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Artículos científicos

Integración metodológica como herramienta de investigación para las relaciones internacionales

Methodological integration as a research tool for international relations

A integração metodológica como ferramenta de pesquisa para as relações internacionais

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Resumen

Este artículo tiene el propósito de aproximar al lector a la aplicación de los métodos para el estudio de la ciencia de las Relaciones Internacionales, con especial énfasis en la integración metodológica. Con esto en mente, se procederá primeramente a explicar en qué consiste la metodología cualitativa, en qué se diferencia de la metodología cuantitativa y cuáles son sus herramientas más utilizadas. En un segundo apartado, se adentra al lector a la utilización del método comparativo, el cual, brinda resultados que permiten explicar patrones y regularidades entre distintos sistemas sociales, políticos e institucionales. En un tercer momento se aborda la integración metodológica, resultado de la utilización de diferentes métodos, al integrar la información cualitativa a cuantitativa, con el objetivo final de que el análisis y procesamiento de la información sea más completo y esto lleve a conclusiones más certeras e integrales. Enseguida, se ilustra la aplicación de la integración metodológica con una investigación realizada desde la perspectiva de estudio de caso comparativo en la frontera de México y Estados Unidos. Finalmente se presentan las conclusiones del trabajo.

Palabras clave: integración metodológica, método comparativo, métodos cualitativos, relaciones internacionales.

Abstract

This article is intended to bring the reader to the application of methods in the study of International Relations science with special emphasis on methodological integration. With this in mind, first we explain the qualitative methodology, and how it differs from the quantitative methodology and which are their tools. In a second part, we introduce to the reader to the use of the comparative method, which provides extremely rich results since it allows to explain patterns and regularities between different social, political and institutional systems. In a third part, we address the methodological integration, as a result of the use of different methods, to integrate qualitative with quantitative data, with the ultimate goal of a more complete analysis and processing of information which leads to more accurate and comprehensive conclusion. Afterwards, we illustrate the application of the methodological integration with a research carried out from the perspective of comparative case study on the border between Mexico and the United States. Finally, we present the conclusions of the work.

Keywords: methodological integration, comparative method, qualitative methods, international relations.

Resumo

Este artigo tem por objetivo aproximar o leitor da aplicação dos métodos para o estudo da ciência das Relações Internacionais, com especial ênfase na integração metodológica. Com isso em mente, iremos primeiro explicar em que consiste a metodologia qualitativa, como ela difere da metodologia quantitativa e quais são as suas ferramentas mais utilizadas. Em uma segunda seção, o leitor é apresentado ao uso do método comparativo, que fornece resultados que permitem explicar padrões e regularidades entre diferentes sistemas sociais, políticos e institucionais. Num terceiro momento, aborda-se a integração metodológica, resultado da utilização de diferentes métodos, integrando informação qualitativa à quantitativa, com o objetivo final de que a análise e processamento da informação seja mais completo e isso conduza a conclusões integral. A seguir, a aplicação da integração metodológica é ilustrada com uma investigação realizada na perspectiva de um estudo de caso comparativo na fronteira do México com os Estados Unidos. Por fim, são apresentadas as conclusões do trabalho.

Palavras-chave: integração metodológica, método comparativo, métodos qualitativos, relações internacionais.

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Introduction

Since its inception, the study of international relations (RR. II.) Has been accompanied by an intense theoretical and methodological debate that is still in force today. For example, according to the opinion of some internationalists, the lack of consensus around a single research method for this area has resulted in an obstacle to its scientific advancement, while others argue that it is precisely the existence of numerous methods and approaches. , together with the debate they provoke, which has facilitated the progress of theoretical contributions in a field of study marked by its complexity and dynamism. However, despite these conflicting positions, at present the emergence of novel research methods and techniques in RR. II. have made it easier for students of this discipline to carry out inquiries with greater scientific rigor and depth. For this reason, the possibility of intertwining research techniques of both currents (qualitative and quantitative) has been explored to provide a more complete analysis of this object of study.

In this regard, Monje (2011) points out: “Despite the fact that each methodological option is based on different assumptions and has its rules and basic forms of action, established and shared by the scientific community itself, they are not exclusive methods, [because] complement ”(p. 11).

The structure of the article is as follows: first, it is explained what the qualitative methodology consists of, what are its differences with the quantitative methodology and which tools of this method are the most used. Second, the use of the comparative method is exposed, which provides elements that allow explaining patterns and regularities between different social, political and institutional systems. ¬Thirdly, the methodological integration of qualitative and quantitative information is addressed in order for the analysis and processing of the data to be more complete, which serves to generate more accurate and comprehensive conclusions. Then the application of these methods is illustrated with the results of an investigation carried out from the perspective of a comparative case study on the border of Mexico and the United States. Finally, the conclusions are presented.

An approach to the qualitative methodology applied to the study of international relations

The qualitative methods used in the investigation of RR. II. they are not exclusive to a particular epistemological position. The qualitative methodology refers to data collection and non-numerical data analysis strategies in order to provide a better understanding of how the world is perceived, therefore it requires a focus on the meanings and processes that constitute RR . II. This is achieved through a deep analysis of events, phenomena, countries, regions, organizations or individuals (Creswell, 2003; Lamont, 2015).

The qualitative methodology offers descriptive data and / or causal relationships of human behavior in all its manifestations (written, spoken or observed), and is characterized by studying specific situations in detail. Its ultimate goal is to transcend the causality of the object of study to reach its understanding (Hernández-Sampieri, Fernández & Baptista, 2010). Frequently, this type of method depends on inductive reasoning, as it follows a logical sequence from the observation of the phenomena or facts of reality, that is, from empirical observations, the construction of theoretical propositions is reached.

Hernández-Sampieri et al. (2010) suggest that, from the qualitative methodology, the statement of the problem to be investigated should begin with the definition of the main concept, followed by a constant review of the proposal during data collection. That is, throughout the process the hypothesis will be generated, which will be redefined from the data collection, although it can also be the product of the study (in both cases it will not be statistically proven). For this reason, Collier (2011) considers that these hypotheses are emergent, flexible and contextual, since they adapt to the data and the research environment. For example, in qualitative research —by using a rooted theory approach— the field is first approached and then, based on that exploratory work, hypotheses and methodological instruments are built. In other words, with this procedure the case is first explored and then the hypotheses are built, for which the process tracing method is used.

Unlike quantitative methods in RR. II., The size of the research sample is not representative of the universe to be studied, since the ultimate goal of the researcher is to delve into the object of study. Thus, the sample can be made up of individuals, events and / or documents. In this sense, the quality of the sample outweighs the quantity. But how to define the size of it? It will depend on the interest in the case, on the researcher's limitations for handling a certain amount of events or phenomena, on the number of facts

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that can be answered from the research question, and on whether the chosen cases are accessible and frequent for the investigator.

It is important to note that the definition of the sample in this type of methodology can be modified as the study progresses and is usually qualitatively significant, unlike what happens in quantitative studies, where it is statistically significant. Table 1 shows the main differences between qualitative and quantitative research.

Tabla 1. Características de la investigación cualitativa y cuantitativa

Comparación	Investigación cualitativa	Investigación cuantitativa
Centro de interés	Cualidad.	Cantidad.
Raíces filosóficas	Fenomenología, interacción simbólica.	Positivismo, empirismo lógico.
Conceptos asociados	Trabajo de campo, etnografía, subjetividad.	Experimental, empírica, estadística.
Objetivos de investigación	Comprensión, descripción, descubrimiento, generadora de hipótesis.	Predicción, control, descripción, confirmación, comprobación de hipótesis.
Características del diseño	Flexible, envolvente, emergente.	Predeterminado, estructurado.
Escenario	Natural, familiar.	Desconocido, artificial.
Muestra	Pequeña, no aleatoria, teórica.	Grande, aleatoria, representativa.
Compilación de datos	Entrevistas, observaciones, papel del investigador.	Instrumentos inanimados (escalas, pruebas, encuestas, cuestionarios).
Modalidad de análisis	Inductivo.	Deductivo (uso de las estadísticas).

Fuente: Elaboración propia con base en Hernández-Sampieri *et al.* (2010)

Regarding the instruments for obtaining qualitative data, the observation, the interview, the focus groups and the office research stand out. However, Lamont (2015) explains that qualitative data is also found in non-textual forms of expression, such as monuments, maps, art, social constructions, and even visual tools. For this reason, this author points out that the methods for the collection of qualitative data used by students of RR. II. have been particularly the following:

- *Interviews.* It is a tool that allows you to collect in-depth information. Researchers use interviews to find data about a particular phenomenon, event, or object, or to discover the views of a person or group of people. Interviews can be structured, in which the interviewee is approached with previously written questions and with response categories; Likewise, they can be semi-structured, in which there is a certain degree of flexibility, although the researcher continues to be guided by a basic interview structure. In addition, there are unstructured interviews, which allow a fluid conversation with the interviewee in an open dialogue, although by its very nature it is desirable that it be recorded on audio or video. Finally, interviews can be semi-directive, where the interviewee is given freedom to tell everything he wants; here the interviewer only guides the discussion without interrupting the interviewee.

- *Focus groups.* Generally, it involves bringing together a group of six to ten participants to discuss a topic and a series of questions. The objective is to gather information on how a certain topic is perceived in a context of social interaction. All focus groups are led by a moderator. In this regard, Hamui and Varela (2013) point out: “One of the central figures in a focus group is the moderator, who directs the dialogue based on the previously prepared interview guide, gives the floor to the participants and encourages their equitable participation ”(P.57).
- *Internet-based search.* Although the Internet has many practical advantages, when academic and scientific materials are not consulted, one must be very cautious as to the veracity of the information presented. With this criterion, the internet allows access to the world's media, government websites and official pages of practically all international organizations. In Lorenzo's words
- *Domínguez and Xalabarder (1997),* “researchers can find the Internet a useful tool for their work based on two fundamental aspects: the communication capacity offered by the network, and the enormous volume of information that appears day after day in The cyberspace" (p. 1)
- *Documentary and archive search.* Also known as cabinet investigation, it is an extremely valuable tool to investigate an international conflict, an international organization, public policies, legislation, among others. It must be taken into account that there can be two types: primary sources (they are original and the researcher has access to them first-hand) and secondary sources (obtained through the analysis of primary sources). The limitation of this tool is that in many cases, given the nature of the field of study of RR. II., The researcher does not have access to the confidential materials of a government or organization, hence it is necessary to collect information by other means. This, however, offers a crucial disadvantage, as it causes that only the original information can be reinterpreted. In this sense, it is recognized that many data are hidden by governments, organizations and companies “for security reasons, for fear of a negative reaction from public opinion, or from the political opposition. There is a self-censorship

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mechanism in written documents, so they only partially reflect internal institutional processes ”(Salazar, 2004, p. 200). Once the qualitative information has been collected, the researcher will be faced with the question of how to analyze it, which can lead to misinterpretations. Even so, some of the most used analysis techniques when collecting qualitative information are the following:

- *Content analysis.* Sometimes it is considered a quantitative method tool, as it seeks to convert textual data into numerical form. The goal is to analyze large amounts of information through coding or categorization. It is a mixed research technique (qualitative and quantitative) that can include written data, photographs, television programs, films and other artistic expressions. Once the data is encoded into categories, it is possible to locate the presence of certain trends or patterns. The ultimate goal of content analysis is to find particular elements in communication (Lamont, 2015).
- *Discourse analysis.* It is a qualitative analysis that focuses on the interpretation of oral or written linguistic manifestations, and can include official and unofficial forms of communication. It focuses on knowing how and why certain rhetorics emerge, become dominant and are used by the actors under study. To apply this type of analysis, it is necessary to identify and justify the selection of texts to be studied, regardless of the type of document, speech or statement that is defined. Even so, they must be texts that come from authorized, well-informed sources and with mastery of the subject to be studied. It is a matter of discerning how and why the actors resorted to that particular rhetoric, since it seeks to discover how language preconfigures the world in which we live; in fact, you can also do analysis of the number of times certain words are used or their relationships in a speech (Lamont, 2015).

On the other hand, it is also worth recommending the work of Klotz and Prakash (2008), who unravel the qualitative research design to point out some of the most used strategies, which are described below:

- *Speech analysis.* It is estimated that to understand the discourse, four methodological steps must be followed. First of all, it is of the utmost importance to possess a degree of cultural competence in order to enter correctly into the way the world is seen. From there, a guide is offered for the delimitation of texts and the subsequent mapping of the representations that comprise the discourse. Lastly, it seeks to clarify the stratification of the dominant and subordinate discourses in the RR. II. (Klotz and Prakash, 2008).

- *Historical representations.* The focus on the narrative of diplomatic history has prevailed in the qualitative study of RR. II., So it is important to have historical analysis tools, as well as guides for searching archival materials and for narrowing down the selection of material. For this reason, it can be affirmed that history is a fundamental science for the study of RR. II. In this regard, Rojas (2004) points out:

> The greatest contribution in history to IR consists in treating them as a historical object, in examining their discourse as the result of a conjunction of factors at a specific moment, in drawing the veil of reification that the theorists of the international have wanted to maintain; history, what shows us, is the very historicity of IR (p.3).

- *Ethnographic research.* Contrary to historiography, ethnography is rarely used as an analysis tool in RR. II. However, in recent times, this view has changed, since it is considered that participant observation and interview can help answer questions related to international studies. Hurtado (2016) explains it as follows:

> This method has the ability to make palpable and visible to "ordinary" people, outside the academic field, the materiality of social practices that occur within state institutions, in war zones or refugees, in places of participation of the civil society that moves in the international sphere, in international organizations, and in academic spheres that are usually seen as external to the object of study (p. 2).

- *Process monitoring.* Commonly known as process tracing, it is used in qualitative analysis in RR. II. to focus on individuals as key actors and to monitor the process by being linked to the study of causal mechanisms in general and understandings of complex cases and processes over time, where it seeks to create rival spaces to test contrasting hypotheses (Zaks, 2017).

In short, qualitative methodology can provide us with a better understanding of how the world is perceived. To fulfill this task, the meanings and processes that make up the RR must be analyzed. II., For which the tools mentioned in this section can be used.

Objectives

- The purpose of this research is to demonstrate that a mixed approach can serve to more accurately interpret youth citizen participation in Baja California (Mexico) and California (United States) for which the following specific objectives have been set:
- Apply the comparative method (MC) using the theme of youth citizen participation in Baja California (Mexico) and California (United States): the case of the Model United Nations (MUN) as an example of methodological integration in RR phenomena. II.
- Reflect on the application of the methodological integration methodology in RR phenomena and events. II.

Before describing the methodology and pointing out the results, it is worth noting that the Model United Nations (MUN) is defined as an educational-cultural activity that tries to represent the protocol of the United Nations (UN) through a “game of role ”that reproduces the way in which the different countries of the world meet and negotiate on issues of interest to humanity. At the MUN "students represent delegates from different countries and participate in debates and negotiations in which they deal with issues that correspond to the work programs of the different organs and commissions of the United Nations" (UN Information Center for Mexico, Cuba and the Dominican Republic [CINU], nd, para. 3). These MUNs are practical tools that replicate the activities of the main United Nations committees and other international organizations, and can be implemented at all educational levels. In this sense, the students debate, discuss and propose solutions to the issues on the international agenda designated by the organizing committee. The objective is to offer a position according to the country they represent, adhering to the principles of foreign policy of that nation and the protocol of the simulated IO.

MUNs have existed practically since the founding of the UN. In fact, it is documented that the first exercise of this nature was carried out in 1947. For Obendorf and Randerson (2012) “MUNs are today a global phenomenon, delivered at almost all levels of teaching and learning, from the primary and secondary schools and universities through undergraduate and graduate degrees in universities” (p. 351).

Therefore, the question asked in the present study was whether these exercises promote youth citizen participation. In this regard, it is argued that the MUNs are training tools, especially at higher education levels, since they promote skills in their participants, such as oral and written expression, information search, writing and debate. In addition, it promotes values such as tolerance, intercultural understanding, empathy, among others. This is particularly important for students of disciplines such as RR. II., Since they must understand the changing and complex international reality that develops in the midst of turbulent situations (Zenuk-Nishide, 2014).

Methodology

The present inquiry was based on methodological integration, which was applied based on a comparative case study approach (Creswell, 2003). In this approach, multiple sources of information are used (eg, interviews, observations, literature review, etc.) and the context of the cases is analyzed especially.

In this research, there was a qualitatively significant sample, since relevant information units for the cases were interviewed. Specifically, these units were young people who have participated in MUN in Tijuana and Mexicali (Mexico), as well as in San Diego (United States). The principle of homogeneity of the interviewees was clearly that they had participated in MUN, while the principle of heterogeneity manifests differentiating aspects, such as schooling (students and university graduates), gender, the role they played in the MUN and their location (states of different countries). The field work, in summary, allowed gathering information through a total of 18 interviews that were applied as follows: 11 conducted with MUN participants from Tijuana and Mexicali (Baja California, Mexico) and 7 with MUN participants from San Diego (California, United States). The instrument used consisted of the following sections:

- General data (name, sex, education, socioeconomic data).
- General data on participation in MUN (number of times he has participated, where he has participated, what role he has played, nationality).
- Social dimension (experiences of social participation prior to MUN, measurement by dimensions of social participation before participating in MUN).
- Direct dimension (dichotomous measurement of youth citizen participation indicators).
- Electoral-political dimension (dichotomous measurement of the indicators of electoral-political participation).
- Citizen skills and training (acquisition of skills, aptitudes, knowledge).

Through this methodology, it is intended to analyze whether the United Nations (UNM) models promote youth citizen participation. The interviews (semi-structured and semi-directive) were conducted in person and through video calls between 2017 and 2018.

The data was processed using the Atlas ti software. Then, the coded information was grouped into different categories: social, direct, and electoral-political. Likewise, it should be noted that the analysis and coding were separated in the MUNs of California and those of Baja California, which were then compared.

After this qualitative coding, a quantitative coding was carried out, since the Likert-Thurstone scales were also used, as well as the dichotomous one. In other words, the indicators were coded to carry out the methodological integration and measure the degree of youth citizen participation. This was accomplished using Hart's (2013) ladder of youth participation and Stuart's (2017) spectrum of public participation.

The questions with dichotomous answer options and Likert-Thurstone type were formulated with the objective of measuring the intensity in each of the considered indicators. With dichotomous questions (yes or no) it was determined whether the young people had participated, for example, in a referendum, non-continuous individual action where intensity cannot be measured.

The use of the Likert-Thurstone type scale is more complex because it results from the combination of two measurement strategies, hence its function must first be determined. On the Likert scale there is a more varied range of response options (greater than two), which is why it is widely used in market or customer satisfaction studies, since it is possible to have a wide range of options. For example, for the question How likely is it that you will recommend our services to your acquaintances ?, the options could be "very likely", "likely", "indifferent", "unlikely", "would not recommend it". Each of these options is coded with a number in order to facilitate the analysis of the instrument results. In this way, the methodological integration begins by giving a numerical value to different qualitative response options.

In contrast, the Thurstone-type scale is one in which the person who designs the instrument assigns default values to each question, so that some have a higher value than others. This is done in order to have a more adequate measurement, as in the present investigation, where certain indicators, according to the literature, have greater weight than others due to their importance or their implications.

When using the methods of these two types of scales, it is called the Likert-Thurstone type, since the questions have a response range greater than two options and

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different predetermined values can be assigned according to each indicator. (Bozal, 2006).

Implementation of the comparative method in international studies

Comparison is always useful to achieve the objective of an investigation, since it allows to identify similarities and differences, and gives the possibility of controlling variables. For Nohlen, Schultze and Romano (2006), this method seeks to examine causal links and tries to isolate the factors that can be considered as cause or effect. In addition, it is useful to distinguish between the quantitative and qualitative mode of use, since it refers to the number of cases to be analyzed and the rationale with which the analysis is guided. Among the main ways of using the comparative method are John Stuart Mill's method of difference and similarity (Savolainen, 1994).

The comparative method (MC) is considered a specialization of the scientific method, and can be specified in different types: experimental, statistical, historical and comparison of shared and non-shared attributes. Comparative research is more generalized, while the case study is more individualistic, so both reinforce each other.

In the social sciences there are different ways of explaining and comparing, although specifically three types of scientific works can be mentioned: ideographic, which are descriptive and interpretive; theorists, whose purpose is to advance the theory, and the comparatists, who are located in an intermediate phase of the previous two. The latter have fewer followers; however, in recent years comparative studies have gained significant attention as a study methodology in the social sciences and as a method to achieve control of variables.

To carry out an optimal process of the comparative method, the conceptual aspect is of fundamental importance, as well as the classification of cases, concepts and variables, that is, the operationalization. In short, the theoretical structure is fundamental, as well as the formulation of hypotheses, which is supported by previous studies.

Within the MC in the RR. II. The study of comparative cases is usual. In this type, research is usually qualitative-based, and multiple sources of information are used, such as interviews, observations, bibliographic and newspaper reviews, etc., but especially the context of the cases is widely analyzed. The following are some of the aspects that should be considered when applying the CM in international studies:

- *Space:* Increasing the number of cases implies increasing the number of relevant variables, which makes comparison more difficult; However, it is also possible to choose a single case and compare hypotheses with the existing literature or in different periods. If two or more cases are used, it would be a binary type study. It is therefore recommended to use few cases and many variables (always less than 20 cases). But how to choose the cases? For this, common and different factors must be considered.
- *For Lijphart (1971)* there should be a reduced number of cases (between 2 and less than 20), since the CM is used for investigations with modest resources; therefore, reducing the number of variables based on context and theory is best. Within the type of comparative case studies there is a “clinical” subtype, where specific cases are analyzed in a limited number of a limited situation. The purpose is to capture “all” the individual of the cases in an intensive way. This type of research can also be understood as configurative-ideographic, and is used to analyze individuals from complex groups. Validity rests with intensive case study (Gomm, Hammersley & Foster, 2000).
- *Time:* Comparative analysis can be performed at different times (diachronic comparison) or at synchronous times.
- *Variables:* The reduction of variables is recommended, but only using previously established theories and hypotheses. The use of key variables is necessary.

Investigations with small N (sample) (few cases) are recommended for the comparative method. In this sense, the "many variables, few cases" technique allows for deep analogies. On the other hand, there are quantitative techniques for investigations of many cases that can help to process the information and complement the conclusions in the MC; for example, sampling strategies, statistical significance, regression, variance, multivariate analysis, among others.

The results of the MC allow us to explain patterns and regularities between different social, political and institutional systems, as well as to identify the independent variables that can explain the dependent ones (results). Again, the importance of theory and the construction of hypotheses is emphasized as fundamental aspects of QI. Likewise, in the case of international studies, these should be applicable to more than one country or culture and allow the use of similar indicators.

Methodological integration

Qualitative methodological integration is a useful tool in social science research — especially in PR studies. II. and in political science (PC) - because over the years these disciplines have been criticized for not having probable methods to base theories, hypotheses and conceptual proposals. Previously, in the case of RR. II., The theories were based on theoretical inferences and abstract indicators that were impossible to measure, such as human nature or the analysis of the behavior of specific individuals (a clear example is behaviorism). With this instrument, different social sciences have managed to respond to these criticisms, giving greater credibility and legitimacy to the research carried out.

Methodological integration is a method that is based on a qualitative and quantitative analysis of any information collected (Patterson, 1996). This can be used to examine different qualitative research techniques, so that it is processed and translated into quantitative information so that it becomes measurable in a more precise way. In this way, more accurate and comprehensive conclusions are sought.

The application of qualitative methodological integration in RR. II. and CP is carried out mainly through the quantitative processing of the qualitative information collected, for example, through an interview. However, it is worth noting that when the methodological integration of qualitative to quantitative information is used, the rationale of the research remains qualitative, since integration is only used to translate certain information collected into numerical data.

A concrete application of methodological integration can be the measurement of some aspect or set of aspects; However, it is important to consider that in order to have a useful analysis through integration it is necessary that the methodological structure of an investigation be solid, since it is important to know —before collecting and processing the information— what the integration will be used for, so that it is not just an instrument without an end. A crucial part of the methodological structure that allows for meaningful integration is the operationalization of the concept to be measured. This is crucial to carry out integrating, since when disaggregating a concept in dimensions —and these in turn in indicators—, a clear idea of what is needed to know to measure such a concept arises. In this way, if the essential information is collected in a qualitative way, it is possible to process it through methodological integration to have measurable quantitative results that can test the hypothesis.

In this sense, the instrument that is proposed - as it needs to process data in a qualitative and quantitative way - can be developed with the help of software. One of the most useful for this instrument is Atlas ti. This helps to organize, interpret, and encode the information collected by creating codes or categories, so that it can be grouped into topics (which can be the indicators, dimensions, or topics to be tested). In this way you can get clear arguments by topic. Another useful program is Microsoft Office Excel, which can be used to calculate the numbers that result from quantitative coding.

Results

An example of applying methodological integration in comparative case studies

To exemplify a way of applying methodological integration in the study of RR phenomena. II., The results of an investigation entitled Youth Citizen Participation in Baja California (Mexico) and California (United States) are presented: the case of the United Nations Model (Márquez Duarte, 2018).

To measure youth citizen participation, a higher value was given to the following indicators: in the social dimension, double the value (x2) was given to participating in civil society organizations, and in the electoral-political dimension it was given the double the value (x2) to vote in elections, and triple (x3) to be a candidate (table 2). This decision was made based on the bibliography analyzed, since several authors assert that voting, as well as being a candidate, has greater political implications for individuals, at least in the context of Mexico and Latin America. For this reason, it was decided that participating in CSOs had a greater weight than participating in the other indicators of the social dimension, since it implies greater commitment; Furthermore, the actions and projects of the SCOs generally have greater implications than those of the other organizations considered as indicators of the social dimension. With this greater weighting, an attempt was made to achieve a result of the measurement of youth citizen participation that is more adjusted to the reality of the contexts in order to locate the individuals more exactly on the scales used.

Tabla 2. Operacionalización de la participación ciudadana juvenil

Dimensiones	**Indicadores**	**Medición**
Social	1. Participar en OCS (x2) 2. Participar en voluntariado 3. Participar en comités vecinales 4. Participar en grupos comunitarios	0 a 3 escala de Likert-Thurstone 0 = no participa 1 = participación sin toma de decisiones 2 = es parte en la discusión de decisiones, pero no las toma, puede tener un puesto en la organización 3 = puesto directivo, toma decisiones, dirige proyectos
Directa (en mecanismos de democracia directa)	1. Iniciativa de ley 2. Referéndum 3. Plebiscito 4. Consultas ciudadanas 5. Asambleas ciudadanas 6. Talleres participativos 7. Marchas 8. Protestas	Escala dicotómica 0 = no participa 1 = sí participa
Electoral-política	1. Votar en elecciones (x2) 2. Ser candidato (x3) 3. Participar en partidos políticos 4. Participar en campañas políticas 5. Cabildeo con políticos 6. Publicar en medios sobre política/políticos	1, 2, 5 y 6 escala dicotómica 0 = no participa 1 = sí participa 3 y 4 = escala Likert-Thurstone (0 a 3) 0 = no participa 1 = participación sin toma de decisiones 2 = toma parte en la discusión de decisiones, pero no las toma, puede tener un puesto en la organización 3 = puesto directivo, toma decisiones, dirige proyectos

Fuente: Elaboración propia

Having defined the form of weighting, as well as the information collected, we proceeded to carry out the necessary analyzes and calculations to obtain the scores for each dimension and the totals of the change in youth citizen participation of each of the MUNs interviewed, as well as for locate them by result in the two scales used for the interpretation of these data. Taking the results of the change in youth citizen participation by dimension of each MUN interviewed, each of them is located on Hart's ladder (2013) (for the social and electoral-political dimensions) and on the spectrum of public participation (for the direct dimension).

Hart (1993) states that from steps 1 to 3, youth actions are considered “non-participatory”; instead, from steps 4 to 8, Hart points out that they can be categorized as “genuine youth participation”. For the purposes of this research, the following is the way to locate the MUN interviewed in this ladder: to place them in steps 1 to 3, they can have a maximum of 1 result in each indicator of the social dimension, in the dimension electoral-political can have a maximum of 1 in each indicator, as well as they do not have to have lobbied or published in the media about politics or politicians, since by carrying out any of these actions they are initiating forms of participation for their own motivation, with understanding situation. It depends on the case of each individual, it is evaluated if he is located in the fourth step, since the scores that he should have as an indicator are the same as for the previous steps. To place them in steps 5 or 6, the MUN interviewed must have a maximum of 2 as a result of each indicator of both dimensions, including lobbying or publishing about politics / politicians. Finally, for young people to be able to place themselves in step 7 or 8, they must have 3 in any indicator and the specific situation of each individual interviewed is analyzed.

The results obtained through the methodological integration were the following: in 16 of the 18 interviewees there is an increase in youth citizen participation derived from their involvement in the MUNs. Regarding total youth citizen participation, there is more increase than in participation for each one of the dimensions, since, when adding the change in the three dimensions, 16 MUNs result in a positive figure. This means that 88.8% of the interviewees assure that the MUNs promoted their youth citizen participation. In addition, the average change in the youth citizen participation of the interviewees was 6.94, which indicates that it was not a minimal change, but a significant one (Márquez Duarte, 2018). This result confirms that the increase in youth citizen participation caused by the MUNs is significant. Regarding the difference between Mexican and US MUNs, Table 3 shows that the increase in youth citizen participation was greater in US MUNs by dimension and total.

Tabla 3. Cambio de participación ciudadana juvenil fomentado por los MUN en entrevistados mexicanos y estadounidenses (por dimensión y total)

Tipo de dimensión	Promedio de MUN mexicanos	Promedio de MUN estadounidenses
Dimensión social	3	4.3
Dimensión directa	1.4	2.3
Dimensión electoral-política	0.6	3.6
Participación ciudadana juvenil total	4.9	10.1

Fuente: Elaboración propia

On the other hand, it is perceived that the direct dimension of youth citizen participation is the least promoted by the MUNs, where only 11 of the 18 interviewees report a change, specifically an increase. Regarding the electoral-political dimension, 12 interviewees indicate an increase, 4 indicate a decrease and two do not report changes. If we analyze the total change in youth citizen participation, it can be seen that 16 of the 18 interviewees indicate an increase and only 2 interviewees report a decrease in youth citizen participation. Regarding the total youth citizen participation, there is more increase than in the participation for each one of the dimensions, since when adding the change in the three dimensions, 16 MUNs result in a positive figure.

Discussion

At this point it is important to clarify that the conclusions reached are based on the quantitative and qualitative information analyzed through the comparative method and methodological integration, since these forms of processing complement each other and can clarify the information to reach a conclusion. more comprehensive. In this sense, the articulation of these methodological approaches to RR. II. and the conceptual discussion of youth citizen participation, MUN and citizen training functioned as support for the research, and have expanded the findings of the field work, which have allowed to test the hypotheses and contribute to the knowledge generated, since they support postulates of previous research that have served as context. In summary, the capacities fostered by the MUNs as a whole were 19: executive presence, organization, discipline, debate, formal language, writing formal documents, oral expression, research / being analytical, negotiation, leadership, teamwork, cross- cultural understanding, following rules, self-confidence, networking, practicing languages, working under pressure, decision-making, and tolerance and empathy.

Conclusions

The RR. II., As a dynamic science, they have faced various paradigmatic debates since their creation derived from the evolution of their object of study, which has been decisive for the creation and adaptation of methodologies capable of responding to the changing international reality in an agile way. since a movement in the global agenda can modify the functionality of the paradigms and their methodologies almost immediately. For this reason, this article raised the need to use different methodologies to adapt them to the topics of RR science. II., With which an attempt was made to strengthen international studies and provide science with different options for analysis.

In this sense, the comparative method was explored, which allowed explaining patterns and regularities between different social, political and institutional systems, as well as identifying possible independent variables that cause and influence the dependent variables. With this method, a theoretical development and hypothesis construction is essential, as well as the construction of operationalization.

In the case of methodological integration, it is a very useful instrument for mixed-cut research techniques. Within the CP and RR. II., Provides relevant tools, especially for case study works that perfectly complement the technique of interviews with actors and key informants. In this sense, the main contribution of this methodology is the measurement of some aspect or set of aspects. A crucial part of the methodological structure that allows for meaningful integration is the operationalization of the concept to be measured. A correct structuring of the studied concept is crucial to integrate and clearly obtain the set of variables and indicators to be measured. In this way, if the necessary information is collected in a qualitative way, it is possible to process it with the support of computer software to test the hypothesis.

As analyzed in the given example, the methodological integration methodology, the comparative method and the case study are complementary within the science of RR. II. Although this article analyzed cases that have many specificities at the regional level - Baja California (Mexico) and California (United States) -, they can also be used in macrosocial units, as for example in the comparative study of nation states.

In the case of this research, when applying these methodologies to understand phenomena that correspond to the international agenda, it was found that they are useful for measuring a set of data that has a transversal temporality where similarities and differences are compared in two areas. very different geographical areas; Even so, this could only be achieved with a combination of qualitative and quantitative methods, which allowed the verification of the main assumption of this research, that is, that the MUN interviewed report changes in their way of thinking and acting in public affairs, capacities referred by the interviewees as political awareness, leadership, self-confidence and being analytical. This has led them to become actively involved in public affairs and to have their voice heard in public decision-making processes.

Future lines of research

As a future line of research, it is important to continue the study of qualitative and quantitative methodologies in order to enrich the science of RR. II., Then - as mentioned throughout this work - for many years theories were based on inferences and abstract indicators that were impossible to measure, such as human nature or the analysis of the behavior of specific individuals. With the methodological instruments proposed here, it has been possible to respond to these criticisms, endowing the science of RR .II. of greater credibility and legitimacy.

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