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Inquiry Procedure of the Research

1. The Research Paradigms or Philosophies
2. Approach of the Research
3. Time Dimension of the Research
Research Paradigms or Philosophies

A paradigm is “a set of beliefs, values and techniques which is shared by members of a scientific community, and which acts as a guide or map, dictating the kinds of problems scientists should address and the types of explanations that are acceptable to them” (Kuhn, 1970: 175)

Dominant Paradigms:
- Positivist, Interpretive/Constructivist, and Critical Paradigms
The Research Process

1. Selecting a RESEARCH PARADIGM
2. Selecting a Topic – Research Topic
3. Determining the Problem (Preliminary Literature Review) – Research Problem
5. Determining the Hypotheses (Prelim. Literature Review) – Research Hypotheses
6. Determining the Objectives – Research Objectives
7. Determining the Question – Research Question
8. Detailed Review of Literature – Literature Review
10. Designing the Research – Research Design
11. Collecting Data – Research Data Collection
12. Analyzing and Interpreting Data – Research Analysis and Conclusion
13. Informing Others – Research Write Up and Publishing
Chapters 0 and 1 and other selected readings

1. Chapter 0: pp. 15-27
2. Chapter 1: pp. 49-69

Research Paradigms

   • Chapter 2
Session Objectives

• Before starting any research, the researcher needs determine the research paradigm.

• This session seeks discuss the interrelationships between paradigms/worldview, philosophical assumptions and interpretive frameworks
Research Paradigms

- A paradigm is “a set of beliefs, values and techniques which is shared by members of a scientific community, and which acts as a guide or map, dictating the kinds of problems scientists should address and the types of explanations that are acceptable to them” (Kuhn, 1970: 175)

1. A PARADIGM is also known as the a worldview
2. There are a number of paradigms and these paradigms continue to evolve
3. To understand the differences between paradigms, we need to use a set of criteria known as philosophical assumptions
Research Paradigms

• To define the distinctions between paradigms, various taxonomies have been used:
  – ontology, epistemology and methodology (Guba and Lincoln, 1994; Creswell, 1994)
  – ontology, epistemology, axiology, rhetorical and methodology (Creswell, 1997)

Taxonomies are the philosophical assumptions for research and they are used to as a structure to explain paradigms or worldviews.
Research Paradigms

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  – ontology, epistemology and methodology (Guba and Lincoln, 1994; Creswell, 1994)
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an interdependent relationship exists between these assumptions, and that relationship formulates an understanding of fundamental philosophical assumptions within a particular paradigm.
Ontology

• This assumption relates to the nature of reality and its characteristics.
  • What is the nature and form of reality?
  • Objective/subjective and single/multiple
  • Objective reality or relativistic and constructivist reality

• Qualitative researchers embracing the idea of multiple realities and thus subjective. The qualitative researchers conduct their study with the intent of unearthing and reporting these multiple realities.

• Quantitative researchers embracing the idea of single reality which is objective.
Epistemology

- This assumption concerns the extent of proximity the researcher establishes with his respondents in his enquiry
  - What is the relationship between the knower and what is known? How do we know what we know? What counts as knowledge?
- **Qualitative** researchers posit that the researcher is **not independent** from what is being researched. Knowledge is context and time dependent. Knowledge is established through the meanings attached to the phenomena studied.
- **Quantitative** researchers posit that the researcher is **independent** from what is being researched. **Distance or objective separateness between researcher and object of study.** Knowledge is discovered and verified through direct observations or measurements of variations in phenomena;
Methodology

Refers to the procedures researchers use to investigate what they believe can be known, and the rationales behind these procedures.

• **Qualitative research** are characteristically *inductive*, *emergent* and are shaped by the *researcher’s experience* in collecting and analyzing the data.

• The **research questions may change or emerge** in the middle of the study to provide a better appreciation of the research problem. The data collection strategy planned before the study, needs to be modified to accompany the new questions.

• Data is analyzed in manner that seeks to develop an increasingly detailed knowledge of the topic being studied.
Methodology

Refers to the procedures researchers use to investigate what they believe can be known, and the rationales behind these procedures. **Quantitative researchers:**

1. Starting with *specific hypotheses or questions* derived from *theory/previous research*
2. Selecting a *sample representative* of the population
3. Using *objective instruments* (e.g. fixed choice questionnaires, attitude scales, etc.)
4. Presenting *results using statistics* and making *inferences* to the population.
5. “Distance” between *researcher and subjects* and emphasis on following the research plan

Axiology

• This assumption questions how the values of the researcher can influence what is to be studied. Value-laden!

• **Qualitative** researchers embrace the fact that research is influenced in one way or the other by the researchers’ values – hence researcher becomes immersed in what is being studied. Researchers of qualitative orientation like to make *explicit their values and how it may have affected or influenced the research or measures employed to reduce the effect of the influence.*

• **Quantitative** researchers view the researcher as being independent from what is being studied – hence there is no question about axiology

POSITION yourself in the study
Philosophical Assumptions

Rhetorical

• This assumption examines the language and the writing approach of the researcher.

• The language of the **qualitative** researcher becomes personal, literary, and based on definitions that evolve during a study rather than being defined by the researcher. They use **metaphors**, and sometimes they **refer to themselves** in their write up using the **first-person pronoun**, “I,” and they **tell stories**.
  - Focus is on credibility, transferability, dependability and confirmability

• **Quantitative** researcher is tends to be impersonal and expressive through statistical results or quantified descriptors – internal validity, reliability, generalizability and objectivity
TYPES OF PARADIGMS
A paradigm is “a set of beliefs, values and techniques which is shared by members of a scientific community, and which acts as a guide or map, dictating the kinds of problems scientists should address and the types of explanations that are acceptable to them” (Kuhn, 1970: 175).

A paradigm or worldview is “a basic set of beliefs that guide action” (Guba, 1990, p. 17).
Research Paradigms

1. Postpositivism
2. Constructivism
3. Advocacy/participatory
4. Pragmatism

Creswell (2007)

1. Positivism
2. Interpretive
3. Critical Theory and Critical Realism

Orlikowski and Baroudi (1991); Myers and Avison (2002)

There are a number of paradigms and these paradigms continue to evolve

1. Positivism
2. Interpretive
3. Realism
4. Critical Realism

Fisher (2010)

Realism is also known as critical realism (Hunt, 1991), postpositivism (Denzin & Lincoln, 1994; Guba & Lincoln, 1994) or neopostpositivism (Manicas & Secord, 1982)
Applying the assumptions to paradigms

A research paradigm can be deeply understood by further discussions of its philosophical assumptions using the three following questions:

1. The **ontological question**. What is the form and nature of reality and, therefore, what is there that can be known about it?

2. The **epistemological question**. What is the nature of the relationship between the knower and would-be knower and what can be know?

3. The **methodological question**. How can the researcher (would-be knower) go about finding out whatever he or she believes can be known?
Positivism

1. **Ontology:** Assumes an objective reality which is single and concrete.

2. **Epistemology:** the researcher is independent from what is being researched. Distance or objective separateness between researcher and object of study. Knowledge is discovered and verified through direct observations or measurements of reality.

3. **Methodology:** instrumentally predict or describe reality. Deductive reasoning is used to postulate theories that can be tested. The positivists believe in empiricism, the idea that observation and measurement are at the core of the scientific endeavor.

4. **Purpose:** is to instrumentally learn about reality so that the general laws that govern reality can be discovered and explained in order to describe, predict and control reality.

**Value-free**
Interpretive/Constructivism/Social Construction

1. **Ontology:** Assesses the existence of multiple realities and value-laden. Reality is socially constructed.

2. **Epistemology:** The researcher is not independent from what is being researched. Knowledge and the known are co-created during the inquiry. Researcher is a unique individual and that all research is essentially biased by each researcher’s individual perceptions. Knowledge is established through the meanings attached to the phenomena studied.

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**Value-laden**

1. Value-laden: We just do not sit because we find a seat – our seating has a meaning
2. Value-laden: Some chairs are reserved in society
3. Value-laden: You may not sit until society has given way – eg. before grace is said
4. Value-laden: To be able to sit you need to internalize the taboos of the context – culture – why we do what we do

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Research Paradigms
Interpretive/Constructivism/Social Construction

1. **Methodology:** characteristically inductive, emergent and are shaped by the researcher’s experience in collecting and analyzing the data.

2. **Purpose:** To go beyond the observable actions of people in the context of social phenomena and understand the subjective meanings they assign to their actions and thereby interpret and understand the reasons behind those actions (Klein and Myers, 1999: 69). The researcher’s intent, then, is to make sense (or interpret) the meanings others have about the world. This is why qualitative research is often called “interpretive” research.

Modernising the public sector – making sense of the different meanings of modernisation and how it affects employee support or resistance to modernisation programme
Principles of Interpretive Research

1. **The Fundamental Principle of the Hermeneutic Circle**: "All human understanding is achieved by iterating between considering the interdependent meaning of parts and the whole that they form. Little parts and BIG Picture"

2. **The Principle of Contextualization**: "Requires critical reflection of the social and historical background of the research setting, so that the intended audience can see how the current situation under investigation emerged."

3. **The Principle of Interaction between the Researchers and the Subjects**: "Requires critical reflection on how the research materials (or 'data') were socially constructed through the interaction between the researchers and participants."

4. **The Principle of Abstraction and Generalization**: "Requires relating the idiographic details revealed by the data interpretation [details of individual instances] through the application of principles one and two to theoretical general concepts that describe the nature of human understanding and social action." [i.e. Don't just tell a story, but find out how it can be relevant to other situations.]

5. **The Principle of Dialogical Reasoning**: Requires sensitivity to possible contradictions between the theoretical preconceptions guiding the research design and actual findings (‘the story which the data tell’) with subsequent cycles of revision." [i.e. Researcher should be humble about the ideas they arrive with, and allow them to be changed.]

6. **The Principle of Multiple Interpretations**: "Requires sensitivity to possible differences in interpretations among the participants as are typically expressed in multiple narratives or stories of the same sequence of events under study. Similar to multiple witness accounts even if all tell it as they saw it." [See last sentence.]

7. **The Principle of Suspicion**: "Requires sensitivity to possible 'biases' and systematic 'distortions' in the narrative collected from the participants." [i.e. Those studied might themselves be biased or might not tell or reveal all that is meaningful.]

Realism and Critical Realism/Postpostivism

1. Ontology and Epistemology:

Realism concerns multiple perceptions about a single, mind-independent reality. Realism – objective reality is distorted by human subjectivity. Value cognizant; conscious of the values of human systems and of researchers.

– Realism recognizes that perceptions have a certain plasticity (Churchland, 1979) and that there are differences between reality and people’s perceptions of reality (Bisman, 2002).

CR argues – two worlds – transitive and intransitive. Transitive is what we observe and learn with our mind. Intransitive – independent of what the mind thinks. Transitive has the perceptions of reality which tend to be value-laden and change continually, but Intransitive has “the underlying structures and mechanisms are ‘relatively enduring’” – that is what we want to study (Dobson, 2002: 7).

– In CR - the discovery of observable and non-observable structures and mechanisms, independent of the events they generate, is the goal of critical realism (Outhwaite, 1983; Tsoukas, 1989).
Realism and Critical Realism/Postpostivism

3. **Methodology:** both qualitative and quantitative methodologies are seen as appropriate for researching the underlying mechanisms that drive actions and events.

**Realism** – accept positivism but go beyond it – scrutinize current views and remove invalid explanations. **HYPOTHETIC-Deduction** – use variables [broken components] to describe phenomena and find the associations between the variables. The confirmed association is the more valid explanation at that time. Realism is about Cause and effect.

**CR** also employ theories and hypothesis/questions to study social phenomena –

- **RETRODUCTION** - process of abstraction – digging behind the layers of truth - breakdown, explore mechanisms and put it together
- Outcomes/Actual events – mechanisms and structures – triggers – policy/strategy
- Find the mechanisms behind the Cause and effect
- Methods such as case studies and unstructured or semi-structured in-depth interviews are acceptable and appropriate within the paradigm, as are statistical analyses, such as those derived from structural equation modeling and other techniques.
Realism and Critical Realism/Postpostivism

3. Purpose:

**Realism** – understand social phenomenon through hypotheses which are tested to establish patterns of associations and hence, most possible explanation

**CR** seeks not to predict but to explain social phenomena, this is done through examining the Context-Mechanism-Outcome Configurations (CMOCs) to develop a better understanding of these relatively enduring structures and mechanisms of social reality
Advocacy/Participatory

- Critiques realism and postpositivism as imposing structural laws and theories does not respond to marginalised individuals or groups. Critiques interpretive for not advocating for action to help individuals.

- **Ontology**: injustices, marginalised groups and individuals exist in reality and need advocacy.

- **Epistemology**: The research also contains an action agenda for reform, a specific plan for addressing the injustices of the marginalized group.

- **Methodology**: In practice, this worldview has shaped several approaches to inquiry. Advocacy researchers engage the participants as active collaborators in their inquiries.

- **Purpose**: The aim of advocacy/participatory studies is to create a political debate and discussion so that change will occur.
Pragmatism

• Individuals holding this worldview focus on outcomes of the research – the actions, situations and consequences of inquiry – rather than antecedent conditions (as in postpositivism).

• Ontology and Epistemology:
  1. Pragmatism is not committed to any one system of philosophy and reality. Truth is what works at the time: it is not based on dualism between reality independent of the mind or within the mind.
  2. Pragmatist researchers look to the “what” and “how” to research based on its intended consequences - where they want to go with it.
  3. Pragmatists agree that research always occurs in social, historical, political, and other contexts. But they believe we should stop asking questions about reality and laws of nature and simply...seek to change the phenomena.
Pragmatism

• **Methodology:** Individual researchers have a freedom of choice. They are “free” to choose the methods, techniques, and procedures of research that best meet their needs and purposes.
  - Apply multiple methods of data collection to best answer the research question
  - Focus on the practical implications of the research
  - Emphasize the importance of conducting research that best addresses the research problem.
Interpretive Communities

Participants in these interpretive projects represent the underrepresented or marginalised groups, whether those differences take the form of gender, race, class, religion, sexuality, and geography or some intersection of these differences.

• **Postmodernists:** “armchair radicals” who focus their critiques on changing ways of thinking rather than on calling for action based on these changes.

• **Feminist Theories:** The questions feminists pose relate to the centrality of gender in shaping our consciousness. The aim of this ideological research is to “correct both the invisibility and distortion of female experience in ways relevant to ending women’s unequal social positions” (Lather, 1991, p.71).

• **Critical theory/Critical race theory:** This perspective are concerned with empowering human beings to transcend the constraints placed on them by race, class, and gender (Fay, 1987).

• **Queer Theory:** concerned with empowering human sexuality on "the idea that identities are not fixed and do not determine who we are." The term was coined by Teresa de Lauretis in 1990.
APPLYING THE PARADIGM IN RESEARCH

Every paradigm has its set of guiding principles and philosophical assumptions
• know and understand them

Every paradigm has its approach to research
• Get to know the steps or checklist and make sure they are incorporated in your research process. You should be ready to explain how you adhered to them in your methodology by the end of your work.

Read on your paradigm and how it applies to your discipline in management or your research issue,

Read Fisher (2010)

1. Chapter 0: pp. 15-27
2. Chapter 1: pp. 49-69
3. Chapter 5

Visit Class website
perceptions of reality tend to be value laden and change continually, but “the underlying structures and mechanisms are ‘relatively enduring’” (Bhaskar, 1978, 1991, 1998; Mingers, 2004b; Smith, 2006).

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**Intransitive**

the Reality
- reality totally independent of our representations of it

**Transitive**

Representations of the Reality
Critical Realism

**Intransitive Domain**
- Actual Events
- Real Causes
  - The imperfect and partial correspondence of our knowledge with reality

**Transitive Domain**
- Qualitative Case Enquiry
  - Multi-method Triangulation
  - Data triangulation
    - Different times (pilot and main study), situations and subjects
  - Investigator triangulation
    - Collaboration with other field researchers
  - Theoretical triangulation
    - Use of different research theories and findings
  - Methodological triangulation
    - Multiple quantitative and qualitative methods – surveys, case studies, and documentary/archival analysis
Critical Realism

... “scientifically significant reality does not lie on the face of the world, but in the hidden essence of things”.

If we remain in the “superficial world of the empirical” or generalise from what is readily observable we miss out the opportunity “to get at underlying mechanisms that may be responsible for the observed regularities”
Critical Realism - Application

- Taxi Drivers Behaviour in Society
Critical Realism

Critical realism seeks to expose the reality of social phenomena and examine and explain the events and discourses that exist within them.

We will only be able to understand - and so change - the social world if we identify the structures at work that generate those events and discourses.

We need to be critical of our own reality because it consists of our own perceptual reality!
Key References


Photo Illustrations from Getty Images – www.gettyimages.com
Structure of Long Essay

- Abstract
- Chapt. 1 – Introduction
- Chapt. 2 – Literature Review
- Chapt. 3 – Context of the Study
- Chapt. 4 – Research Methodology
- Chapt. 5 – Results and Discussion
- Chapt. 6 – Conclusion
References


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