Research Paradigms: Researchers’ Worldviews, Theoretical Frameworks and Study Designs

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Abstract
For novice researchers, in the fields of educational and social research, the choice of an appropriate research paradigm and relevant methodology is an uphill task. The vast amount of literature on this subject further exacerbates the confusion of early-career researchers. Hence, the current paper introduces them to the philosophical underpinnings of three major research paradigms in research. It delineates the positivistic, interpretive, and critical paradigms with an aim to seek a connexion among the ontology, epistemology, methodology and methods of each paradigm. In addition, it explores various underlying assumptions in educational research that have an impact on researchers’ world views, theoretical frameworks and study designs.

Keywords: methods; methodology; research paradigms; study designs; worldviews