoretical area transcending conventional disciplinary boundaries. Moreover, establishing this sociology as a unique research strategy requires a comprehensive approach involving philosophical anthropology, economic socialization, social pedagogy, sociology of education, and related fields, applied at supranational, national, and local levels (4).

This field aligns with the overarching theoretical-methodological orientation of moving beyond classical philosophical problems and modes of interpretation. However, it differs from conventional philosophical approaches by employing non-philosophical methods. Conversely, within the domains of functional analysis and sociology, exclusively immanent sociological tools prove insufficient.

The social significance of food security for sustainable societal development and human civilization necessitates a phenomenological perspective on the sociology of knowledge concerning food processes. Phenomenological sociology posits the identity between processes of cognition and processes of world-making, focusing on elucidating how individuals construct social reality and how this reality, in turn, shapes individuals as socially active agents. This perspective highlights the social construction of reality through practices and knowledge related to food processes, affirming that such phenomena (including but not limited to food self-sufficiency) are both real and of primary importance.

Consequently, interest in the sociology of “knowledge” on food security converges with the analysis of the multiplicity of “knowledges” about processes by which systems of knowledge attain social legitimacy as “reality.” This framing fundamentally leads to the core logical opposition of “truth” versus “falsehood.” The prevailing assumption is that arguments rest upon rigorous scientific procedures involving analysis of facts and factors shaping social interactions, which participants perceive as objective reality. A key tenet of phenomenological sociology in this context is that its epistemological boundaries delineate its scope.

Based on these considerations, it follows that the sociology of food security should not be viewed merely as an interdisciplinary or transdisciplinary field. Rather, as conceptualized here, it represents a far more encompassing framework than a mere focus on food production and consumption.

CONCLUSION

The sociology of food security constitutes an independent scientific theory.

A revised conceptual-categorical framework, along with updated methodologies, is essential for advancing this field.

Current developments are driven by the reinterpretation of hermeneutic ideas, and promising prospects lie in the integration of knowledge within a comprehensive sociological theory. The study corroborates the prevailing trend in the sociology of food security toward the synthesis of knowledge from cultural sociology into a unified domain of post-classical sociological inquiry, deeply intertwined with philosophical issues.

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