

Note from the Editor

In recent issues, there has been a plethora of articles published on empirical studies largely based on primary data sources, some with very high level statistical analysis. Most were typically micro level projects focusing either on a specific institution or on some geographical or political entity such as a province or a district. These studies do serve a very useful purpose of generating new data as well as substantiate previously thought out theoretical arguments. Most journals cater to these valuable contributions, so does *BEJS*. However, as I applauded these contributions over the years in the *BEJS*, I was also getting increasingly concerned at the lack of theoretical papers. Theoretical analysis do require such substantiations and often these micro level empirical studies herald in new theories but major theoretical work with high level of abstraction is largely missing from this journal as is also generally true of the discipline as such.

I do not wish to engage in a debate on the necessity of such theories in the discipline since I have dealt with this issue all my life on different occasions including the announcing of the “end of sociological theory” a decade ago. But I had always believed and felt confident that there are still a few hardy souls among us who do feel the necessity of theoretical discourse within the discipline and are quietly, often without much appreciation or even passing recognition, working out theories which may someday occupy the centre stage of the discipline and guide future empirical research and publications.

I am not alluding to “grand theories” but look at works like Durkheim’s *Suicide*, a high level theoretical generalization based purely on secondary data. That study of suicide was based on data collected from 26,000 cases across the European countries and by simply the use of percentages and ratios. Just think how much more he could have achieved with the current technology. Such studies are very possible today with so much data available literally wherever you look. Numerous international and national agencies, including governments, are churning out unimaginable amount of data on a daily basis. The internet and other media are making these readily available to the public. All we need is to broaden our horizon and think out of our location in time and space and we can work out similar theories, including that of a new theory of suicide.

I am happy that some researchers are making an effort and few such papers are also finding their place in this journal too. This issue in particular contains a few theoretical papers, not necessary supported with huge data sets. But I am delighted nonetheless that some are bold enough to address theoretical issues. Soon I hope broad theoretical generalizations based on immense data sets that are at our disposal will be forthcoming. At the very least, regional or continent wise studies are definitely possible with the presently available data sets. I urge the young researchers to move out of their comfortable niches and micro level studies with primary data and attempt macro level theoretical generalizations with secondary data sets waiting for you out there. I shall always have space for such works in this journal.