

RESEARCH PHILOSOPHIES FOR PhD STUDIES

This module aims to develop critical awareness of research philosophies. Activities provide opportunities for practice in the selection and justification of an appropriate approach for research. There is a focus on qualitative and mixed methods.

LEARNING OUTCOMES:

On successful completion of this module the learner will be able to:

- Develop knowledge of different schools of thought in the philosophy of the social sciences and their application to research.
- Distinguish between ontological and epistemological research approaches.
- Describe the advantages and disadvantages of researchers as insiders and as outsiders.
- Justify the selection of an appropriate philosophical approach for a PhD.

INDICATIVE CONTENT:

The Branches of Philosophy for Research

Ontology, Epistemology, Axiology. Contrasting Deductive and Inductive Approaches, Objectivity and Subjectivity, Qualitative and Quantitative Research Approaches.

Positioning the Researcher

Insider Researcher, Outsider Researcher. Understanding Your Position in Relation to the Research.

Philosophy of the Social Sciences for Qualitative Research

Narrative, Phenomenology, Feminism, Grounded Theory, Action Research, Discourse Analysis, Ethnography

MODULE RESOURCES

Recommended Book Resources

- Williams, M. 2016, Key Concepts in the Philosophy of Social Research, Sage London [ISBN:978085702742]
- Thomas, M.K.E. and Bellingham, R. 2020, Post-qualitative Research and Innovative Methodologies, Bloomsbury Academic London [ISBN: 978-1-3500-62]
- Saunders, M.N.K., Lewis, P. and Thornhill, A. 2019, Research Methods for Business Students, 8th Ed., Chapter 4 - Understanding research philosophy and approaches to theory development pp.128-171, Pearson Education Limited Harlow [ISBN: 9781292208794]

Other Resources

- Sage Research Methods Online: Byrne, D. 2017, Philosophy of Research, Sage, Online ISBN:9781526408495 <https://dx-doi-org.cit.idm.oclc.org/10.4135/9781526408495>

COURSE WORK

| Assessment Type | Assessment Description | Outcome addressed | % of total | Assessment Date |
|--------------------|---|-------------------|------------|-----------------|
| Reflective Journal | Two short reflective entries based upon your experience of working through structured activities for this module. Students will have the opportunity to submit and discuss work in progress. | 2,3 | 40.0 | Week 8 |
| Essay | A concise critical justification of the research philosophy that underpins your chosen research project (1,500-2,000 words). Students will have the opportunity to submit and discuss work in progress. | 1,4 | 60.0 | Week 12 |