Evaluating Evidence in Human Science Sorting Activity

TOK

**Instructions:**

Cut out the below cards with different types of evidence (quantified and qualified) and knowledge claims from different human sciences. You will be placed in groups of three and each be assigned a human science to focus on (preferably one that you are currently studying). Your task is to create a diamond 9 diagram representing the most reliable to least reliable forms of support for knowledge claims. Remember to annotate your diamond 9 with justifications your choices (most reliable and least reliable as a minimum). These will help you with the questions below.

**Psychology**

Opinions of Academic Experts

Meta-Analysis (Comparing Data Across Different Cultures/Locations)

Case Studies

Overt Controlled Observation Experiments

Overt Naturalistic Observation Experiments

Covert Controlled Observation Experiments

Covert Naturalistic Observation Experiments

Correlation Studies based on preexisting data

Statistics gathered from Sample Surveys

**Discussion Questions (To be completed once your diagrams are complete)**

1. What makes one type of evidence more reliable than another? Explain how you prioritized your diagrams. What are the strengths and limitations of your “most reliable” type of evidence?
2. How does the methodology of your discipline impact the prioritization of evidence? Try to give specific examples.
3. Are there certain knowledge claims that are better supported with “non-empirical” evidence? If so, what kind? If not, why not?
4. It has been said that all Human Sciences aspire to be like the Natural Sciences. What are the difficulties in applying the scientific method of controlled variables, observation, and replication to the Human Sciences?
5. Do you believe that humans can truly “scientifically” study other humans? What are the knowledge questions that arise when we attempt to do so? Make a list.

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**Geography**

Census Data taken from an online survey

Historical Census Data from the Government

Satellite Generated Maps

Hand Drawn Maps from Topographers

Case Studies

Surveys – eg: land use survey.

Opinion of Academic Experts

Interviews of Local Population

Voluntary Questionaires

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**Economics**

Researched Data from Studies

Data Based on Historical Trends

Meta-Analysis (Comparing Data Across Different Cultures/Locations)

Case Studies

Statistics gathered from Sample Surveys

Opinions of Experts with Practical Experience

Anecdotal Observation and Interviews

Correlation Studies based on preexisting data

Opinions of Academic Experts

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