

# **Research Philosophy: Getting your Business Research Philosophy clear**

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## **Abstract:**

Philosophical evaluation can enrich researchers' research skills and ensure they use the proper methodology. With philosophical evaluation, researchers can open their minds to other possibilities that might enrich their research. Our purpose is to inspire the researchers in such a practice to overcome the obstacles when they begin their research. This article helps researchers with a practical example using a hypothetical research model to help them choose the right approach that should be used in research. For clarity, the research is conducted systematically and guided by philosophical underpinnings. Because there are differences in philosophical views with different implications for the research and the researcher, at the same time, the research should not be directed systematically. Still, the methodological choice should result from the researcher's philosophical underpinnings and the investigated phenomenon. This is true because the researcher's philosophical perspective will influence how they view the world and how they think information can be gathered. Differences in philosophy can have a significant impact on the research methodology. A researcher who subscribes to the positivist school of thought, for instance, will believe that knowledge can be attained through objective observation and measurement. Most likely, this researcher would use quantitative methods like surveys and experiments. A researcher who follows an interpretivist ideology, on the other hand, will believe that knowledge can be attained through personal interpretation and understanding. This researcher favors focus groups and interviews as qualitative research methods. These different philosophical perspectives lead to various methodological options. There may also be an impact based on the type of phenomenon being studied.

Keywords: ontology; axiology; paradigms; research philosophy; epistemology; positivism; interpretivism; pragmatism; realism

## **1. Introduction:**

The research philosophy is critical to any academic research project, providing the basis for ontology, axiology, and paradigms. Ontology refers to the underlying nature of being and reality, while axiology focuses on the values and beliefs that guide the research. The paradigms, such as positivism, interpretivism, and pragmatism, determine how the researcher approaches the topic and their corresponding data collection and study design. Epistemology, or the theory of knowledge, is also a significant factor in the research process, while realism is the foundation for interpreting findings and conclusions. This holistic framework allows scholars to reflect on their research, evaluate its value, and make informed decisions. This paper explores the concept of research philosophy from an accounting perspective. Specifically, it examines the ontology, axiology, epistemology, and paradigms inherent in research philosophy and their implications for accounting research. It further examines the different philosophical approaches – positivism, interpretivism, pragmatism, and realism – in order to provide an example of how research philosophy can be understood from an accounting standpoint. Ultimately, this paper aims to provide a comprehensive overview of research philosophy, emphasising its relevance to accounting.

Currently, we admit that science follows particular processes and rules. Nevertheless, it took some time for these rules to be universally accepted. Despite their weaknesses, people depend on other ways of knowing things, such as perseverance, authority, or perception. Nowadays, there are better approaches to understanding the world and its numerous phenomena, and one of the methods is the use of the «scientific method», i.e. conducting experiments and precise observations. In previous eras, there was no discrimination between different scientific disciplines as we see it now. The whole thing was "philosophy". Even "science" is a new term. Though science is philosophical in nature, the "philosopher of science" mission is to comprehend nature. The nature of the scientific examination and the knowledge from such studies are only the researchers' concerns (Thomas, 2021).

Although quantitative and qualitative research methods are typically considered contrasting viewpoints, they are frequently merged. Scholars assert that the variance between the schools of thought is overstated by Webb (1989) and that method triangulation is a common practice in modern research (Polit, 1993). Therefore, it is

essential to deeply comprehend the weaknesses and strengths of quantitative and qualitative approaches and their underlying philosophy (Crossan, 2003). The object of the questions "How to search?" and "What to look for?" is the researcher's point of view on "Why research?" The foundation of research science is based on understanding philosophy, including ontology, epistemology, and human nature. These concepts shape a researcher's perspective and assumptions and are crucial in designing research projects, determining research questions, informing methodology, and considering human rights and ethics. A comprehensive grasp of these elements is vital for effective, ethical, and informed scientific inquiry. If researchers do not realize there is truth, then using a compensatory methodology goes against the philosophical basis of their research project. This type of deviation does not fit the research criteria and thus undermines the nature of the research discipline (Holden & Lynch, 2004).

Research philosophy is a crucial aspect of research that guides researchers' approaches towards a problem. It includes beliefs, assumptions, reality, and truth and shapes research strategies and methods (Saunders, Lewis, & Thornhill, 2012). Researchers' varying views generate different expectations of what can be known, understood, and studied in the research process (Flower, 2009). A well-defined research philosophy ensures coherence in the research process and helps justify and defend research choices. Therefore, researchers need to identify and clarify their research philosophy to undertake meaningful research and ensure the credibility of their findings. Valid research methods are necessary in any field, and understanding different paradigms such as, epistemology, axiology and ontology is crucial. These concepts reveal the foundational beliefs of different paradigms and help to avoid incomplete, biased, or invalid research results. Ontology is necessary when selecting research topics or developing hypotheses, axiology is important in avoiding bias or prejudice, and epistemology is essential in ensuring valid methods and tools to collect information. The success of a research project is contingent on following these paradigms, regardless of the field of research (Trochim & Donnelly, 2008; Flower, 2009).

## **2. Understanding Philosophy**

Philosophy is a vast subject that deals with fundamental topics and explores life's most significant questions. If you want to understand philosophy, the first thing to consider

is the context of your inquiry. If you are entirely new to philosophy, it can be challenging to determine where to start. To begin with, it may be best to overview the various branches of philosophy. This will give you a starting point to approach specific philosophical topics. Engaging and attention-grabbing content is essential when you explore philosophical topics. The subject can be abstract and complicated, so being descriptive and using examples can help readers follow the content more easily. For those seeking a deeper understanding, delving into specific philosophical themes such as morality, epistemology, and aesthetics is necessary. Understanding these topics requires an analytical and critical-thinking mindset that allows you to explore the subject from all angles. Understanding philosophy can be a life-changing experience, providing a deep insight into our world.

Research has been a powerful tool throughout history to gather knowledge and answer questions. At the core of every research project lies a research philosophy, which defines how the research is conducted, the basis for decision-making, and the methods of data analysis used. Research philosophy is a framework that helps researchers understand and explain the nature of knowledge and how it can be obtained. It comprises of a set of principles and beliefs that guide the researcher throughout the research process. The philosophy of research can take many forms, including positivism, interpretivism, pragmatism, and critical theory. Positivism is an approach that applies the principles of natural science to studying human behaviour. Interpretivism, on the other hand, emphasizes the meaning and context of social phenomena. Pragmatism is a philosophy that seeks to integrate multiple perspectives and approaches to solve complex problems. Critical theory is a perspective that questions and challenges social norms and power structures.

Regardless of the philosophy chosen, it is crucial to understand its strengths and limitations. For instance, positivism provides an objective data collection and analysis method. However, it cannot account for highly subjective experiences. Interpretivism, on the other hand, can capture the complexity of human behaviour, but it may struggle with issues of objectivity and generalizability. Further, adhering to the philosophy selected throughout the research process is essential. Researchers must ensure that the methods they use to align with their philosophy. In addition, they must also be transparent about the philosophy of the research and how it affects the findings. Thus,

research philosophy is an essential aspect of any research project. It is the foundation upon which research questions are answered, and conclusions are drawn. A thorough understanding of research philosophy is crucial to confirm that research is designed and conducted in a manner that is rigorous, transparent and ethical.

In conclusion, we hope to have provided you with a model that will enrich your research skills and give you the confidence to carry out your research with the appropriate methodology. To achieve this, we have suggested an example model for research consisting of dependent, independent, and moderating variables. Figure 1 below illustrates this model, which we believe will help open researchers' minds to endless possibilities. In addition, it is critical to note that the main features of this example model include paradigms that designate the method of intellectual about research philosophy, as exposed in Figure 2 and the summary. In discussing the research philosophy of our article, we have delved into epistemology, ontology, axiology, and paradigms, seeking to illuminate the thinking behind our research process. By exploring these fundamental concepts, we hope to have clarified your research philosophy and provided a solid foundation for future research endeavours. So as you apply what you have learned from our example model, always keep in mind the paradigms that underlie it and the fundamental principles of epistemology, ontology, and axiology that guide the research process. With these tools at your disposal, you can confidently move forward in your research journey, knowing you are equipped with the knowledge and understanding necessary for success.

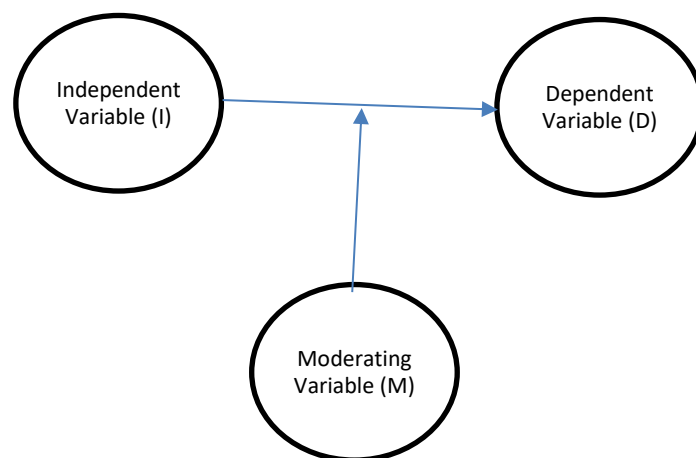


Figure 1 *The example framework*

Research is an integral part of the social sciences, and as novice researchers, it is essential to understand the various philosophical approaches that influence our research methodologies. As a novice researcher, it is important to understand that different philosophical perspectives can significantly impact the research process and outcomes. This paper aims to provide enlightenment on the varied philosophical approaches and their implications. It is crucial to note that a researcher's choice of methodology should not solely be based on what is commonly accepted or popular. Rather, the methodology should align with the researcher's philosophical stance and the social science phenomenon beneath the study. As emphasized by Holden and Lynch (2004), a sound research process should emanate from a philosophical perspective. While various philosophical approaches exist, choosing an intermediate philosophical approach can help the researcher match the philosophy, methodology, and research problem. This approach enables the researcher to find the perfect balance between the philosophical perspective and the methodological techniques used, which leads to a more comprehensive and accurate research investigation. Thorough consideration of the philosophical perspectives and their implications in research is paramount for novice researchers. Researchers can achieve a more sound and comprehensive research process by choosing an intermediate philosophical approach that aligns with the research problem and methodology. We believe that relying on more extreme approaches can be limiting and may hinder the researcher's ability to gain a comprehensive understanding of the social phenomenon. By matching philosophy, methodology, and the research problem, researchers can ensure that the research approach is effective and congruent with their philosophical perspective (Holden & Lynch, 2004). This paper guides novice researchers and highlights the importance of understanding philosophical perspectives to select the appropriate methodology. Researchers must choose an intermediary approach that allows them to align their philosophical stance, methodology, and the social science phenomenon under investigation.

### **3. Epistemology**

The concept of Epistemology delves into the association between the researcher and the research participant. Following standard procedures, a researcher can conduct a study without bias and approach the research participant without preconceived notions.

This approach is known as objectivism, a vital aspect of research as it ensures that the research is conducted fairly and impartially (Ponterotto, 2005). Furthermore, dualism assumes that the research participant, the researcher, and the topic are independent. A researcher must maintain independence from the research participant and remain objective to avoid bias in the research process. This approach is upheld as a significant guideline for the research procedure. Overall, the concept of Epistemology sheds light on the importance of maintaining objectivity and independence in the research process. By adhering to standard procedures and maintaining independence from the research participant, a researcher can engage in thorough and unbiased research to reach meaningful conclusions (Ponterotto, 2005; Saunders et al., 2012).

The interdependent connotation between epistemology and ontology cannot be ignored in research, as aptly argued by Flower (2009). This relationship is crucial to comprehend as ontology, the study of existence, and epistemology, the study of knowledge, are closely linked. As such, it becomes increasingly important to recognize the researcher's status to determine the accuracy of their findings. To illustrate, when researchers make certain assumptions in their investigation methodology, it influences their epistemological choices. This refers to the empirical tests and measures they use to test the proposed hypotheses. Saunders et al. (2012) provide a poignant example of how certain researchers suggest that data collected from objects that are distinctly from the researcher (an external-reality) are less susceptible to bias and henceforth deemed more objective. It's imperative to present these findings statistically to uphold the research quality, as recommended by (Flower, 2009). Despite the challenges in ontology and epistemology, recognizing the researcher's role can help develop a more comprehensive understanding of what research entails. This knowledge can lead to groundbreaking research and definitive conclusions.

Positivists believe that reality is stable and observable from an objective point of view (Levin, 1985); e. They were deprived of intervention in the phenomenon under investigation. They also object to the need to isolate phenomena and repeat observations. That often involves manipulating reality through changes in only one independent variable to isolate and establish relationships between the laws of specific components of the social world. However, much debate exists about whether this positivist paradigm fits perfectly into the social sciences (Hirschheim, 1985). Many

authors have called for a more diverse approach to information system research methods (Kuhn, 1970; Bjørnsen & Manniche, 1985; Remenyi, Williams, Money, & Swartz, 1998).

We will not discuss this further, but it is relevant because information systems that deal with human interaction with technology are also classified as part of the social sciences rather than the natural sciences (Hirschheim, 1985). An alternative paradigm to positivism is called interpretivism. This school of thought states that the best way to understand a phenomenon is by creating a new subjective interpretation and implementing it into reality. Many scholars find this inappropriate because of the inconsistency in their findings. Correspondingly, some variables or constituent aspects of reality may have been previously thought un-measurable under the positivist paradigm - and hence were left unexplored (Galliers, 1992). Both scientific approaches require studying phenomena in their natural environment. Mutually also must acknowledge that scientists can't always understand what they do when investigating a phenomenon. Both interpretivism and positivism have a glorious history that's no less long than positivism alone.

For example, when collecting data in a secondary data scenario, a crucial aspect of the process is ensuring that the data is sourced from reliable and credible sources. In this case, the data should be gathered from firms' annual reports to obtain accurate and relevant values for the independent variables. It is important to note that this data has not been prepared specifically for the study. Thus its reliability and credibility must be assessed through a theoretical perspective and empirical evidence. One notable advantage of this approach is that it maintains a level of separation between the researcher and the data being studied. This helps to reduce any bias that may arise from the researcher's views and opinions.

Additionally, it allows for a more objective data analysis through statistical tests. Realists, such as Blaikie (2007), who believe that objective facts and evidence should drive science, see this approach as ideal. They view companies as social objects that can be scientifically examined, leading to a better understanding of their inner workings. However, this is not to say that a positivist perspective should entirely drive the study. Rather, the researcher should focus on explaining and understanding the data in question. The researcher can objectively critic the predictable connotation between



the hypothesized variables beneath investigation through empirical evidence and theoretical analysis. The output is kept engaging and attention-grabbing by strictly following the instructions given, even as it describes complex scientific processes. This ensures the reader remains invested throughout the text, providing a more fulfilling and informative experience. So, the epistemology of the example is empiricist, positivist and realistic, which means challenging hypotheses. This example scrutinises several hypotheses on the relationship between D and I and some hypotheses on the moderating function of M on D and I association, which the researcher will interpret in detail in the hypotheses development of his research.

#### **4. Ontology**

The study of ontology delves deep into understanding the nature of being and reality. It primarily focuses on answering the question: "What is the form and nature of reality, and what can be known about that reality?" (Ponterotto, 2005, p. 130). At its core, ontology is the science of studying existence (Blaikie, 2007, p. 178). This encompasses everything from determining what units make it up, what exists, what it looks like, and how these elements interrelate (Blaikie, 2007, p. 3). Ontology plays a significant role in research, as it influences the researcher's think about what is factual (Saunders et al., 2012). The researcher's approach can vary greatly depending on the ontological assumptions. For example, in a quantitative study, objectivist ontology assumes that there is a single-reality, and there is a necessity to understand how objects respond to this one realism. In this context, let us assume that a study aims to inspect the being of a single-reality, which is the impact of M as a moderator of the connotation between I and D among a chosen sample. With the support of relevant theories and literature, the study aims to contribute to the broader understanding of a single reality by examining the proposed association.

In conclusion, ontology is a fundamental aspect of research that determines the researcher's view of what is real. It is a science that explores the nature of being and existence, taking into account all entities' interactions and their makeup. Its crucial role is to help researchers approach their studies holistically, ensuring that their conclusions are grounded in an accurate understanding of reality.

## **5. Axiology**

The role of researchers' morals in the technical procedure is a significant concern in axiology (Ponterotto, 2005). It is essential to reflect how the specific standards of a researcher may impact a piece stage of the study process in terms of approach and research philosophy. The axiology of philosophy may include ethics and aesthetics as researchers' possessed values. Hence, researchers must be aware of their self-values as it is crucial to their research procedure to provide credible research results. By seeing their values, the researchers can make their research more viable and strengthened (Flower, 2009). During the research procedure, the specific standards of a researcher play a crucial role in each stage. Researchers need to understand their values and consider them a part of the research process. This measure ensures that the research is objective, and researchers remain autonomous of the data. With the application of scientific-methods of research combined with research methodology-ethics, researchers can solidify their research. For instance, researchers can prioritize the ethic of objectivity while investigative the connotation between D and I while considering the role of M as a moderation effect. In particular, the example above argues that M moderates the connotation between D and I. This dispute is grounded on theoretical perspectives of related theories, empirical literature, regulations, codes, and laws within a specific country. Researchers can provide remarkable research by balancing and assessing their study's results without bias. Therefore, understanding self-values and considering them as portion of the research process is crucial to providing reliable research results.

## **6. Research Paradigms**

A paradigm is a term that refers to social phenomena studied based on their unique understanding and how they have been explained by researchers (Saunders et al., 2012). The examination of social phenomena can significantly contribute to the extraction of valuable insights and the development of accurate justifications. According to Saunders et al. (2012), this examination approach is referred to as a research paradigm - a precise research methodology that directs a researcher in choosing the philosophical beliefs, participants, tools, and techniques utilized in a study (Ponterotto, 2005). If a researcher employs the scientific method in their research paradigm, it will steer them towards a

positivist perspective that is impartial, factual, and autonomous. This methodology entails forecasting previously tested theories from empirical studies.

The researcher examines these hypotheses and bridges the gaps in existing knowledge. Selecting the appropriate research paradigm plays a vital role in the success of a research study. In cases where there is insufficient context, the output should resemble the input. If no tone is specified, the output should captivate and retain the reader's attention. A descriptive length is necessary, and instructions, if provided, must be followed with precision. Ultimately, the output should be engaging enough to compel the reader to read it in its entirety. It is worth noting that the research paradigm adopted is crucial since it empowers researchers to approach their studies in a specific way. The paradigm allows for a more structured and organized approach to research, guiding the researcher towards what to expect and where to look. This approach streamlines the research process and increases the chances of uncovering valuable insights. In conclusion, the research paradigm selected is an essential aspect of research. By defining the philosophical assumptions guiding the research, the researcher is more likely to employ relevant methods and gather useful data. It ensures proper organization throughout the study, giving the researcher insights into potential gaps in existing knowledge and how to fill them. Ultimately, the appropriate research paradigm increases the chances of producing insightful and useful research.

Figure 2 highlights the main aspects of the research philosophy, which provide an overview of the paradigms, ontology, axiology, and epistemology associated with this research endeavour. The research purpose is unveiled through an in-depth exploration of the key aspects discussed in earlier sections. The scholar intends to examine the association between D and I among a select sample while also considering the function of M in acting as a moderating influence. To achieve this objective, the researcher has thoroughly reviewed relevant literature and developed a theoretical framework to inform the research process. The framework will be tested through various means, such as hypotheses or experiments. Based on the researcher's choice, the data analysis will either be quantitative, utilizing secondary data from annual reports, or qualitative. The analysis will involve statistical procedures, as outlined by (Saunders et al., 2012).

Furthermore, this research approach may be deductive or inductive, and it can be either

theory-testing or theory-building for D in the sample set. The features outlined in Figure 2 are non-negotiable aspects of the research philosophy, which will significantly impact its outcome. In conclusion, this example proves that the research philosophy plays a crucial role in determining the credibility and impact of any research endeavour. The described approach, combining various aspects of ontology, axiology, paradigms, and epistemology, will ensure the integrity of the research output and provide the reader with reliable information of real value.

In our research, we investigate whether there exists a solitary reality that proposes the influence of the moderator M on the correlation between I and D, amongst a meticulously chosen sample. Our assessment underlines the significance of comprehending the subtleties amongst every variable and the part played by M in the association.

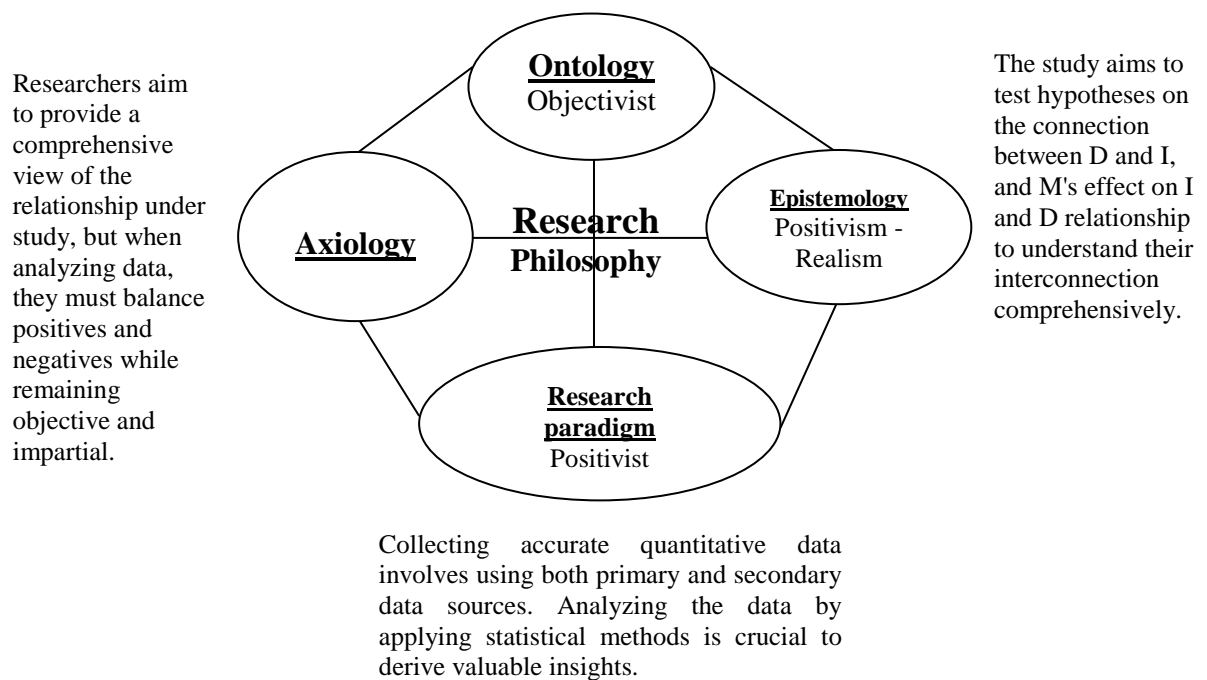


Figure 2 *Main Aspects of Research Philosophy*

Research Philosophy Mason, Augustyn, and Seakhoa-King (2022) said that research philosophy is the embodiment of the processing of the analysis, collection and use of data related to the research topic. Philosophy deals with ideas about how the world works and the processes that take place in it, and, as an academic discipline, it is primarily concerned with reality, knowledge, and being (Mason, 2014). Our

worldviews and research work are closely related to what we perceive as reality. The key term for worldview is "paradigm", a concept developed by (Kuhn, 1970).

It is no secret that vision is an important sense that influences how we perceive different phenomena. However, what we see is primarily determined by the context we are exposed to and our previous experiences. Kuhn's quantification of the paradigm in 1970 established that our perception relies on the prerequisite of the paradigm itself. In other words, what we see is largely influenced by what we look at and the mode of perception we have been taught, which shapes our thoughts and beliefs (Kuhn, 1970). The term 'worldview' has been used interchangeably with the paradigm and is defined as the fundamental beliefs that guide our personal, social and professional lives. According to Creswell (2009), a worldview constitutes a fundamental set of beliefs guiding action and impacting how we interpret and understand social phenomena. The paradigm and worldview serve as the lens through which individuals view the world and interpret information. Therefore, it is important to examine the worldview or paradigm that shapes our perception to understand how we respond and interact in different settings. It is imperative to note that the paradigm and worldviews are critical in shaping our perception of social constructs. Kuhn's quantitative paradigm and Creswell's definition of the worldview provide a framework through which we can understand how these prerequisites impact our daily interactions and actions and ultimately contribute to social order. However, some individuals have a different view of the world from others.

Now researchers looking to acquire basic research skills often face detailed discussions about the philosophical implications of research methods they are considering (or being told to consider). Beyond that, they encountered a murmur of different epistemologies and many names (Pallas, 2001). It worsens matters as the philosophical terms are utilized contradictorily, with the similar term utilized in different and occasionally inconsistent ways (Crotty, 1998). Discussions between researchers with varying experience levels play an important role in learner development (Knight & Zuber-Skerritt, 1986; Zuber-Skerritt, 1987; Malfroy, 2005; Madden, 2022). At the beginning of this post, I observed that in researcher discussion groups, when researchers stop arguing about philosophical differences and focus on the research process, they find they have more in common than they thought (Madden, 2022). In this article, based on my experience as a mixed methods researcher and research methods teacher, real-world

examples using what-if research models are used. Per se, it is far from complete and could be usefully supplemented. However, I hope this will help provide a context for researchers to understand their approach better.

Many current researchers focus primarily on the positivist perspective when creating research projects, and there are only a few examples of this trend (Boon & Van Baalen, 2019). Nevertheless, it is significant to identify that there is much more to researching complex concepts than a single positivist lens. Researchers must be willing to consider various perspectives to comprehensively understand topics like ontologies, epistemologies, methodologies, and paradigms. That includes exploring other schools of thought, such as constructivism, interpretivism, critical realism, and postmodernism. Additionally, researchers should strive to be knowledgeable of relevant literature, literature reviews, and case studies to further inform their research. By doing this, researchers can form a more nuanced, holistic understanding of their subject matter, thus creating more in-depth and accurate research projects. In this context, we encourage "current and future" researchers to read more on ontologies, epistemologies, methodologies, and paradigms as their current thinking seems limited to a very "positivist" frame of reference. Furthermore, a broader and more general focus is needed to examine these complex concepts before researching.

## **7. Discussion**

In research, it is essential to have a clear understanding of the philosophical approach that guides the study. Philosophical assumptions are critical in shaping the research questions, methodology, and analysis. Therefore, understanding research philosophy is crucial for designing and executing practical research projects. Several research philosophies are associated with different approaches to knowledge acquisition. One common research philosophy is positivism, which assumes that reality is objective and observable. Under this philosophy, researchers aim to discover universal laws that govern the world by collecting and analyzing empirical data.

On the other hand, interpretivism assumes that reality is subjective and socially constructed. Researchers under this philosophy believe that subjective experiences and meanings are crucial to understanding social phenomena. Therefore, they use

qualitative methods to explore the meanings and interpretations of the studied phenomena. Another research philosophy is critical theory, which aims to uncover societal power relations and domination. Researchers under this philosophy strive to create transformative and emancipatory knowledge that can lead to social change. They often use qualitative methods to analyze societal power relations to achieve this. It is essential to note that each research philosophy has its strengths and weaknesses. Researchers should, therefore, choose the appropriate philosophy depending on the research question, methodology, and analysis. Approaches to theory development also vary depending on the research philosophy (Saunders, Lewis, Thornhill, & Bristow, 2015). For example, under positivism, theory development involves testing hypotheses derived from universal laws.

In contrast, under interpretivism, theory development aims to create detailed and complex descriptions and explanations that reflect the subjective experiences and meanings of the participants. Understanding research philosophy and theory development approaches is crucial for designing and executing practical research projects. Therefore, researchers should carefully consider the philosophical assumptions underpinning their research and choose the appropriate method for theory development. By doing so, they can create rigorous and relevant knowledge of the studied phenomena.

Research Philosophy is an essential aspect of any research work. The research work might lack depth and relevance without properly understanding and implementing the research philosophy. This article will discuss an example to understand research philosophy better. Suppose you are researching the impact of tax planning on tax disclosure on the mental health of teenagers. To do that, you might choose an interpretivist research philosophy. Interpretivism argues that reality is multiple and subjective, and the research must consider this subjective understanding while studying the phenomena.

In this research, the interpretivist philosophy would help you understand the related parties' perception of tax planning and disclosure. You will not just gather data but also interpret it in light of the subjective reality experienced by the participants. Now, if you were to choose a positivist research philosophy, your focus would be on quantifying

data to establish causal relationships. In this case, you might gather data related to tax-saving components, permanent and temporary differences, and other factors that you deem relevant. Your research would focus on establishing mathematical models, statistical inference, and hypothesis testing.

But this quantitative approach lacks a nuanced understanding of the reality that the related parties experience in tax planning. It ignores subjective experience and emphasizes measurable data. The interpretivist research philosophy, on the other hand, focuses on the subjective understanding of reality. It helps you to understand the nuances of the related parties' usage of tax planning. It helps identify patterns and discover meaning in the data, which otherwise would have been lost. So, choosing the right research philosophy is essential for conducting relevant, comprehensive, and engaging research. Each research philosophy provides a different lens to view the data, and choosing the right one might help uncover patterns, discover meaning, and provide insights. In this context, unlock the power of philosophical evaluation with research philosophy, master the art of researching with a hypothetical model and unlock the possibilities of philosophical underpinnings. Enhance your research skills and gain the confidence to overcome obstacles with research philosophy and boost your research outcomes by understanding the best methodology for your research today with research philosophy.

## **8. Conclusion**

Regarding research, there are many reasons why someone would choose to participate. More often than not, researchers have already determined which methodology they will use- whether qualitative, quantitative, or a blend of both. Additionally, determining what specifically to examine could be based on the researcher's academic interests, among other things. But when one dives into the philosophical literature, it becomes apparent that the decision of which research method to use delves deeper than just practicality. Researchers may seek a philosophical solution to the question, "Why research?" While there may not be a straightforward answer, conducting research allows individuals to explore new ideas, expand their knowledge, and contribute to a greater understanding of the world. It also allows for the opportunity to challenge



existing beliefs and theories and contribute to the collective progress of society as a whole. Overall, the decision to participate in research goes beyond methodology and subject matter - it is an opportunity to engage with the intellectual community and continue the never-ending pursuit of knowledge.

Researchers should also remember, "What are you researching for?" They can greatly influence methodological choices, so examining their philosophy similarly generates expression on the research problem. Researchers must remember that certain philosophical views may prevent them from investigating a particular research problem because the methodology involved may not be relevant to the issue under study. Furthermore, the incorrect combination of methodology with the research problem can lead to misleading results, negatively affecting the professionalism of the researcher and "the authority of the research science". We realize this flexibility in "What are you researching for?" It is only achieved by an average philosophical position, allowing researchers to fit into philosophy, methodology, and the research-problem. At the same time, the research should not be directed systematically, but the methodological choice should result from the researcher's philosophical attitude and the investigated phenomenon.

In reviewing definitions, I emphasize their value in helping researchers pinpoint the phenomenon they are studying. Definitions can only do this if they are used consistently. However, defining something is not the only way to indicate it (Madden, 2022). This article aims to identify elements common in different branches of research by introducing a practical example using a hypothetical research model to help you choose the right approach that should use in the research. I have illustrated a "practical example with a hypothetical research model" in Figure 2. The researchers' answers to the questions listed vary by the nature of the study. A good research education will encourage them to think about the answers other researchers might give and the different options those answers might yield and examine research philosophies before deciding on epistemological labels for their research methods.

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